



JAMES BOYER MAY

Collected Poems

POEMS, TRANSLATIONS, AND THE TRACE YEARS

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

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James Boyer May

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Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry

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EDITORIAL EDITION

This edition resets the poetry from the original book and periodical scans. Lineation, stanza divisions, italics, internal headings, and clearly intentional indents have been checked against those witnesses. Source-page hanging indents are not reproduced.

James Boyer May

1904–1981

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers

Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry

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DOCUMENTARY IMAGES

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'21

'21
M.H.S.



Seniors

LEO W. H. ZANDER
"Lee"

Chorus, 1-2; Class Basketball, 2; Track, 2;
Booster Staff.

"Not too quiet; not too bold. That is why
we all want him as our friend."

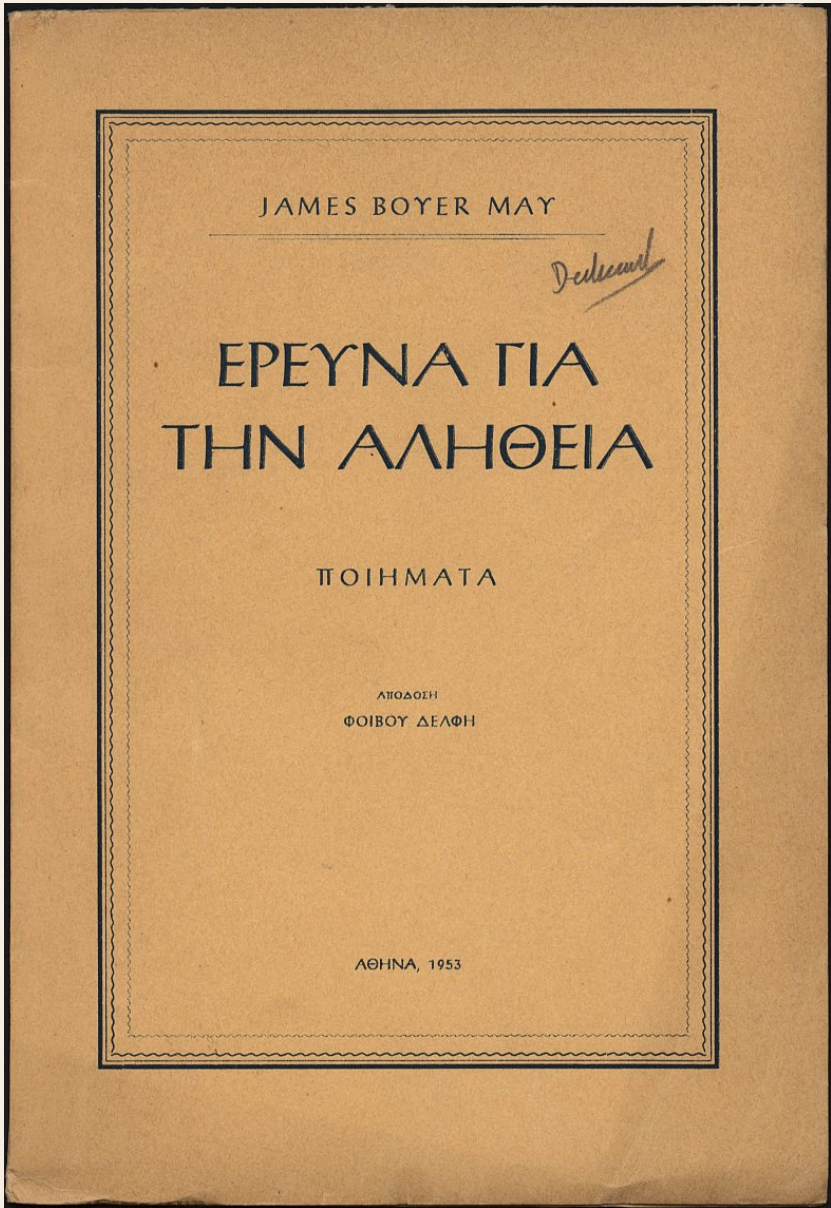
JAMES BOYER MAY
"Sis"

Three-year student.
Webster Debating Society, 2-3; Debating
Team, 2-3; Captain, 3; Chorus, 2-3; Glee Club, 3

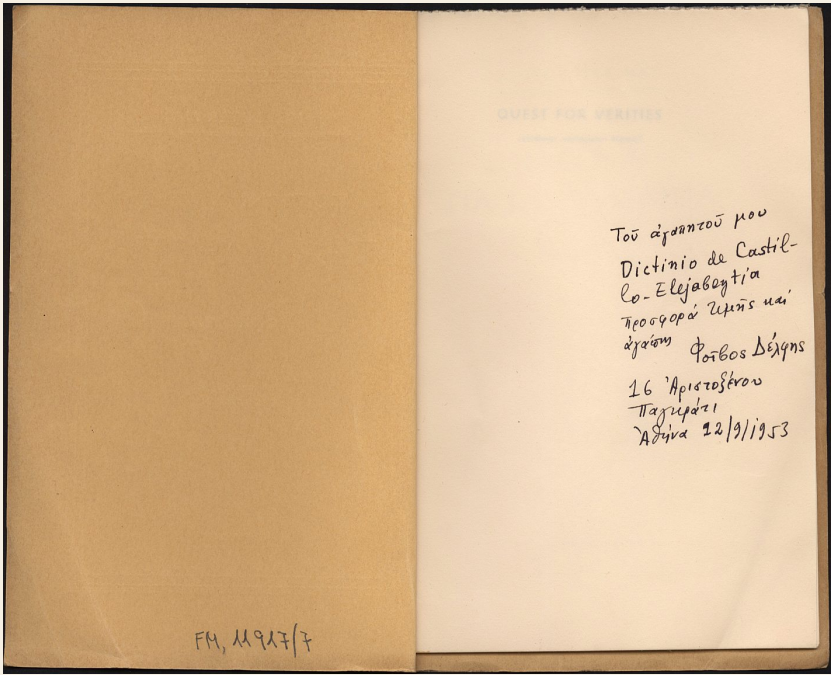
"He always came dressed spick and span.
That's what makes them all fall, even Marian"

EDWARD LANGER

James Boyer May in the 1921 Marinette High School annual; the page records his debating, chorus, and glee-club activities.



The 1953 Athens edition of May's poems in Phivos Delphis's Greek translation.



Title-page evidence for *Eryna gia ten Aletheia* (Athens, 1953).

INTRODUCTION

James Boyer May, 1904–1981

James Boyer May made Los Angeles a switching station for the international little-magazine world. A Wisconsin-born reporter who became a poet, fiction writer, translator, critic, broadcaster, and editor, he founded *Trace* in 1952 and turned it into a durable communications network for independent writers. His own compressed, philosophically restless poems range from atomic-age civic satire to spiritual inquiry and experimental syntax; his translations from Phivos Delphis place that work in a two-way Greek-American exchange.

Stage I | Wisconsin, journalism, and migration, 1904–1945

Born in Redgranite, Wisconsin, on 30 December 1904, May was the son of James Virgil May and Viola Florence Pickett May. He grew up principally in Marinette, where his 1921 high-school annual records him as debate captain and a member of chorus and glee club. He married Geraldine Elizabeth Evanchack in Menominee, Michigan, on his twentieth birthday. Advertising work gave way to reporting at the *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern* by 1928. He moved to Los Angeles by the middle 1930s and enlisted there in 1942; the exact branch and service chronology remain unresolved.

Stage II | Books, translation, and *Trace*, 1946–1957

May first appeared in book form as a fiction writer, publishing *Eight Years* in 1946 and *For a New Era of Hate* in 1947. He founded *Trace: A Chronicle of Living Literature* in June 1952. The magazine began as a directory and information exchange, then became a forum where geographically scattered editors and poets could find one another, argue about standards, and document otherwise ephemeral publications. His 1950s books included the anthology *Eight American Poets*, the survey *Twigs as Varied Bent, Selected Poems: 1950–1955*, and the 1957 Villiers companion volumes *Selected Fiction, Selected Essays & Criticism*, and *Collected Later Poems*. *Modern Greek Poems* translated Phivos Delphis through English intermediaries; Delphis had translated May into Greek the preceding year.

Stage III | Los Angeles networks and the later *Trace*, 1958–1981

May helped assemble *Poetry Los Angeles I* with Thomas McGrath and Peter Yates and participated in Pacifica radio culture through KPFK. Alexandra Garrett later remembered *Trace* as fundamentally a one-man operation: May worked in his basement surrounded by hundreds of manuscripts, produced a complete typescript for every issue, worried constantly about Villiers carrying the magazine's debt, and nevertheless continued to pay contributors. Helen Luster, Milton Van Sickle, Garrett, and others assisted him, but the directory, news exchange, and editorial labor remained centered on May. *Trace* continued into 1970–71, eventually reaching a combined issue 72/73 and recording hundreds of contributors. Its practical structure—addresses, notices, arguments, correspondence, and bibliographic tracking—made it one of the postwar period's important little-magazine bridges. May died in Los Angeles County on 23 February 1981. His archive, long described as exceptionally large, preserves both a difficult poetic career and the social machinery that made independent literature visible.

TRANSLATIONS: *MODERN GREEK POEMS* (1954)

English versions of Phivos Delphis

Corinna

Into fields far from humans and evil
with feelings of men and ephemeral
 as your youth, sweet Corinna . . .
I go where you were swift with pureness
abloom goodness and supple as flowers,
 light-armed and agile . . .
filled with compassion and wisdom . . .
I say to the mountains good-morning
 in this just-so remoteness.
She's come in the dress of the flame-cloud
 and dancing as birds do,
to meet me—and saying good-morning
here in the clearing, where waiting for sunrise . . .
She comes with the clouds and the birds
 and frenzies of love
 (You are welcome!)
She comes frisking and lamblike
with flowers and dawn in her face,
her arms filled by her breasts and her flowers.
 Now her pure youth has been left
 far below in that knowledgeable place
when she'd but dreamed of the flame-cloud
which had been flowing, as always
 there in beauty towards knowing
of world-things, *consumed by his eyes,*
and consuming . . . Her name was a song.
 Little by little she knew this.

In the wide-open field where
were rising the birds,
when I *was* there, lonely,
that animate walker
down solitude valleys.

Then, I mounted the steps of the birds and the fog.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Life Is a View

Life is a view from a high mountaintop
a welcome meeting
among spruce trees of wholesome beauty . . .
and a dusty journeyed road.

Life delights like a dream;
and riverlike, raw,
the ways to each meeting,
each by each in their passage.
A view from a high mountaintop,
a sight of the past,
a sight of the present,
on an endless dusty footpath.
Beneath the rain and storm,
progression of travail,
progression of feet on the strayed way-path
into an immense wasteland.

A wondrous-viewed march,
harshly dreamed as if real:
a young world with its source out of death,
a quick parting which resumes *never more*.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Dawn

Bojiati, 29 August 48

Before me rolls immobile ocean—fields
of Attica, from dawn-sweet mountain—
and overhead, a voiceless flight of birds,
black against a hill of rose, by sun-
rise. Green, the hills of chosen morning;
soon rise, about, the voices out of air...
for, near our tent, the mule-path passes.
Bells and songs are wafted with the dawn,
on rising for my walk into the fields;
there, above me, winging birds...
the children rising also, Doris
and Helen, their pure presences
 embuing latter heaven,
Helen's shore—that is the name I give it,
from Helen of the green-lit eyes and
cheeks of rose, like dawn, like peach.

 Though animate; like bronze, in
contradiction—Doris, unsubdued
and lively-humoured paradox.
Faith—yet, sport and beauty blending,
as this sweet dawning's leaped across
the hills of Attica... and fragrances
of morning sent to me, there wrapt
in balm of pine, now holy tree.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

The Dark Wood

The dark wood
is my life
which knows only your steps
upon a bygone path
(My dark wood proffers
her footsteps, the past trails I am searching for,
before the sun
ascends the wasteland silence)
of dark wood, like your hair...
as there, where you have passed
back of time,;
back of my trees...
Your name tells me the brooks,
the winds, the desert moon of night,
my dark wood is this life.
All haltings, I've passed, al-
tered of their stance,
heavy with your memory
and time which is flowing.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

A Long March

A long march, I have dreamed,
upon the fatherland mountain-slopes;
a long march on the dusty road
to my old forgotten high footpath,
A long march, I have dreamed,
upon the mountains of rocky Roumelis,
I will shout first good-morning to them,
as once when I strode among the spruce trees.
A good-morning, I will tell my mountains
and my rocks, trees, fountains, and the birds;
a long march on irrepressible footsteps
with a smiling companion and songs of youth.
I shall read again my refound way,
and say, as once long ago, first good-morning
to Liacoura, transmitting fraternal salutations;
high-soaring eaglelike, as scaling then Parnassus.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

The Sky Is Red

This man is more dangerous
than the wolf with madness.
The shadows of sorrows
are behind me like sisters
upon the barren road...
I sit down at home
and hear the prelude of crime
to darken the soul,
as then where the sky was red
and our land below the wind.
The stream of days
is running to the chasm and these selves,
where tears flow...
There is an endless prelude of crime
thus far on the road to prosperity.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

A Hard Winter

Athens, October, 1948

One hard winter
we shall have passed
unnumbered those hard winters
without one promising gleam
to light in front of wasteland—
without fire
or bread
or hope
the numberless winters
of bleak cannibal devourers.
My trails are lost
among those frost hours.
In vain, the grimy man
is waiting for the lost
spring...

