

The  
Weave  
That  
Binds  
Us

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The Weave That Binds Us  
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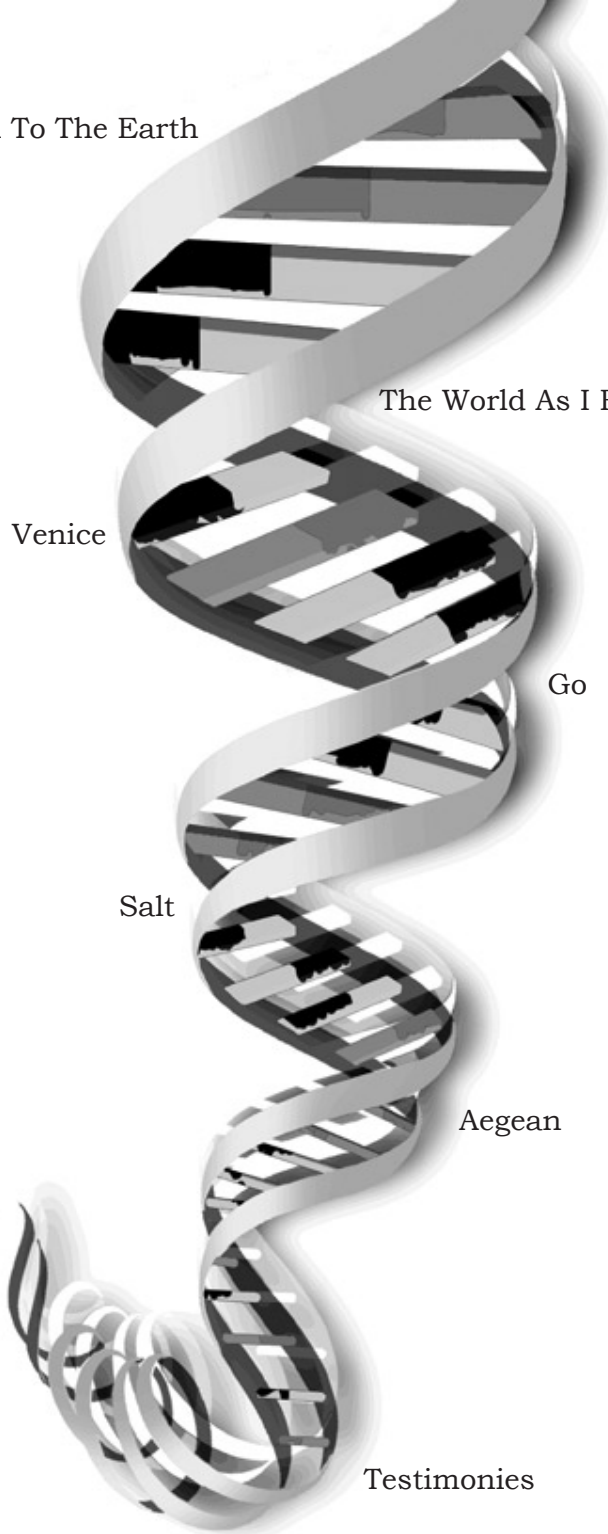
Venice

Go

Salt

Aegean

Testimonies





A decorative calligraphic frame consisting of a central rectangular box with a double-line border. On the left and right sides of the box, there are stylized flourishes that resemble calligraphic brackets or handles, each with a horizontal line extending outwards. The text "To Marie-Anne" is written in a cursive script inside the box.

*To Marie-Anne*





Hail To The Earth



## Hail to the Earth!

The charm of it—  
spring in the country I love,  
its music, its beatitudes,  
neither nostalgia nor false longing,  
but creditable  
equal to the day  
awaking sentiments not unlike  
a love for all things that walks or crawls  
on this the beautiful earth.

Leave-by the old theories of the self  
as useless member of a dying race—  
the earth (let me tell you again) is beautiful  
and you are both participant and recipient  
of all it has to offer.

Shall we contemplate the rose?  
Shall we surrender to it?  
Shall we be (or at least attempt to be) the voice  
which offers it its rightful praise?

For I have watched the sunrise and the sunset  
and after that the moon's glory on this shoreline.

I have drafted lines of delight  
I have