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Wolf-Man

I am wolfman who covers his ugliness,
his repulsive insatiability beneath the cloths,

Dirty am I, who conceals under cloths,
an intriguer, ugly and wild
as the capillary wolf,
which is ever employed with alien object.

I am the man whom you contend with ever,
who makes babble and whose lechery means for you failure.

His passage upon the world marked out your life.
He enrages the godless ones, unredeemable ever,
conveying plainly falsehood in science,
which precisely in our day is wordy diplomacy.
But I am by nature of frenzied wilder breast
and nether hairy legs.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Vain Toil?

In vain a very long time I dwell on my death
and here pausing at crossroad of hard trial of my mind;
though fiery is my ardor for poesy,
that which I here mean depthmost in heart
is that likeness to distorted fate;
I cannot pass over the words of my old friend
who tells me one day:
“Leave go the writing, it does not give bread.’
At first I believe in the old man’s decree.
After a little I say that the man
is but merely a beggar.
This crossroad marks grief for piercing me now,
it is a crux puzzling our century.
I hear always the voice that is crying:
“Let go the infertile writing,
that does not give bread.
Take in your hands the hard tool of steel.’
My dilemma is whether be one inglorious—
but workman for money-bread—
or poet only;
around me those takers of material gains.
Contrary doubter, I vacillate; while
one also realist, practical,
wellknowing that I am man
who cannot live without potatoes and beans.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Routine

Our lives are of nether
routines chaining us fast
to our careers... But
here, upon mountains,
are far lost from me, sorrow's
immediacies;
I'm by heights freed of all
needless griefs of want.
I am a mountaineer
who climbs up sheerest-faced craigs,
breathes here clear air...
Our lives make such demands,
cruelly forming routines—
each stone of faith
which ever, each man must roll there—
with ordered, each stone
to learn shape of his breakwater...
But here, dawns all clear blue...
here, all free birds keep singing
up high in green trees of light.

At this juncture I've thrown down
the timeworn millstone of this world.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

The Man of Business

Patient aging animal of business:
man, in workshop of another or
his own... By hand or brain, is all the same,
Where laboring sunburnt on the mountain,
sweating on the plain, or in a Vulcan's shop
where steel is fired, or iron is hoe or plough
out in a field... or making shoes or ma-
sonry... as carpenter, or partner...
Every man, whose tool forms out of mind or aids
his hand—it is the same for brothers-under-sky.

Joined by patient likeness, donkey and his farmer—
though one is fast-yoked to the well-pump.

A rascal and a robber, this—
which patience asks, like spider and like bee...

Unfunctional for self, though forming gain;
ative. Free-willed or not, man goes his way.
reckless of danger, evil spirit
of plotting enchained peoples, struggling
in life, for life... fellow prisoners
with me, a bliss-fooled man denying:
“Me—I work in sunbright airlit places
or in darkness, married then or not;
but when an opportunity, I work.’

This proves my first-met enemy is self,
most dangerous and first to be knocked down.

Oh! man of business, returning here
from fields in dusty dress to live
duress and hardship, duty paid
that God of Need.

Oh! voices of the misery, prosper-
ity—and crux = to be or not to be.
For life is out of chaos and sharp strife;
yet, ways of life might be much better.

We flutter flylike round a lamp
of business... to last bewilderment.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Life

Life as direful solitude
on an old mine-dump farm;
direful as a war,
as a black-starred night—
and arduous as travel.

Life, rough as a rope, as toil,
as jagged rocks,
direful as abandonment
in a desert place.

Life, direful as a shipwreck
on a star-dead night—
as a frozen integer—
as an isolated fortress guards.

Life, harsh as armed strife,
direful as the sword,
victorless victor,
glorious—but dust.

Life, abandonment in struggle
beneath guideless heavens
of frozen stars...
life cursed by bliss.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Shepherds and Birds

Much happier must have been
the man with slow oxen,
or with pipe and flock,
than he with machines
now in this atomic age.
Most happy, old-time men lived,
uncrowded for homes, where
now they mass together.
Idea's plough
is furrowing here all
the untilled broad areas... passing.
Then, the shepherds under the spruce trees
did sing early birth of God.
While now, faithless, they sing war;
the birds sang
the coming of dawn;
now they sing only of death.
Inanimate, like stones, are men...
Much happier, lived the farmers,
than these massed in cities,
streaming where roads give freedom—like rivers.
Now there is no place and space for us;
now there is no thing to delight.
Nascent-formed cities have no homes and shops—
as with bird-populace, bettering us.
The birds and shepherds hold a faith, a goal,
they know their way with the soil.
Oh, rustic pastoral hours,
return and enliven again desert Earth!
Return Pan's sentient sounding pipes, to announce
with divine strains again coming death for Europe.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Mountains of Memory

Mountains of memory
I comprehend as a know-
er who walked lone there
under the sun.
I walked lone there
into the blue-and-white solitudes
under proud spruce trees
of healing strength.
The desert raven knows me,
and voiceless stones,
and deeps.
One white cloud held the beauty
in passing over my head
where a free eagle soared in his flight.
The valleys, ravines, crests—
all these held for me visions,
the white and clear visions
of youth in my climbing
through the creative light of sun.
The stones of solitude
smell good dawn
and heaven,
Mountains of memory
take substance from know-
ing my dreams of blue facets
and white and of diversities.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Mediterranean Sea

You've seen, immortal Mother, Med-
iterranean sea,
all the tears of our people, all
the outpourings of blood...
I, bending, kiss your waves and hear
your far-past roarings, long ago.
I hear sing your first child
in that morning of loss to you,
having borne the Mycenaic age...
Aegean too... While sailing ships
here were ploughing in your face these folds.
Hail! our great Mother, who rocks
the old dream of one true world in her coas-
tal blue... Across her has passed
Alexander, at the last to lose dreams.
And she has rocked the fleet
of Themistocles here.
This is she, living cradle of all,
and of our living culture.
And now granting passage to en-
emies, though brother-men...
While she holds the eternal Greek mind,
can hope for cosmocracy die?
That's the voice of a broken world—
vain voices of Greeks and of others...
for the oracle told
of what happens again,
how this world must have meantime this suffering.
Let me kneel on your beach one last time,
alone here anointed in holy baptismal,
and bathing my face one last time.
One day shall see again from you
new birth and stirring people,
as then where first was seen the three-
span rainbow craft of Phenix,
as causing there softly first morn-
ing's fresh furrow on those tranquil waters...

in that morning there first passing over...
Hail! our great Mother, who rocks
 our old dream for one world.
From you, the sullen haughty men have passed.
From you may now emerge again the one
 new world, from the olden gods.
You have purged out the slavers, both thralls
and the bold men who slaughter the helpless,
and the pride of the British has turned into dust.
 Oh! thousand-aged, your shout is I.
You hold the blue dawning destinies
of the days of an immortal world.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

The Vain Invocation

(To my first friend, Ruth Cain)

This poem is a funeral ode to our age.
It is a vain invocation of our soul
in the dread dissembling mind of this century;
it is the turning from life to death.

(This man here is a wild beast...)
In this hallowed while, with my friend, Ruth,
as at home in Delphi, sometimes,
shape my life again—
Oh! God of vast alonenesses.
Return boyhood days,
which then flowed like a clean brook—

return days when I rode on the donkey
singing like a free bird.

Blessèd as initial passage
on this journey, as a dream;
Now that all my being
is laid bare through tears and in pain,
and I'm crying my lost liberty...
now that years have foreclosed from me
my young days, heavily barred by an iron gate...
Let that boyhood restore my life,
this hallowed while with white lamb
and gold pipe, here on rock of Parnassus,
so peaceful and unwarlike.

(24 August, 1948)

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

A Letter from Me to Norma Carl

I don't know which first should be obeyed here:
whether cries from corporeal need or from mind;
whether voices from impulses crying to be,
or those voices for writings, today maybe lost.
Preceptor, my old man, admonished me in these terms:
'Let go your fruitless writings'—
I don't want to be heedful of him;
rather, poor as my country, I shall live now,
patient as her struggle, as my ancestors...
one frugal as those, like our peasants.
All people about me are seeking substance;
but hardship is my destiny—of trial solely.
I am poor and have no money to publish a book;
however, I am wealthy in sentience.
I have no money to build a home—
having children and family needs—
'Yet, I have not despaired entirely;
for I feel that beyond all of these,
self-delusions, there lies a true life of mind.
I feel that nothing remains here forever
and all being is harsh birth, to lose
more than lets destiny partake of!
Our life is a dreadful darkness;
our life is a joyful play;
only in friendship may be intrinsic
beauty which gives us validity's troth,
as the sunrays breaking with light
dark brows, to impenetrate dim souls of man.

So these letters to me are coming
as if rays of light to my deep darkness,
as would voices of words out of your soul,
from soul to soul in the desert world.
Beyond each marked occasion and mere advantage,
there lies an eternal friendship...
Beyond an eternity, there stands the decent life;
beyond that eternity, there waits privation and truth;
a fissured hope only, piercing the impassable night.

For always here in this world, the first prize goes
ever to quackery and unkindly acts.
The people must rise one day to better.
It is not a toil in vain to write.
Good-bye! Farewell!

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Only a Meeting

Life is a window to yesterday,
only a meeting;
one way to the future.
Present above, waits
the bird of life
which is ready for flight.

Life is a meeting, a glimpse:
a lost moment of spring;
a trial of labour;
a dreadful truth
which embodies a dream,
endlessly dreamed.
And I am merely a dreamer,
like those others about me,
only protagonist dreamer
with all these partaking shadows
in the stratagems of life...
only one dreamer...

Our voice speaks in solitude;
our life strives in terror;
in fallacy, we live;
our life brings disguised pretension,
only a meeting...
Only reconnaissance of high mountaintops.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Denial

The climate of loss and waste
now has closed on our days;
the bitter arrows of violence
have nailed us in them;
about me is all error
and illusory hope.
Here lies the soft road,
and therewith bad;
we form the villages, cities
nations, the immortal people;
the voices of the world
which are sounding as one river;
I know the climate of great grief
with storm, darkness, wounds and tears.
The close torrent of red blood;
here is both victim and oblation-changer;
here is borne voice of this broken world,
the guardian breath and substance;
I feel myself part of an endless dream;
I approach the adits of death.
I and last silence; and tired shadows.
Where is the joy of life?
Where is the gate of life?
This poesy is nailed fastly with arrows of hate;
it cannot rise up, lifting man,
who now holds in his hands the machine,
to carve likeness, graving God,
prime ingratitude.
Grimed by sweat and blood
which drips down his belly,
most ungrateful of things.
He makes our climate of storm;
we are seated upon margins
down where voices of worlds
softly are stilled.

We are the infertile denial;
we make this wild climate,

this dark climate,
where it blows and shakes off everything.
The climate where the bad displaces good.
The climate where thrive blood-drinking criminals.
The climate which Nike told us brings death of God.
The End.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Mother Country

At night the Bardoucian shepherd plays his flute;
around the flocks slow sweet strains of his grief flow...
As my country once,
he is mourning by this song his lost freedom—
the proud spruce trees and hollies,
the osiers and meadows and valleys
up in the high mountains of his mother country.
Oh! highlands of swift hilltops and slopes,
I love thee with his pathos in this night
of nostalgic pain in my sharing with him.
I sing for thee from depths of his sweet flute.
My voice, as then, is lost
in her boscaige... I, frugal as a shepherd,
thus as singing for thee,
become old mountaineer now,
who in a far-gone time scaled high peaks,
should not ever have aged.
He here on this hillside sings,
thus empty, day-crumbling and sleepless
as I, by sweet flute—breathing soul.

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Waiting for My Aged Friend

Neo Bojiati, 29 August, 1948

At noon when I lie down with eyes closed
under the sky and the pine tree
standing alone, like me, in this valley,
I hear dry treads of falling thrombs
as a murmuring fugue theme.
After light sleep I get up
and await customed passage
of a new elderly friend
who is called Mitsos Milonas.
He every day and night breathes
this clean and fresh air;
this final day states:
“I am a man of the mountain
and would have you do as I say:
Early to bed, early to rise . . .
that makes one healthy forever.
Following which, you walk forth;
for in movement springs life.
Nothing other—
you go do as I say;
Good-bye!”

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

Alma Mater

Neo Bojiati, 27 August, 1948

Life is nourished by the dream
and the dream by earth, mud and worms;
life is a chaos, worlds-bottomless gulf.
No one interprets their sense well:
birth and caries, life and death and waste—
the feelings which are filled by clay and stone
and light of soul which becomes dust—
the chasm which never is bridged,
the road to the desert.
Myself or ourselves who found motherling, this plunge.
Myself, comprising all earth's tests,
lies prone now, flat in the dust.
Hermit or pilgrim voyager's the sane;
for by neither, gains one strength everlasting.
And now I am singing the chaos that is thought,
and the music of the non-existent consonance.
I am the memory which has been dust,
he that became the voiceless desert;
I am the flame of vital breath that's void-lost,
I have been the endless source of this humanity;
the Alma Mater, eternal Greece! . . .
All things are coming from dream and chasm;
all our thoughts are coming from them,
that is the dreadful truth.
This beauty is nourished by this fleshly sting;
it is grown from earthly body;
that which is ugliness in me, forms this beauty in you.
And my chaos is your rhythm
and harmony of the worlds.

Oh human sage, oh human dolt . . .
this man and his struggle with this nature
this man and his struggle with this life.
His epic, dramatic wrestling with himself.
All these which are spawned and improbable
and incredible.

The man and the voice; the voices of instinct
and the voices of mind.
Flows through world, what's partly joy, part sorrow,
the dread deep,
the voracious deep,
the unyoked deep
the black the dark, that abyss
of instability and incohesion
and this death.
Oh! Alma Mater Europe, thou shalt be early dust.
However, thy dust shall be again in light;
thou shalt be some time a dead body,
old, holy Alma Mater—
and after awed quaking terror passes, Earth
shall again make the New East of the world,
Leader and Mother;
though never she yokes with her gold bridge the great chasm! . . .

Publication. English version by James Boyer May in *Modern Greek Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1954).

SELECTED POEMS: 1950–1955 (1955)

The hand-set Inferno Press sequence

Lamia: 1950

The crawl of that conspicuous year yawned widely
upon toy-counters of atomic play;
and yet, the ivy-hid prognosticators
were not agog.

They coolly noted suns had glowered setting
through ages known for lusts of murdered days.
..» Well, Spengler'd told of such, and forms of fate had
declined before.

For Jews and Medes and Greeks had stripped long veils from
old worlds—with this, but second scene of nine;
and Norsemen's myths had passed down, wisely rinsing
those twilights' bloods.

Depressing-hued must seem the veins of men who
there married larger bombs... and Toynbee wrote
in curtate cycloids tracing turns to prove that
no sun stays set.

To sad-eyed Europe's pleas, such nimble provings;
and who'd prefer an ascan plain so shade-
less?... Oh, horisoned sun, refulgent, warming!

Pray, watch charmed shapes
of shadows where new furious fighting poets
were baking there those catalysts to mix
elixirs never known to rhyme before—
and Chaucer fought.

And having laid grey eggs of death, young pilots
then sang more sweetly of old garden rapes.
And wouldn't Hiroshima pregnate them? And—
yes, hadn't green

come back?... Lo—nitwits too, and wheezings beastly
thence odored conclaves where they talked of peace,
how dragon's teeth need not be sown those nights—yet
digestive shades.

of second molars slanted moistly deeper
where all those ivy-hidden thinkers stayed too long

in situs there behind those cautious casements,
till nova flamed.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Acceleration

Thrive by passage, moving
always... moving where ob-
struction's breathless...
taking flight's quick moment
anti-pause intended.
Bride of even faster
motion contemplated—
now invention's shaped her.
Oh! swift four-flushed freak of
circumstantial speed—these
maddening beds have jet-pro-
pulsioned aftermaths.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Undedicated

Unless we every wit revolt,
ideals shall surely snare us;
all model souls shall sweat,
due homagers to Romes,
so framed, and so, and so,
upon exalted patterns,
first Plato, then the bear, and last the food-dispenser.

They thrust upon our want such bland inducements:
What good is good, if goods are undivided?
Don't goods divided warrant bliss?
The suspect men have clever virile glands;
oh, watch they do not procreate ambition!
No pains bite sharper than the pangs of birth;
rest here, unfeeling, uniformed.
How snugger soothe you fair to die?

If life you love, disgorge!
Yes, vomit forth in haste
this jellifying ideality,
before it stiffens in your guts
and makes you prayerful thank the orthodox
forever.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Corn as Essence

Feeding of porkers is practical prayer;
otherwise bacon forms leanly from blessings.

Provender and higher grace,
the pitch of man's afflictions—
lend us uncharacteristic sight
to measure the nutriment's good.

Luring as corn to the hogs of green heaven,
lights of the chapel of science's credo.

Secularly bright with facts—
no guessing spires, prosaic
data in moment-to-moment view,
translating creation's signs.

Language is tallow for reason's trim candles;
thought cannot flame without words for the lectern—

habit's warm embrace of verbs,
unprescient voweled roundness,
validly hardened semantically
to manna-filled prayerful wands.

Dreams of white candles from lard off the pig meat,
formulae, gruntless, unsquealingly met—

instrument, accreted God!
Analogy—and rendered
scathlessly pure now, unsmelling grace
with orthodox ultima sound.

Kneelers to phrases of habit and science,
captivated to fatten new droves for the word troughs—

crowd then without real ideals,
munch droolingly sanest deductions.
Grow to sure tapers on doubt's curtained shrine—
and drip to the vat of the damned!

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

The Day Has Come

Consuming stone, their coffins—no
mere mummies kept, for memory
of niggard martyred quaestorships
of wisdom coins. Beneath grey bar-
oque chamber walled with porphyry:

panopticon encompassing
three Fascist bastard monsters carved
from purple lava...

Next candidates ascend declining
sword of book-crowned mountainside...
They'll write in majuscules profound,
fine abstruse meanings from
cramped terms of application,
by quick-eyed rules of learned vergence bound.

Who carved three purple monsters—
Wise dolt, free THRALL, and BROTHER STRIFE?
That's all observers ask today.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

The Hotel Party

Elwes' tower to mercantile pander
with lift-car of Mammon and red-button numbers
to halt it at floors of sleek barter.
A fun-fingered loaf-maiden strokes them,
 while we vibrate ascending.
Revertive anthemion dollars,
rich chromium frieze of her car,
this procuress decorously presses
 on mixed-number redness.

We pass to the floor of spiced whoredom,
through brisk scissor-doors of perfume,
a refuge of dilettante magic,
of deft-angled wonders; and puerile,
 staid others, unpracticed,
unsensing real arts nor of letters.
Receptive white palms hug our own;
bland essence of cocktails commingling
with odors of under-arm salves—
and nearby, intentional music,
another bored nickel inserted
in pore of dull popular moment.
At this bar for inebriate samplings,
raping tongues will reverse all finesse;
 though, constrained with first drinks,
seeking eyes parry postures of culture.

Fast chatter and proffered hors d'œuvres...
crowded dissonant faked British accents...
some questions of import cathartic:
 What commerce does one do and where?
 Whose merchandise sells BEST
 And why?

And making Paris on devalued pounds
exchanged in Geneva and—nothing
else will trouble a person of round sense.
And should the exchange make him worry,
an able psychiatrist remedies that...
 Rich supper for glibness—

pale shrimps and young capon, rare steaks,
with clatter and yammer. The chit
 for it dribbled on neckties...
How replete over frettingly problems,
if new wars and some rabble go hungry in Asia?
But more drinks soon will nudge on drab answers
and ruin cute fun of mixed numbers.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Surrogate

(A Study in Modern Culture)

This counterfeit's defined by semblances
which fix not what ensues bright duplicate
aluminum and hollow shining house-
 ware symbols. Adding cheers for wres-
 tling champions, past archwayed gates
 of sweaty stadia... Relax then
 ventureward through mirrored bars,
inhaling rolling-bellied songs
of heterosexual maidens with long breasts...
 add night-late flights along
 gold-flashing boulevards
 in high-gear'd misdirections.

Lo! here one sits, red-lovely yoked,
crooning into five blue telephones
in close-ranked drill on desk parade,
with button-summons for a sloe-
eyed secretary's dashed epitomes
in wired shalt notebooks. Nervous clowns run corridors
of apparitioned omened form.
See Triumph's bloody countenance? Pellmell
 ahead, white chariot desk!
Minus charioteer, ahead
of weeping captives where matriculants
adore prize mass curricula...
 and every hour served,
 if senselessly. Pomaded
 tailored flourishes of
 'bright-appareled egress.
Through anachronistic shams...
insensitive, though naked-robed and counter-quoted.
A paralalian link through interval
 of undelved prophecies,
he's ego-censored, smelling incensed
shouted-silent purposes; mere smoke
 enwraps these seeds of utter

cigarette survival,
non-gratuitous inter-
course of commerce, procreating
spurious-dollar man...
His book records no mysteries,
in spite of Paracelsus.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

On Defining Subversive Citizens

Patriotic show of zealot
chauvinistic hands
has cast into each market place
 pink ostrakon,
rejected fragmentation
 for writing which
quick names intelligence has
earned dull hatred from the ignorant.
My country not of thee
these warranties of banishment
to independent thought;
for Thomas Paine and other
dangerous men who fathered us
held never fears for chippings from
intolerant-lawed chalices
promoting universal state.
Tyrants spring not sportlike
from whom break set rules.
Again, erred farce of banishing
Hyperbolus—Nicias
joined with Alcibiades
to villify all men who won't:
approve triskelion seal
of conquest, trin-
ity, emasculate,
of dollars, demo-cratic votes,
 and bureaurcrats.

Democracy!—how breed
essential cranky critics
in deserts where rich oil wells flow
obediently for chewing gum?
Before ten days have locked smart trunks
for travel of so brash and raffish
culture into every continent
for ten long testing years,

inquire who stops at home
to tipple on returns.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Of June Necessity

Where green, ensue close whirring blades,
to lop and mangle succulence of summer...

Later, leap chill flickering
sprinkler sprays of night-pall, so
that cockcrow sun may cook shorn grasses, steaming..

sweet green death endued
for staggering bugs to wade,
before quenched midday steep in sick-
ish haybarn odor, fryingly.

Moreover, once steel music cuts
to quiet in mown freshest afternoon,

charm's fastly wilted
in greenest moistly shades.

Wet second twilight bleeds no chlorophyll—

top grasses yellow in warm dark.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

On Lost Heroism's Frustrations

Repurposive endurements endlessly
soar, eoning fulfillments in
 blue stellar places
where nebulating fires whirl lightless—
but for eyes eternal-blind,
 on world like ours.
We strain sight, strive to find
what verges on cold violet dark
out there amongst white turning spheres
ellipsing countlessly in time's
 far-lost dimension...
while inner conflicts spell
indulgence for rude primal vandals
whom some Freudists cite as too repressed
 for virile animals.

But where's fit cause for approbation...
 curving backwards
then, by Darwin dial? Nor by measure
 of high sentiment
of foregone super-abnegation...
'gat by galaxies or—
 by nuclear view—
 wrong climbers out of space.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Ad Hominem

Tall concept always imitates
the act. No wilderness inspires a march...
nor speculative minds inspired to blaze
wise theory marks on boles of history
 before achievement's interpassed.
Else, men would never serve in lotteries,
 conjoined to follow and to fight
 until their homilied descent,
catabasis, sad consequence of triumph...

Between ravines of sense-split orisons,
 juts fond-deluding Trebizond,
where viewed that prayed-for ocean Odyssey.
 But premature-wept thankfulness...
 for swallowed up at once,
 'good evil and bad good—
 and whether lashed or led.

Pore closer then in Xenophon's
far Cyropaedic narrative...
 Greeks lost, endure again—
 with specious gratitudes.
Long-sighing suicidal tryst
 that Pantheia there kept
for Abradatas, killed in littoral strife...
 These fancied they moved by wish—
 as men will follow self-regard
 today, toward 'freedom,' if not spoils;
 while after opportunist war,
 all trees of prejudice are axed
to mark new trails no politics foretells.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

To Long War

What spring's incarnate here?
Fecundity but manifest
 in loving atom bombs...
and for chilled thousand years from fate,
what freedoms at the U.S. bargain sales
or peerless Russian heaven, Kremlin-bound!
Whoever wins, what more rhapsodic gain
than gothic front on Strawberry Hill?
Across the polar wastes, what fundamentals?—
embattled continents to meed this fud-
dled history, this century?
O—hyperbolean differences
 those beauties disparate
as those of Cuzco, Mycenae...
perhaps long plunge from rock to sea,
and fast-won deaths for saline worshippers...
And wouldn't Hypnos be a fitter god
 than bright Apollo here?

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Estivation

(Réchauffé)

Adust, brown rock-sharp crouching morbid mountains
 pore over these
 from thirsty mistless heights;
perpetually relentless skies
 shape canopy
 and backdrop
for torpid long-indulgent sands
 which lap enverdured place
 of holiday oasis
 without submerging it.

Here, air-conditioned fagtail bars
entomb each last resistance,
in parities through autumn days
 which never cry—
 but, rose-clear every dawn,
unmournful blot out fervid stars and then
 extinguish Venus and
 an hibernacular moon.

The listless wealthy, come to rest; but tired,
 they diddle with desire
 which won't reglow in them.

They play unsentient in dim chromium haunts
 where only jukebox souls resound—
not knowing that their shrinking earth but rolls
 in wavering ellipse
in varied annual routes about the blaze
the desert valley greets diurnally.

No cycloid certainties,
 no circle-borne returns.
They placid wait, as though for young resurgence.
 Aged moneyed derelicts, they slurp
 on teenballs at brass rails
where cancered verdigris denies them.

No draught restores voyeurs who can but coddle

vague desires
to squint at wearily when gin-dry morn
overtakes their trials,
remote displaced in time.
Here next may glare an imitative sun
as impotent as sex-numb boredoms
which vacant watch
two homosexual
tortured ancient antic boxers televised
(they pummel feebly each
the other wornout ardent bleeding
face).

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Genius Populi Americani

My country, 'tis where not-
so-mystic twelve's libations
pray shuffle-rooted plantings yield
fat juicy-fruited affluence.
Presiding genius of this wealthy state—
oh, grant discerning fraudulence
to hear each least susurrus
hint sophistical
where which billboarded piedmont
next rebuds the easy dollar!
Some Mizpah vantage grant to them
above so-needy-searching fratres—
proxenos' aid in Latin climes
where versatile investment earns
twice more than pensive scholarship.
Topographical percentages,
steep price-exalted hills—
between which causeways soar,
where paupers may be ever gorged
on rich-oiled hash of Cadillacs'
spare parts by swabbing cash-
lined curbside spittle-pots.
Geniculate entrepreneurs
are best-clothed jugglers here—
they swing smart shifts, full-profitting
each stichomythic intercourse
of harlot law-inflicting ghouls.
The topmost key-voissoir intends
a connotative arch above
arvales greenly-verdured,
multi-branched, indentured to
a soil whose every inch is profit-seeded.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Reflection After Empire

Bitumen flanges of this living track
burn Congo flames, low brown in color,
painingly by blacked crowds of banyan trees
seeing how purposely resentments spread
to Burma. Darkest continent won't hold
such fires, nor white denials quench them
in mid-ocean; for every isthmus shorts
the circuits with steel strictures.

Not red names of movements, but
their common knowledge of rapacities
enduing hatted bosses of
those bareheaded gangs which
built these roads.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Ossia

Incredibly, ideals of bomb-feared noons—
 here, volent blooms should scintillate,
men supplicate annihilative plans.
Restore they Dorian syssitia?
 What disciplined inversions!
 Blessed sodomies! This bread,
 to idealize catastrophists—
 the samely sort who mouth it mumbling,
rigid soldierly in firm-struck ranks
against spare Spartan threats of Soviets
they imitate and wish to parody.

Hear Creon's voice through Sophocles:
"Obedience due... unjust or just
commandments... pay it and be governed
well...deny the fiend of Anarchy
 which ruins states... preserve
 the ordered host alive!"

Alive in what? Alive for what?
Whose children eating whose planned loaves?
No haze of death from threatened bombs—this wraith's
invisibility seeps into each
 in noon of modern Athens. Feel!
Means subjugate those who do
this to themselves. Where martial Greeks
today? Whose house turned out of doors,
oh, Sophocles? And Plato too—
What state-approved tunes resound?
Which circumspected dance ensures
wise mimicries of safe considerations?

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Strayed

(Concerning Some Post-Poundians)

All around this locus of drouthed searchings,
pale-caution-tintured maps of longitudes
 of pages others scaled—
plains they crossing scrawled on there
 with aptly-trod pretense
 of richly-greening print...
just type sticks, for grey altitudes.
 Arid dun-inked pens—
no blooded courses, running love...
parched streambeds, marling stilled, ensilt
about dulled whitenesses of bones
 afloat unmotioned there.

 Binomial by Eros
 as necessity...
 but integers cannot
expand by sterile radicals,
 equated minus rains.
Season for attainment needs
 mersive contacts also—
 dactyloid, creative.
 Forswearing waters perish...
 As well, addition's desert—
better that—for there, oases
practice palm-tree dactylology,
dependably, against blue skies;
and sparkling liquid daemons deep inspire
some re-enfoliated libertines
 of conscious artifice.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

The Chief Delusion

Death is a place; but not a country.

Days are events; and not of measure....

 In them, next that place, is where

 all concepts meet all consequence.

When the forest makes a blue room,

pond reflecting sky in narrow clearing,

 true isolation's recognized...

 that always-place of mirror-last-

 ing knowledge. There, green rushes make

 their counterparts. We see the sub-

terfuge, and sense how they reflect us

 (or we do them)... how bountiful,

unstrait, may be each passage into no-place.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Early L.A. Morning After Freeze

Oh, merrily, bright fore-damp lustre
of faked sheets of bastard winter
when pale southern sun first lights
 cold father frost across
 greyed lawns and darkened tiles
of modern real estate development!
Still stand, crisp blackening heliotropes,
as pointing where sky-chariot rides;
and briskly, little dogs do squirt
 their fore-day duties, smelling
wisely where some parking lover tossed
a crumpled whiteness from an hurried
wasted need. Here still, cold damages
of night lie undiscovered... weak
appetites distraining primal urges
while mock-virile impulse decks
descendants of dull subdivisions.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Beachside Affair

Down to sighing sea by avid night...

Across black serpent waves, a low
enpurpled star demarks horizon west
where hampering daytime sun has dropped...

Within wet dark and lichen-odored cave,
embracing thighs of carnal moment's blessedness...

All heat of afternoon boils through the loins,

while hiss of surf beats one-to-ten
for charging blood, which via vena cava
always fills swelled heart again with knowledge
after facts.... Till, leaving last that place,

before slow tide, while lingering
to gaze at Jupiter, that princely pimp
once glorified as Merodach,
because all women—then as now—
rejected lust's realities
in bedrooms of white burning sun...

Like dripping-uddered sea-cow mothers still,
their primal urges sanctified,
these appetites for easy pleasures, close
as blood to bone; some godhead make of
itching-rendered searched significance,
relationship to vision, each
poor watel of experience
upon a seashore couch. And each
engenderment to find that early eastern moon,
reminder both of god-sun and sure boundlessness—
no prostitution role.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Tree Time Was

Analogy-sic, balmless: knowledge
of a toe-strong ancestry...
and similar to blaming glands
for mental aberrations
hibernated through one's years
of wastrel learning. What one wants
is reassurance there's a brain
 that's stouter than a toe...
 that one now can dominate
 one's glands, and be a man.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

This Pageant Present

Dark other streets are lighted for this fool-
ery of crowning this Elizabeth...
where dimly daylong centuries
have crowded hungry masses (no
cathedrals), and long foggy dawns
have seen belligerence of emp-
ty bellies... never diamonds, nor am-
ethysts embroidered on whose gowns.
Oh, tempora, indeed! Which crying need
of culture's met by womb-infested pre-
sent day descendants of these after-
gloried namesakes of a virile past?

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

On Modern Perspicacity

White planes in flight—tautologous—
portend beak-sharp resorts to dark-
nesses of air-raid-sheltered
words in labyrinth...
undivinely conjectured
known to every gas-masked reader of
new verse! Which images demand
rare vision in translations?
What merds of brown definement,
such late blue-sky-drunk rhapsodies?
Must every pilot vibrate sole-
ly to connivances
of treadle-wheels of brookish platitudes?
These motors roar confusion; but
unvaguely through mist metaphysic,
inscribed to shorn combustions.
More minds relate by spirit than
by mawkish owls of woodsy cunning...
or conning snapshots of old snowy
egret clauses.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Scrutiny

Each face of evil is neglect;
no circumstance makes summer
 falling leaves... but failed
intentions of some husbandman.
And when some generation's
 ugliness has awed
prognosticators of the doom
of man, why doesn't one of these
take heed which legends are
repeated oftenest in beer-
halls of our time, whose ways
of making love are tried as
best examples... where books
are being burned for honesties?

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Stays Not

Those who would be fasteners of time are fools;
it will not fasten.

Never aspect makes an ending,
for every one is ipso facto more.

No stopping time's expansion, act to act,
and endlessly resolving,

leaving else for changing ever...

will on will to kindle new-bent worlds'

varieties, expenditures,

and neoteric forms and sounds

and colors, interventions limitless.

What reason so? Why never entropy?

Each act demands new purpose by new being;

action is becoming—has to form

awarely knowledgeable

containless life. The latter

quite impedeless... always is, was, shall

enact a farther being, never dying

burster of whatever hinge defines.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Love Among Us

Liaisons poetical
are not sodalities,
but bitterness, wrong for-
titudes with poisoned barbs,
holding hands beside cold ditches next some other
poet's road, to jab him on his way to death with
quoting tongues. Oh, charity! identified with
shirking of one's duty: rendering more intense those
sufferings which bleed the richest verse.

Intended was this way; so
make no concordance for mutual readings—
meet no common ground for loved discussions—
scale no peak together. On/y one may
climb long narrow back of only mountain—his.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Are Bigger the Better

Apt comparisons of what with which
 grow rarer with time's progress—
 as (most likely) bombs are instances.
 Speed makes much with speed, and yet
 meaning only speed, not faster;
 for, to see this needs a size,
 and eyes are never comprehensive.
 Nor brightness—for the sun's the only.
 Were it quite unparsing dull,
 in sky so master-mixed invention'd stop,
 we'd be just less encumbered with
 new whatnots of effulgency,
 for what-of laughter. Think
 an instant which utensil
 has a sum (of anything)...
 add all size to sizes (anywhere)...
 then make a prayer for guiding who've
 gone crazy building sky-high fire!

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Slice of Death

(A Memory of a Military Camp)

Where am I?... Who am I?

Who was that, back there

I seem to be related to—

in conscious tried conception only...

Which pole of being? None—

just marching-school to bend
illusion toward an assignation

over waters purposeless,

if purposed by war's masquerade

of living. This between-land where

the will is overridden,

learning other selves decide;

and other-letting, till sore feet

beat heartwise unison—or hearts

tell numbers to the feet. All time's

become mere meeting of commands.

Here, thinks no baffled moment's solitude,

unless tight cot at night—and snores and sighs

there multisound, and sleep-drugged voices speak

of where had been whose homes? Or were

these ever entities? Or self-

deceived, where commonplace?

To so deceive myself

again! And test this will

to turn my own invention of

command's delusion, some one single

choosing of a way to stand!

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955).

Discussing Dreams

Another self, or truly self?
Those problems fought in antic
circumstances there on myriad
 ladders through long tunnels
 which are found suspended
 where one boards weird Pullman
 cars for homes in cities
never seen by common sense of
day... and yet, in waking, also
conjurable... events still turning
on that frame of other actions,
past mere knowing reference.
And will these wondrous places
all confirm translations into
other meanings? Holds each tumbled
bedtime, only symbols? Or may
loveliness and horror factual
 wait us there our dousing
 of that final taper?

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

Love of Country Defined

In fond embrace of symbol,
kissing nothing-self, whose self
attenuated growth in
speciousness which lends illusions
of security for what

was never first secured.
Not other than, say Sam
or Uncle Bull, my Johnnie boy—
there's no one there—no
parent nor majority
nor king nor tribal chief—
just father-image, un-
predictable intended deeds.

Reversed, participants in power
neither act those acts they claim to act.

Who paints fine signs: "PUT OUT
All fires... no SPITTING ON
The sidewalk... smoking HERE
Prohibited?"

Anonymous that hand, as reaching armed
from corporation octopus, obese
and tendonless and flexing never
muscles, roll on roll...

sightless, yet is always
there and prying unctuously
into affairs such as what does
or does not happen in a wedded bedroom night.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

What's Future's Past

A store is for gulled future strength,
no matter what the food.
A needless contradiction here?
Then why do stores lie rot?
Anxiety's the key—
its blight on every act,
as worm which may already creep
within fouled meat of holed-safe nuts,
or munch on mustily about
germed core of apple-doom.
On hearing tons of butter have
gone rancid, ponder semen shot
against avoider's closet wall...
misunderstanding life's the same.
Each bin of beans or what, laid here
pretentioned to defeat some fu-
ture of misfortune? Yet,
misfortune always dwells in pasts,
and all that burdens coincides
with very stores' security!
Present only, as sensation, rise
those selfsame fears, denying now,
cringing after memories,
wasting what a future offers,
dying over other deaths...
and storing then but falsity,
because the worm gnaws ever past,
is never overtaken, and
must always so defeat those frugal.

Publication. First collected in *Selected Poems: 1950–1955* (Inferno Press, 1955). Reprinted, with minor variants, in a later collection represented in this edition.

COLLECTED LATER POEMS

(1957)

Later poems and the closing selected-earlier sequence; simple reprints from 1955 are represented once

Modern Physicist as Poet Sorting Incongruities

How bone-mure mind within a skull?
For, bonelessly, the senses reach
atomic notions... plotted solid-
dreaming—as of flesh, another
pretense from impelled attractions,
particled unviewably while
thoughts far-swim all aether-waves.

A mind can navigate those seas
remotest ever, promontoried
where great curve of space returns
awash from nothingness abhorred,
as meanwhile had been falsely said
of nature's needed vacuum;
yet, similes are useless, as
to try illuminating where
no eyes have formed... and meanwhile bears
no referents, because that term
of timing, waiting, pausing, conning
guides no truer exploration
than has caused men postulate that
minds are murable and bones less
fluid than is blood... while senses
haul to unportended shores
new theories no sense verifies.

A wise-born folly, like equating
settled destiny with chance
or fact about the universe,
that parallels all meet.
We every one perform as if
we sensed reality—and each
but needs assurance, to be free.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Nebim

Before the day, as after,
 angels speak. This is
The Word, and uttered voiceless
through all time, for listeners...
No hallowed special period
is for prophecy—but
everywhere, as surely
as in temple gardens
 of Eleusis, then.
Departure whence from Crete did
not destroy those powers;
 every thirteenth day
of each September, the eph-
ibi went from Athens,
to return with sacra.
So, with modern science—
but another rendering
of God's great witnesses...
 even blind ones, like
deniers of these very
instruments, so bomb-prepared
to shatter all our columned
porticoes,.. and maybe soon
return to listen to Keryces?

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Questions on Remembrance

Memory's this man,
though not enablement—
not powering any mo-
tion's impulse, if sole guide.

As fixatif
retains, beneath,
lines and shapes and shades...
so, reminded, worn, curved
gelatin of thought,
those neuron images
not any after-glaze
can redirect... but—lustrous—
only rationalize.

Nor should comparison,
pastel-blended,
then be analyzed as
other than a twig or scene...
but like and link of nature—
with man who does it so,
compelled,
as self-created chose
(yet did not) when his life began.

That ever-force had moved in him—
also his art and machinations, all
most deadly of intentions came,
by will drawn will-less in extreme...
composite flux and interchange
and changer, slowly working through
these instruments,
Choice, then free as finger crumbles
chalk to smear intentioned or quick
careless shape of mauve desire.

Each man is nature moving too,
like slow-limbed trees, or sands, swift-sifted
by a tide, or late destructive
hurricane's obliteration

both of men and what they'd formed...

Next, memory there draws
intenser self-delusion... puissant
mystery from back of time,
where none recalls which hour he might
have been—just fought inertia
by movements now gone separately
beyond recall; yet same,
here pushing in him. Habit-
ridden by each stroke,
so rhythm-bent in trillion gods'
recurrences.

Incited and determined while
each choosing's modified
by colors from the under-skies...
unique and vigilant
in purposes, yet meekly gov-
erned, not apart in minute vision...
held to life by shadows of
remembrance, bound and free and here-
imprisoned self, as picture in
a frame whose reference has meaning
only in a certain room,
one certain day—and turning thence,
remains forever, just the same.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Grapes' Wrath

To penetrate storm's blackness—charged
electric strangulation—one
may hymn all endlessness and yet
may never sing one God-shape's love-
liness of natural rightness.

Dogmatic lightnings flash
(externally to rev-
elation—true—but sword-
sharp fires of blazing regulation)
infusing brimstone orders where
sweet scents of love's morality
had July-flowered. Fear
takes shelter under lat-
tices' futility...
Until, in trembling, falls
the soothing summer rain,
envelopes such misfeasances and laves
the guns of thunder into silence and
acceptance, pouring peace on that
most terrible display
of under-viewed conviction.

And miles up there—high overhead—
the golden seas were riding backs of clouds
which scrutinized the dark-
ened earth for signs of God's
growth greening where truth's tides
should spill. Their lowering amplitudes
of minatory black were swollen with...
salvation.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

On Seasonal Incontinence

First monster import: who lets grow
wild tares of lost profusion? When
should providence be fast restored—
and how firm-planted were set rows of habit?

Questions not irrelevant;
yet, wilderness makes inroads everyman,
by seed to root—and unessential,
yowling lynxes in far winter thickets,
Here, in summer onset, lark-
song-watched beside a mannered meadow
where plump cows munch cuds in walnut
shade, here next blue-flowered hedges
tall around new-ripened plot
of grain. Your next-farm acres are as menaced,
if between your rows of staunchly-
stable corn upsprouts pale least
canary, rye-grass, or one thistled purple.
Quick disorder ravages all slowest habit...

near-infecting best-sown field as worst.

Then, how delimit tamer dangers
of abandonment? Which inroads
should be salted where? You say this
land was, such-and-such a season,
purposely plowed fallow? But...
that made holiday, and no re-
laxing of injunctions, Time's
too various to leave one briefest duty
purposeless—to hoe no weeds, nor see that sun
heats only food and beauty greeningly.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

The Demon

Stare in your glass—
read plain your eyes...
What beast tensely crouched in your brain,
in wait for your fire's dying flame?
Like tiger to spring for your rending—
now hungrily watching?
Next, stroke your cheek for faint comfort:
blood courses fuel to replenish,
supporting one life-brand to frighten
one tiger. Yet also, this light's what
reveals what's in darkness beyond—
persisting-eyed menace—
as long as you live.

Each death brings a darkness as deep
as wilderness, demon of self to meet...
and when's burning low, one's own beast
shall leap—and no mercy.
So, pile on more fuel with a drink from
that bottle which soon will pour empty,
while fire of this heart's blazing faster
with stirring. In each darkly death one's
then prey to that alternate ego.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

From Memoried Dream

Close by each living temple's day-
light minaret, aglow
with circulating blood
which rushes skyward, warm
with sun-dreamt purposes
of architravaled sing-
le-morticed jointures laid,
there glooms an altar of dead night.

It's shared in awed plural-
ities of sunken dark-
ness rounding corners of
pretensioned disregard...
which never ever stay
half-easy to distinguish then,
with barriers immersed in sleep.

Each dreaming argues other vast-
er place of worship where both time
and space are limitless,
and entity's no more.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

A Thought for Dusk

At nightfall, when dense hush
and fear-smelled shadows, cooled
from vanished sun, and writhing
similes, dark-circled
ambits of thick low-branched
trees providing ambush
for those always-present
threats to earth-grown creatures
tested where green things have
sprouted from detritus—
dubious-loamed, congealed
where global thrivings mingle...
At nightfall, only animals
should whimper, caged by those
subjective fears—well-founded
true enough—while man's
objective knowledge pierces
dusk and scents new dawning
on that other rim. He knows
earth's moving curve and why
each sun should seem to set;
he breathes from far beyond
horizon that which light-
ens contemplation, rounds
his reasoninged comprisal
more than calendared
existence. To escape
with Sartre from purposes precludes
escape from nightmare being;
greatest danger's in di-
version, touchstone of that
modern mania for
doing that's confused
identify, itself, and caused
us mumble of becoming, while
we lose that precious core, that

simple-mastered knowledge suns
are rising while they set.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

The Stranger Fault

Toes-in logically and tucked
round warm, by even-last, high bed—
 Imbued with well-fed note,
 wise mentor lays night plans...
Blind ways were reasoned soundly if
trained eye-dogs sniffed swift pickets, tugged
them on good routes by trod-hard paths. -.

But with more light, dreamed voiceless strays
lunged counter them, confused each nose,
allowed all sightless wonder dog
to dog. What logic schemed by this?
To stumble over shredded bricks
 and grope slow fence along?
Waked mentor makes another note,
and shivers no desire, and thinks
of hungry days in fog and marvels
how he's lived so long to speculate on death.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Of Final Reciprocity

In wilderness, in darkness, and
in last beatitude—
the shadows mingle closely,
each with hold on each,
and fortified and fortifying... whether fear
of doubt, or certainty,
some solemnest event
in some distrainted existence.
This is life's expectancy,
untabulated... norm, without
a normal. And—for each
accomplishment—prepared for,
certainly.

Go ax your way
through thickets, trim the boles of trees...
taste each bedtime darkness—
for that trial to come.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

A Recuperative Reflection

Strong oak here knows its roots,
though acorns scattered brown on sward.
Less can be said of man who con-
templates this, knowing not his source
for growing, nor why motives should
not range so far beyond—uncon-
centrated then where he has lost
a central-trunked intent for being.

Importance guides each searched extent,
is true; yet matters not—one's tap
of living's depth is close beneath
where one was born ... in soil which feeds
one's cognizance of multiply-
ing there one's shoots and leaves, and green-
varied disparity that marks
this man apart—and never closeness.

For deeds performed should live alone.
Beware bold thought which renders act—
no matter seems divine—one's rea-
soned course toward after-acts, to dwell
half-parted, thence dividing es-
sence from firm-barked identity
of meaning growth's relation to
one's manifest definement.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Of Waiting Habit and Reluctance

Old rabbits snooze unfitfully—

Yet well aware and watching
always, always bateful, ready
wound as any faithful old

Big Ben, their readiness not
set for hours, but circumstances.

Lesson's here involving stasis
(meaning seeming) ... how what rests

holds motion all the time, if
balancing or passing by it-
self ... intently missing trigger
left till some one turn will trip to
movement. This is primal factor
in each self ... and where self's poised to
register waits instrumental
(too, predestining events,

where crucial instant makes them
intervene). Then, WHAT's revealed by
what's there moved, and all becomes what's
lain behind the hesitance to
habit's long repression, by un-
coiling spring or letting leap.

And proving interval should
not hold worry. Quiet, sleep there
like old rabbits. Clocks are hourly,
lifeless, not aware, unwaiting
anything, their habits fixed

by others' machinations.
You're alive; so sleeping *live*,
despite reluctance, knowing habit
meets exciting crucial change.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

What Change Endures

Trenton Limestone's bearing oil today
values falsely algae's
bearing meaning difference
through Mohawkian epoch...

Wall Street's craggy smoke-dark
walls set less than jazz-tune
artifice in Orleans, rendering
New old music on
some downbeat street of never-travel. Let Tradition
yield to poets, or be sanctified to die.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Consider the Coral ...

Leads none and strays not, for straying's forgot ...
clings rather, strivingly, memory-hued,
colorfully-rendered escape in pastels,
warmed in rose depths of the aquamarine,
 where canary-chromed fishes
 flit not a note,
gliding across Dendrophylliac buds.

Selfhood's subversive by rules of the strand—
Madrepore mouths swallow not for a brain ...
permanence only for external bone,
fossilised records. Not one living polyp
 here is muscled for choosing
 positive loss ...
gaining degenerate mutual bliss.

Movement as primary register now—
such is the kingdom of living on earth—
spacious reality used, not just sensed,
tasted or felt, as by tentacled mouths.
 Nor is bone-castle purpose—
 mimic accords,
rearing new bird-perches out of old seas.

Loving is leaving one's lovers behind—
tritely observed by all bardsters of rhyme.
Clinging love's prison, not soul, but the corpse ...
bled since, detritus is left for cold waves.
 In small caves of old hunger
 rots gone desire,
guarding no longer entrance of birth.

Dangerous therapies, harmonies' arts—
occupied sanely, immutable forms—
feeding and venting and feeding again,
hoping for only like formings of likes,
 as Triassic salt medium,

currently bathed,
dreaming conversion to petrified worth.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Tetherward

Mid-men of circumstance secure this trend...
prefer slack chains by elm trees where
tall shade falls softly fair-day noons.
And salt-block's there, mashed meal conveyed...
 no gutless joys pursued,
 never roaming emptily
 with chance—but trampling firm
 their circles munchingly,
 enduring early-morning glare
and evening heat. As round as every world,
 their own—and seasoned too,
diurnally, that place well in that place.
They defecate and wait, unchallenging
and smugly never giving thought
how every END's the same.

 Whose face
is this? Of sheep or cow or pig?
This belly-bloat confuses me.
No spirit's teeth of horse—far less,
fleet venturous goat, a climber.
What mind is, wanders to recall
 progenitors who dared
 some fence-square ambit—
at least less-temporally inclined
when dreaming, if yet meaningful
recalcitrance is limited
to tossing up and down dead links
 when last green sprout
 grows just beyond the snout—
and clinking, pleading for another tree,
 as for another world...
 but never never to be free.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Of Man Who Was

When tall hills give way to morning,
and everglades dry pastures new—
man's extension as His keeper,
 will have served His ends.
Time's importance will be cancelled,
balanced in quick everlasting
photographed impression.
'Post'—as tellers of long tales
by fires, or lounging on divans
in after-dinner hours—all-
in-all, those moments, self-reliant,
 each. No innovator's
 satisfied ... but when
bright heights are sunk, and gloried seas
are waveless, will be always past
(those secrets of achievement). You
 may practice this incumbent
paradise ... you cannot be disturbed
once THE Bomb has shattered you.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Good Here Is Evil

Amorous languorous trust
 in sound principal's lasting
 endowment of living...

But interest's added to death—
 all compounded in tables
 which feel never loving...

Seize lushest bond in translation!
Express its real labor of meaning,
by insisting on cashing this now.

We're aflight in gold, sunlighted facts
anent money and tiger-moth wings
 over young dahlias.

 Go paint such green leaves
 to enable young blossoms...
leaving all munchness to wormers
 in stumps of aged memos for
 creditor fastness.

This is treason for bankers and bores;
but free gardens grow priceless and usury's
Christless. See faithful save false,
while agnostics obey what He said.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Relation of an Unrelated Tutor

Heat broken, irreplaceable...
 What entry re-unite?
 What unit amplify?
There grows no plenitude, when warmth,
 itself, has gone from here—
and certitude unfortified
 has spurted casual stream
which cleverness cannot repair.
Dark rebus holds no mystery—
just fact to overcome, as mi-
nus money or gaunt need of bread.

 We search through parlored splen-
dor as for hint how to resume
 some special mode to ren-
der livable a life which has
 no future use for vi-
sion, nor anticipates a prog-
eny to use some amplitude.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Thither Glow, Yet Darkly Waits

In perpetuity's fancy
there gleam inditedly
far shelters homines
on evening path-pes to
where elder fastness shaded
homophonics comfort cant,
enabling all soft breaths of
autumn-odored musk to waft
back where the peaceful of trees are
rooting new-old wisdoms—
alter-yellowed of leaves,
lasting mellowed of dreams,
 and pleasingly-stemmed now,
immaculately branched,
contiguously reasoned.

June-rarely presaged that
each latter foot must reach
some darker ultimate
than how some men will hope—
that black-there wall of nothing-sight...
nor then nor well remembered?

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Quoth Lachesis

Of unnamed patience; since no
feasance satisfies least need
for naming everything that's other-
otherwise identified...

 This is small bird in tree
 of apricots, beneath which
 lies in June-hot shade
 white cat of destiny... to eat
 no bird so tritely... to
 weave upon telepathy
 what makes each birth a death,
 each death a malfeasance
 when not envied with patience...
 so unnamed,

 Grave misled lives
result when those refuse to suffer
understanding of this paradox.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Pam

Gray lattice fence (by moon), holds custom;
while woodpile wilderness keeps rebel mice...
Grim black cat knave sits highest (loo),
when played, to smash down burdock, singular,
 and shield for mice, where tritely moon-
 light's reverent... disregards bright
squeaks of younger mice, where cut-oak
odors brown impenetrate from past
each mocked-at present personality.
With henhouse odors on moist wind,
rule, ineluctable, which blows decree...
 informs cat Pam, whose eye had seemed
 turned clearly on white clouds, quick-
overpassing next old lemon face of moon....

He leaps athwart cross-lattice, crashingly
tall burdock, clutchingly, before toothed-
boulder chopblock, genius child.
So custom holds high place to wait
 and pounce while moons glow full
 for jacks-of-clubs... to play them
heartlessly, intolerant, by wind-
told sense, a savage act of governed sentiment.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Expediency

Lean struggle knows
of sowish-fattened need—
engenderment for future
anxious hunters' gullets,
heated after circumstance.

Brown shadows of gray barn,
where happy grunts and tuneful
squeals of milk-fed porkiness...
while judicatively, in farm-
house kitchen, hard men sit
well-chewing relatives of these,
discussing now to castrate
growing sentiments, and whet-
ting knives against bleak stone
beside pale sweating bucket, listening
to time and calculating when
sworn sun will light sharp ang-
le for their plotted issuance...
shuffling work-soled treads
across scuffed sill and hard
across dry-rutted summer
barnyard, with blood-frenzied forethought.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Shadow under Glass

(Deed after Plan)

INTERVENTION'S minor
convocants pre-qualify...
This filtered form here carries
spots of small defection,
marring reembodi-
ment beneath complicit-
paned transparency... there
outlined fairly; yet
alloyedly, with dim matters
not its sense.

Permutation's fragment-
ed extension (image
recognized) abstracting
ill intention through mixed
spotted favors, glass-exposed.
Few heed this.

Concept always reads as first...
each image was (to be).

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

River Lending

Desire and entropy
build scraggly tents on delta lands...
where mud-warm Mormons silt through rushes,
bird-song tended, tall and
nesting-fertilized... steeple-
blended, drifted too
(historically) from
plains where mares of preaching
pioneers once raced and vented.

Soon, swift storms from new Miami
blow amok brown tents and birds...
songs then drying sticky
remnants of Missouri morass.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Song for Angels

Who can be not invalid, in some respect?

Hu is only not that...
or blazing hammer-cross with sacred fire
forever burning as the fabled sun
conjunctioned with this special mundane globe
confounded by too many flawless gods.

Of men?—they're ever sick, and
everywhere stay subject to default.
Strong as weak, they each convey
straw dreams, as meant to any, singly.
Stumbling to disastrous triumphs,
stunt by stunt and phase by phase,
they must soon realize a flaw...
their hardest roles are those of signs,
grave symbols of departing flesh,
grieved monishments, accompanying
each fall or breakingpoint where mind,
easiest to cripple dauntfully,
may default first. So, perfect imperfection,
Messianic in the smallest of creation.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Life's Astronomy

All wills which circle
with each setting sun must after
roll round, later east to pierce
 gray flanks of thigh-spread night.
Man's dawns of ecstasy, all whorled
with morning red... each shaft curved toward
hot zenith, where decked afterglow
limns presage for pink-modest twilight
... woman-clouds, All-pleasured arc!
 —that universal sky-
dream of new acts to come, the same,
each dawn advancing—live each night,
when shades may equal every part-
 ing like, and yet dislike....
And this is what each breast
thence springs eternal.

Direction's falsified on spheres,
 where all are born to dwell—
as earthbound, sexually combine,
uncompassedly-directioned...
West runs maidenly? But where
does west then mate, if not in east,
 dark goal of Cadmus' quest,
 that male-formed destiny?
Around, around—all quests here meet!
And east must pass where westerly,
 each motion's there conjoined...
Europa mounts the bull.
And aggregate? Feared mis-
cegenation of desire.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Epiphaneia

Gull on inland pole-top:
both the EYE and beacon.
Representing knowing God,
where every creature sees Him...
Wisdomed candor sentried
high enough to comment
on this fancy... while it
incarnates in confidence of
love, there intimate to
vastnesses of sky, despite
far grandeured seas of storms or wars
where men ignore good gulls.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Concerning Over-Refinement

Hairless hands, like thornless roses
grope ever softly, clutch no
 interstice of time.

Accomplishment must serve where
only careful trellises
provide for facile weaknesses...
 not thumbless—yet small in-
 dexed force in purposes.

Emphasis on pleasure, lacking
contrast and intensity;
 for sun may shine on all
alike, and still so variedly
for each, whatever appetite
for light, absorption of what heat.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Late Season Holiday, at Close

This meaning's chopped, illogic-waved
by persiflage reflections made
 before last light has mellowed
 into sustenance
for reasoned after-salt of night.
Unclosed cloud-shutters over gazed-on sea—
unodored, answerless, and hurting gray.
There, turbulent, undangerous;
yet irritant (the people-waves depart),
 and bright unduplicating...
 merely blinking fast
 refractions of undraped
 retiring sun,

 Dull sands
lie shouldering and cool, in blanked
absorption of such slinking rays.
Unmeditative sea of pop-
corn afternoon, where argument

 keeps ricocheting back against
 plopped paste-formed rows of garbage-
 venting stands and shops...
their owners scraping shut their doors
and frowning at this farewell flick-
ered yellow... spitting at fast talk
 that flavors offshore wind
 and leaves the breakers still.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Psychological Dissertation

An attitude of body may denote the mind:
how one stands or prays or sits or leans
upon the atmosphere, or covers up
one's finitude, or looks toward flown invention.
The eyes flit gestures which the limbs may not;
and stomach-rumbling should be listened for
before the word. Without a bated breath,
could lovers meet? And there, beneath, a heart
 that signals rapidly by beat
 the time which hands lack yet the boldness
 to reach out and touch. Ambition
 is a forwardness of spine, a jaw
 kept shut on hunger after nodding
 of decision... slackness of
 the shifting hips reveals
a looseness in convention... moral firmness
of the sworn intention trips on air,
when shoulders shrug before the fist has clenched.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Time Does Not

Old feeling flesh that melts not,
vehicling peremptory desiring
never, nor burnt-ash-warmed odors
warming that depravity had lain there.
Could this but be *lechered*-brave,

new hope would rise, each sinning
verism blent, then pouring substance
on a thinned-out canvas, where spent
artistry how feebly waits to
trace gay former acts, bold strokes of
which remotely seem were virile
from some other touch... bright other
eyes... inspired by baited turbulence
in flesh that moved with blood of suns.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Where Reaching Not to Find

Intrepid once, and confident,
my vine whose tendrils gestured toward
bright suns soon found red bricks of commonplace
could satisfy. Warmed there, resigned and curled
it clutched old crevices or turned around
 its hither stems; and upward seldom,
 nursing strength, expanding little skyward,
guessing well how distant heavens are,
touched only by staunch cypress tree whose growth
juts independently to feel that blue,
unwincing at noontime zenith pitch
of fiercest sun, which won't be wound
about with tender greenness... Shivering through
 each later night of patience for
 each waning-now short daylight gaze
 which scarcely warms the wall.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Trapped Heart ... by Memory

INCREDIBLY, each satiated mind
reverts to peer through rain-dark panes of pasts.
No present pleasance can forestall that search
for muddy horror, when has cloyed all bright-
est-sunned contrivance where immediacy
turns, hinged on lucent casements, flung to joys
green-napping, lenient under birdsung ar-
bored-congress dalliance (how blithely clipt!).
What lawn may ever stretch out swardless to
changed brink? What change may, conjured, merely fail
with juncture-visaged sunlit like?... No—gray-
ly, bears some dreadful hope of tragedy...
perverse, each ego, cloyfully—because from contrasts only,
reek white roses sweet.
Or color-mixed painted shades between,
where limb-wound passions, searching, press for al-
ternating aspects, breathing spectraled flesh,
warm-moistly... query tears and terror too.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Contrast Adream

In dreaming, dreamed...
In waking, yet unawakened...
Conclusively, confusion leaves
no vague montage of doubting there;
 while what's so sharp-defined
 as noon ingesting lunch,
with last neurotic symptoms quelled
until another queasy morning,
 tastes uncertain... Staired
 cupola ascent
to cat-faced friends... domed marble homes
with stranger servants baking bread...
complexly read participants
 one's never met... while here,
realities of monthly bills
and getting what's to pay them
 raptly still form mystery more
 than lions in pink gardens
peopled by slim fondling hands
of geishas leading one to couch
with monsters under hothouse glass
which steeples crystal greenery.
 So, mischance turns full wakening.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Shadow

That follows closely as a breath:
it leaps and trembles shoulderwise
and trips one's ankles, eel-like;
upon one's wake of transit
by a sun-warm boulder... flat
 and scuttling in the grass,
always heel-near, never leaving
one companionless—but mapping
every movement on that dark observance.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Belief

Grow, lovely rose—by blooming born...
and shadowed keep unsecret death
that withers each unfolding. Blow,
lovely rose, and respite me
forever, each unstopping zephyr
where my world rolls.

Gardens are
as numberless as gardeners,
all are grown in everlast-
ing space, expanding timeless by moved will
which makes each will by virtue of
such acts here forming never cease.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

A Thought of Epaminondas

Instead of junctioned Megalopolis,
adjacent cave now holds the symbol.
What 4th B.C. Greeks kept harbored there,
we are not sure—no more than they
should know the icon from St, Luke,
A monastery thrives in open monster
crypt, protected outpost
purposing dissent from Spartans,
Russ or whom, or modern contra-
Arcady ideas. Madonna-wise,
or back to Bacchus... loves and idylls, all—
and whether amorous or trysting
sacrifice—a right to dwell
in peace with one's own aims, profane or Godly.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Between Ecstasies, One's Love

Longer lower levels starve dull
most of being... even horror
 narrows shallows, else
 monotony clogs
viscera and lead-weights footsteps
shuffling on gray autumn turf, next
leaf-gone hedge and garden bloomless.
 Here, a dragon fright
 or two will tingle
flesh with no desire, arousing
blood to fight, if nothing more.... So,
love should not protest her every
hour, but let her stray a little.
 When bright summit sun
 arises, hill-warm,
fresh-then, plucking, red on freshet
verge (the verdant flesh), she's readied,
greeting heights... and amphoteric,
bittersweet from joy's' escape.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Remind You on the Day of Pul

When the elephant runs mad,
the woman smells Ganesha...
her fears turn reverence... she sees
huge foot upon the mouse, her first
intruder where her child-mind formed.
King purposes are misconstrued
through Freudian deceit that cites
another symbol—not huge feet—
that reared proboscis, super-long,
curved sounding shrilling unstaffed key
for warning Jerichos... foreknown
to trumpet, crumbling walls of maids
to be sate-fallowed deep with salt-
ened ash from ruptured flesh-broke temples.

Publication. First published in *East and West*, vol. 1, nos. 2–3 (Summer–Autumn 1956), pp. 19–20; collected in *Collected Later Poems* (1957).

Having Opened Gifts

There, indeterminate;
but ready, breathing
French cologne and Christmas,
batingly. Because such bribes
are weatherproof in rankest
jungle, mercenary. Hold
my hand, old sweet—and whisper
love, and rediscover lust,
accepting such warm sanctity
as moistened thighs here proffer.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Claimant

I've lost alternative...
It haunts me
since that paradigm's
consequence has

What refuge have I,
now that patterns
are so plain by dark
of pat requirements?
Whose shall rise again?—
what hope-bodings?—
when these strapping
boys have said their vengeful say?

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Desert Song of Lineman

For you I send far now
all paeons dry of love,
while subject humming trees
 here predicate their
 creosoted shafts...
 high-peniled, string
 taut sky-bisecting wires.

Messages unworded guessed,
 enlarged and flaring
off in livid darts
of blue-flamed foliage,
sunflung to sear my eyes,
testicularly burned
 (redoubled torture)
socketed. How can
so Freudian compar-
isons here tremble with
 my unquenched thirst?

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Vision

Transportation moralizes
 actively the sperm. What
 dust has lain is shaken
 from the scrotum; and re-
 vitalized. The phallus
springs erect to justify which
 act portends—innured, im-
 mured, enchased, and fevered
by benevolence to pene-
 trate where purity may
 now be fertilized to
 bear that angel child who
 sang in vain to Sanctus
 where the sexless spheres ro-
 tated, where the senseless
wastrels of encyclopedic
 knowledge watered. These were
 eunuchs, castrate-by-mis-
taking-of eternity for
 presbyters' forswearing
 all Time's glands.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Last Night, Love

Grasped antibody willingness
folds rapture in gray-cloak-
ing subterfuge, where minished
brittle glass imbues
each luscious bite of happiness...
guiled forethought treasures aft-
erthought, thus ominous;
and pleasure tinkles frettingly
with worry bells disgaging con-
centration and conniving with
anxiety... consumer.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Morning-After Psychogenic Guest

Gaunt dulled-tone therapeutic notes
 of night-tossed sleep without
 a love to justify long wakeness;
 bellows-heart, in ambergri
on tropic-ocean blanket-waves of dream-
ings stopped... just where quick beat
here makes slap-oared return through viscous
 sunlight bowering coldly now
 warm darkness where dream's caravel
 has failed indenture for some
respite voyage from evening's dissonance.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Dilettante ... Unreclaimed

Amity for dilettante
forswears all purposes,
bequeathing never patterns—
except where sands are washed
by tides of longer-men-
tioned uniformity. Like
shadow on a misty
day, unsurely even seen,
unless its owner lingers
there from nights to mornings
long enough to gather
reputation by the clock.

Despair itself may be
salt affirmation, if a
clever hand keeps sifting
pretty shells, arranging
them peculiarly enough,
and sitting, buttocks wetted,
grinning languidly and never
walking home to find how
beached exposure's dried him featureless.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Course of Nature Reason

This is ripe meadow—there is the hay.
But close in dark covert sits the wise crow.
He talks to the Susans, brown-eyed watching
where feckless margins grow seeded to weeds.
Purple of thistles outvotes their thorns...
and just so, some coarse notes of idlers mean more
than hummings of bees—though they work hard to hoard
butterful honey. Announcer of breath!—
be quiet as logs next dark thicket's green...
palm their rough barks, while inquiring why
seasons must change. And then doze in the close
and hear the sweet brook... also, lie in dry field
and let ripe the hay. For by our words, caw no
answers—nor laboring by. Let's let
wise crow sound sense, while closing our eye.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Verification (the having) Rebirth

These cannot faithlessly do less...

nor more then, either.

Yes, high tides have borne as far

in January as July—

and faster, lovely.

This was whispered to me lately,

after presences were bedded;

I had no recompense, except

wave on wave ascending,

till I felt their thrilling

coldness, true as only may

be felt upon events,

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Apologue

BLUE-TONGUED mouth, at dawn
drools tattling berry juices
sucked when slumbering-foot-
ed, morning-thirsty, found
 full vine for love.

Sweet-odored, pronely-tangled,
slackly-wed to cling more
raptly shaggy coat
 of bead-eyed prowler—
huge, yet timid, slow, yet
strong-embracing... active
in heat's season, dark or light;
and swift of paw, from dormance through
 caved continence,
last winter's brother-sleep prepared.
And none informs diurnal-
parting night who spoiled his bed.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Grandmother

Antiquities of fiddlebacks and Dresden,
old solaces where lonely years
rock, gazing back on glories, Roman
never... merely remnants of
 longed humble teraphim...

 There shall be writing-desks
 in heaven, with glassed shelves
 above, enclosing small
memorials... hinged rosewood boards
to open for inscribing tea-
time missives.

 Cookyless, the jar
 which will then hold these
ashes, law prohibits strewing
on the wind beside treed waters
sliding always past a sachet bank
of grasses, where she first loved—
 before antiquity.

Publication. First published in *East and West*, vol. 1, nos. 2–3 (Summer–Autumn 1956), pp. 19–20;
collected in *Collected Later Poems* (1957).

Explicating Ampersands

Is what so eventuates so justified?
When it's there, must reason answer after?
Balm enough that explanation comes?
O, credulous! go rectify that sequence,
and look first where most barbarous and wild-
est growth correctly do the same.

There to here may rectify distortionings;
yet no here is there—but always gazing
back as now... anticipating what
may never be—and wrong triangulat-
ed destiny—and speculating if
some means do make imagined ends.

Never branch-growth swells another budlet.
Always present at the root, those billion
possibilities of chance are willed
then, each and every one a choice... while none's
determined either, though not accident.
All nature's contradiction's child.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Gallery of Modern Art (sometimes)

What's applauded for art may be artifice—
like twig-bugs or armor for trees—
or colors in circles, like moth's
erring wings. Absolving to critics,
 such manifest models...
contingent on shielding hot flame, and
depending on whether one jiggles
the branch and then kicks at the bark, to
indent same in oddly unorthodox places,
while lodging rough bugs
 in the neck of one's jacket.

Same happens where
they hang all these copular paintings
and statues of wood, wired x-wise.
Imitations of rashness provide
not even camouflage—except
one must not kick walls and shake chandeliers.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

For the Existentialists

Middle roads are whimpers whispered
in old forests where boles jostle
roughly cowards crying: 'Compromise! (Does
not exist—does not exist! No road, no
pathway even leads between decisions'
alternates. Ah, turning, turning!)
Noticed silence, only guide by
force of never-learned intention,
through each weakest wanderer in
dread of knowing why each will must
choose... and pleads, no less, he owns no
will, but moves by touch-and-stumble
where spared ancestors now hang by
ropes unrotted under cover of glib
words which make dark specious foliage to
hide transcriptions surely
meantime made where they have
blamed all error on unmoving trees.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Appraisal

If reasoning's analogy—
why, show me then persuasion
used in nature to reform
whatever courses habit's set.

It is not done so—
nor by literalities,
nor waiting-sweetly reasonings,
nor through one's tolerating what
must then be altered.

Poetry's emotions are
as violent as any beast's
that prowls whichever jungle's ramage.
Let us stop our measuring
what gapage now between those spittled
manifested jaws of change!

Those teeth are bared, those ruth-
less new intentions poised
to spring and mangle kill-
ingly all well artic-
ulated syllables of past
and post-worn precedent.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Dillywether

If wild ducks were missioned
by bell thonged to feathered long
nape of that one at an apex of
forging cusped flight, where extempore
always, and scissoring clouds is true
practice in plural of ducks—
then what of the honking bold geese? Surely
they could not follow a bell. Nor could
silliness pardon what would be commission of
skyways disaster, should beams get entangled, next
goose-flight collide with these
odd-warning ducks and their bell.

Clouds are but clouds—and yes, certainly!—
yet, when a plan interferes, may prove
even a cloud can obscure that sixth
sense in traist flying of poetry
seeking its forms in rapt silence where
whispers of wings will suffice.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Results

When penalized, turn twice
behind accomplishment
and reconsider price...
if whether blowing any breath
with chance of merit should
not be at risk of hardihood
of spirit—soul intent
for offering. Altar: this
 chopping-block of bliss
 and runnel of worn will
 where bleed to death
ambitions which do not fulfil.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Guarantor

No wisdoms ask first answers
at close of enquiry...
Rich rose—grown knowledge knows
its every root and where
each thornèd vine has crept request.

How carelessly it blooms
and spends a unique flavor
in blue moment sun-washed haze
of happy August afternoon!
And wilting, it will recompense
itself with turning petal pages
of acceptance, in spent joyous
urge endeavored.., integral.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Mid-Passage Harborings

Trepidation weights all anchors
bounden-dutied by what debts of
consciences at ports of past regard.
There seems no lifting one of these;
 yet, each morning wakened
by vague murmurs of dark ocean—
surface-calm, but heaving sad
from memories of deep storms past...
 how might have braved them, this
 tight craft or that... while
those others ventured, lost, and left
such nervous logbooks to be read.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Occlusion

Insist upon black photograph
of what enwraps attainment...
Never be denied each factual
light and shadow through that lens
which tripping recognizing-
instant there, has caught
that past and shrunk it to
one mortal transcript of
what never was... but is,
everywhere and always
in blue eye of God.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Trinket from India

Amazingly, to relegate
first token of difference...
Which lovely lust here's meant
to imitate in filigree?
No doubt, he must have sensed that,
choosing this memento
and sending it around the world;
although he doubtless also meant
to send romance—his gross intention
grown therein complex and not
unlike what may sprout promises
of sturdy lasting love.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Validity

Enigma in fast dance of motes;
how every dot goes whirling free,
and yet creates gray rabble cloud.

Is this because of tiny shapen souls
impelled by vagrant universals
Or may some spiral sough of selfish atmosphere

so whirl them?

God's purpose turns between these neither
for final substances stay hid
and no stray wind inflates,
except some errant course—
nor dust is borne,
but shares a draft in being.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

The Apporter

Whose time is this to breathe
across young elder grove and sigh
upon green new-grown wheat and taste
 blue dawning spring and songs
 of red winged blackbirds
where east, south fences meet
angulating borders of fixity?
Trained fingers on blank keys strike thoughtfully
 to tell of these, interpreting
 what eyes and nose and ears
 there long since had registered.,
 undeluded that
 convoluted plans
of any brain direct
and order this. No more than birds
transported wheat; far rather say
that spirit then is
was and shall be moving through
 all organs of creation—
 same sprouting single
 elder leaf, inspiring worlds.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Dawn Each Man

Paracelsus in Astronomia Magna: '... man is a seed and the world is his apple.'

Hominis—arcana...

also, seeds in each plucked myriad

nourished tri-spaced destiny...

fruits grown as one, though fore-made

unlimited.

Gold bowls of moons,

ensalvered in high western skies

of nightside blue—

analogied fulfilments, ripening

from rays of suns, invisible.

What rosa solis, vastly sensed,

while lustrous angels hymning, sheathe

dimensions in white aether webs?

Balmless mundane creatures, micro-bound,

just see, through sweet-limbed trees

of sunrise meaning

orchards, where versed birds

flit pecking apples reddening

for star-flown reaches,

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Poem to After-Birth

This plasmic strip, umbilical—
but unmoored foetal being—
not child (though foetus-feeder)
to cry in pink-tongued lust...

Unmemoried, formless, here—
no self, not writhing selfness.
Purposeless placental choices, choiceless;
yet still, with appetite ideal
for entropy... warm navel wish.
For cradles of child-kind are swung
continually by arms of purple boding.

You!—please gray-contemplate
non-existence, thickly think of
all striate convolutions,
billion-dyed and scoriaceous,
unholding static trope of consciousness...
in living single accident...

And suicide is ever failing...
Invariably, each gibbet score
reads entry to such worse
awakening. You'll learn
to fear macrobiotic life,
this too-enduring process called
an incarnation—though
in fact, mere re-encroached
disaster proving void-
lessness of space. The He
to fear;—Who slashed the macro-cord
when sky was not... yet, everywhere.

Tied answers you may never see
involve red secrets which no
metaphysic surgeon can,
how cleverly, incise—no knife
so sharp, nor comprehension
keen enough to regulate.
For blood's unblooded here to feed
illusioned circumstance of entry

closed from neverwheres. All
master-seekers say sucking foodless prayers...
how dying heralds paradise.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Clockwork

Oleander-venomed dallying
in ordered garden closure of
previsioned moments... Contravene
one carefully-kept hour, unworrying!

Count here Dante's three-times-three?
Misjudgment blights all blunt instructed
sense—with bored and unblown lavender...
July's remontant rose, uncut,
flames odorless.

Think back a way... where dwindled love?
When brackenless, dry logic-dusty copse?
Nor even terror quicks your measured heart
undreaming, torpid in shrunk garth
through where no numbered magic penetrates
one sharpened taste, one pungent smell,
one sparkling scene—as in close island
of your childhood, when you breathed
with nightly wonder and in lovely fear
of everything that lurked past margins of
impulsive unplanned ways of chanting joy.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Watermark

Curled duplex ess of hope,
spiritus... ssssssserpents
sanctified in parchment
medieval, where lies writ
late Satan's gospel of
unvirile worms that
fructify themselves,
never having overcome
repressions.

8 of these adore
with moulding magic lusts
X emblem of redemption
they may never wreathe upon,
because they spit no semen
ink across gray page
to countervail
atoning scribes.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Contra Wrackswirl

Falsehoods, dark on half-bleached pulpwood,
dangle folded on green vines
 beside last morning's gate,
while linnet-pure indignant warblings
warn a shy brown dog retreating
there beneath an autumn-tinted
 spring Grevillea tree.
The puppy hears that he's immortal,
holding his inseparable soul—
no birth to better death, though he
 could read, and never scamper
 from a paper slap.

Enchant me, lasting-painted dawn,
unmistaken by black news of war
or what ensued upon which warping
 stage of last night's crime!
Here, smelling honeysuckle flavor,
how interpose grim rosin-newsprint
words, fallaciously insisting
 we need ever breathe as they?
Let molder in those vines,
today's mirraddlescope—
mere negative conjecturings
on lies of shifting rabble time.
Reverting, go unintervalled,
by clockless metred self... deny
 each darkening member reason,
 like the red rugosa rose.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Prayer to Eastward Face of Janus

Mallow poppies bloom in sunrise heaven
high beyond old rain-rinsed olive
 trees on January hill,
 above which clouds cannot
conceal red witness viewing battlements
from vantage taller than Sierras.

 This crescent moon peers backward,
 staring undecided through
 pink ineffectual mists.

Quick-shut war's door oh, patron of beginnings!
Staff and key held hidden—blot now
crimson horror of your face toward conflict.
Smoke of thyme, ascend there higher
 than untended groves—
 wreathe and supplicate
grim warder of this climbing tiger sun.

From long ago, Herodotus
wrote vainly fame of conquests—
all who passed this frame in demon
struggles under two-way countenance.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Matins

Yes, praying Father, meditate
and pace the privet sculptured paths
of primly usaged garden.

But what eternal sea's confined
by caveat of marble fountain?

What writ dictates the adjutage
to spurt such tortured forms?

Explain us not of orifice—
you guess damned well we ask
no physics lesson here.

And may not molecules still leap
their independent arcs,
all spilling H₂O resolve?

What modifies God's forms—oh, priest?
Whose hand beyond the iron-locked gate
has strayed to train the bird to fly
which but an eon past crawled like the snake?
Are vines denied from fissuring this stone?
The eagle screams into a stranger sun,
and rives kin serpent flesh that's wingless.

The One you've said you meant
pronounces every matins
no formulae are sacred.

Quick!—stuff starched-robed intolerance
in marble mouths till water turns
to nonconformist cracks to seep
some furtive drops for rebel saintly lives
profanely staining stone for God.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

His Body and His Blood

Self-Baker's million dozens kneeling
twice one thousand years, and sucking
blood the Lamb had never meant to shed...
Their sacrifice, atonement brews,
as tribal convocations fed
flesh-stews to cannibals... and stabbed-
dead fathers moved by wearers
of indulgenced lust,
ingestion of smoked hands, with prayers
for power... Here now, semen-just
their odored vestments at white Eucharist.
Bled lilies on pale altars,
candles blooming symbolized
meaning for new blessed
suppers. Preciosity,
organ-vocaled piped barbarity
for minds which think they hear Him at
that last unlucky table
utter words of comfort
to the swallowers of His voice...
They kneel and mumble, crumbled remnants
on their tongues... while brooding choice...
and weeping crazily significance.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

5th Demos Sanction and Reward

Ite missa est...
dark dawn... dismayed bird
cringing, fearful, singing

in black tall silhouette
of leaf-shorn poplar
to those departing prison chapel.
Murked franchise after ritual—
professions of truth in red bread.

Sad bird chants for Sebazius denied,
unthroned and wriggling—
and never can he strike again
their mortal heedlessness...
striped god will twitch until
they sup on holocaust.

Count the self-residual commons—
first was Greece, then early Rome;
with Cromwell's Commonwealth (the third),
when errored prophecy
fifth monarchy did not educe;
and in this conning, fourth and last,
our country and sham Soviets.

Chained cauldron of demoted deity
brims steaming formulaed destruction,
foretold for bombing selfhoods;
and chauvinist, chameleon fiend,
as Ceridwen, atomic gloried one,
imbrues spectators with
rare scalding testamentated blobs
sopped redly from ingenerated coils,
dead ancient virile father serpent...

Fifth demos men encounter next,
as soon as stones of war mass workhouse states—
and per old oracles—
reality... and adequate

divider of material good...
nonentity.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Gibil-Supplication and Enquiry

To man, all fire's a lion,
which subjugates the cold,
then swallows him at last, unless
he manages to purify
perception with a brand—
protected just to warm himself
until some awful reckoning.

Oh, Vedic Agni!—help persuade
our wood Akkadian later lord
of flame to rub forever life from death.
Convince him not besides to prove to us
those charred remainders from last calculi!

This nexus, dread antithesis,
to live and not to live,
the ghastly triteness of our being—
exploding paradox of change.
Each act asserts an opposite,
in silence, pain, and clamor where
bright figment darks creation.
Must rubbing sticks of truth ignite
unquenchables? Can't mannered fires endure?

(Gibil, Assyro-Babylonian god of fire derived from the Akkadian gi, meaning stick, and bil, meaning fire—referring to the rubbing of wood to kindle fire.)

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

The Fallacy

About the Altis, with tall-columned shrine
to Zeus, the fleet-limbed ancient Greeks
sped nakedly, each fifth earth's ambit round
 reproving sun,
Olympian timing; yet their steles
to triumphs weren't regarded marks
ascribable to progress for that age
 the hill of Cronus saw
Neanderthal enslaved and raped
 by Cro-Magnon;
not even when brave chattering apes
dove grinning dares from prehistoric trees
whose monstrous limbs reached fingerless into
 gray godless skies.
Then, unnamed Cladeus and Alphaeus—
nor Doric porticos to shadow chastened games
from bluer heaven's favor of
 unmetred libido.

But now they've learned eugenics and eugenics
 and think they know what aspect
of this show takes measurement of Zeus.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Transvalues by Temblor

Under the mountain under the brain
where lava's sequestered in forefather walls
and only the heated-hued eyes
of flowed magma may see... with late-
hardened jaws are defined
petrological facts of the dark
metamorphosis... roaringly ground
where marble's slow-forming from lime.

Anamorphic disregard
of good... not evil known; and yet,
this finer catalyst, a mind,
still lags behind slow rocks'
imagination...
Accept deep-pressured change and feel
all instability
of such tectonic shifts on faults
of terra (whirling where through space?),
un-drama-sensing how some sediment
has gathered under ocean, pressing there
thin crust of floor across huge inner fire...

This man was born from earth... not fancy told...
was spawned from rocks, cognizes well
infirmity, while jiggled here
on topside layer of remotest rel-
atives in heaving mass.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

Veneire

Mandative challenge of mirror in hall,
asking whose eye can discern this confusion...

Real axis of reflexion does not lie
within an image—
across each matrix mind.

And this morning's dim view's no inturning glimpse—
nor anywhere but through our exit with
two dogs into the street.

How claim one interferes, with each divine—
including every meddling erring man?
Predestined candy marbles in glass jar
inside this sleeping drugstore window...

And which events count later then? If none,
perhaps this jar contains all sentiencies;
and precepts never antedating doers—
and neither changing natures either—
this image speaks. We listen.
Perhaps it states eternal now.

Let Bertrand Russell test each taste of mind...
Yet, can he add one flavored act by testing?
Or weren't God's candies safe enough before?
If A consists of B, he cites—
or B of A—

All silliness, when life unslackening IS!
As in him too, the careful scientist...

We dash on past the drugstore window
across wood bridge and to pink dawn,
to try for tidings of responses there
where riddles aren't protected by a pane.
We sniff rank vermin odors of the marsh,
a savor for low skies
with white cranes flying.

The dogs both leap and plunge athwart
slow gentle curves tall reeds have drawn
next sturdy tails of Typha.
Some while, they bay toward shrouding clouds which hush

far honking geese which worry them, Demand
they so, gay falsity of life for death?
And there, pale moon of morning loiters white-
ly near veined hills opposing sunrise.
Beams Phobos here? Stride we on Mars?
The dogs cavort beneath reluctant moon.
and unamazed, not having learnt of Mars.

This tarnished scrap of knowledge of
grim other moons is ours alone;
while vision we heed none, no more than dogs.
What creeping lizard measures towering palms?
Worlds' changelessness, we do not see,
because ourselves are changing
by finite concepts of our years,
The lesson is the spectrum of desire,
mirage of wavering light
encompassing hazed marsh of mirrored
destiny, fulfilled to each of us
within each challenge of reflexion.

Publication. First collected in *Collected Later Poems* (Villiers Publications, 1957).

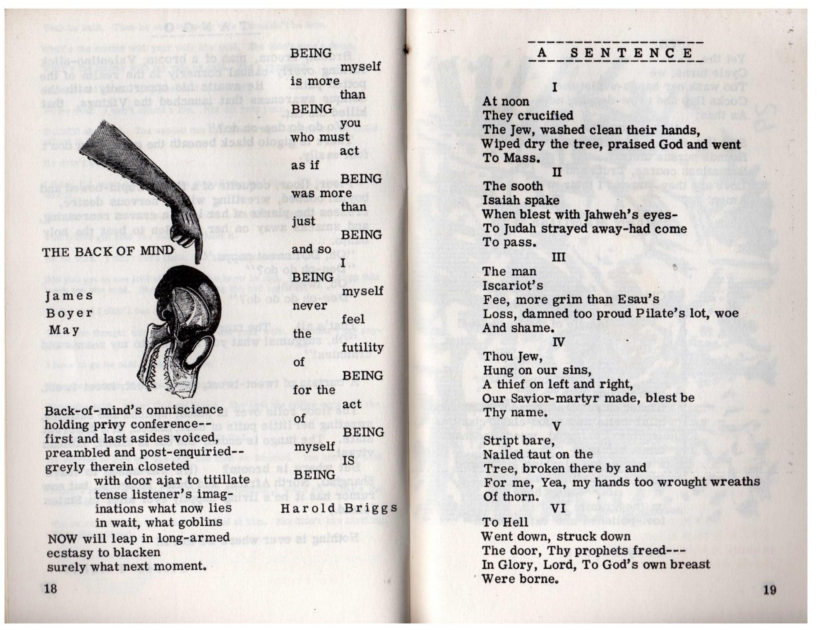
LATER PERIODICAL VERSE, 1958–1961

Poetry not collected in May's books

The Back of Mind

Back-of-mind's omniscience
holding privy conference—
first and last asides voiced,
preambled and post-enquired—
greyly therein closeted
 with door ajar to titillate
 tense listener's imag-
 inations what now lies
 in wait, what goblins
now will leap in long-armed
 ecstasy to blacken
surely what next moment.

Publication. First published in *Yugen*, no. 2 (1958), p. 18. The spatial arrangement is reset and followed by the source facsimile.



"The Back of Mind" in Yugen, no. 2 (1958), p. 18; the facsimile preserves the illustrated spatial arrangement.

the salutary snare

... for Colin Wilson

Inveiglement's the word . . .
 invokes the muttered-hoarsley animals
 of darkly-omened paths
 for looped and twisted snouts: waylaid,
 coerced, onstumbling victims—headless,
 jerked into iniquity.
 HOW-WHEN-WHICH matters not; but heed
 the 'free' beast's counter-tale
 of satiation's aisles to boredom.
 All aimless wanderers are chosen
 for this easy-nibbled pasturage . . . greenly
 everyway, through timeless foliage.
 Indulged leap's discoveries:
 how Eden's banishment purveyed
 the apple-bane . . . unsimply-fevering
 childhoods . . . luring all conditions . . .
 never pleading tags for purpose . . . or, with
 grownup buggeries as substitutes,
 till bites won't lust on fairest-odored vines.
 Instead, the grand maleficence,
 which saves each beast despair . . . by
 twisting tight the guide against omniscience.
 Better than to dally, wondering
 if somewhere sometime next to fall
 on meaning-change, to compensate for straying . . .
 safe-in-pain, to baleful self-betrayal.

Publication. First published in *The Outsider*, no. 1 (1961), p. 82; reset from the complete Reveal Digital/JSTOR page image. The printed spelling “muttered-hoarsley” is retained.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Textual method and recovered witnesses

Each book is presented as its own chronological section. Repeated poems are printed once when later publication involved only punctuation or minor wording; the publication note records the later witness. Entirely reconceived texts would be retained separately. Book and journal titles are italicized throughout.

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COLOPHON

Production record

This critical reader's edition was prepared for *Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry*. It is set in EB Garamond at six by nine inches. The cover uses unlettered artwork created by Brian Kim Stefans and the standard Green/Extremes palette; its title remains live in the PDF.

The poems were reconstructed from original scans rather than from earlier reader PDFs. The complete source files, geometry-aware transcriptions, research dossier, cover art, and production script are retained with the edition.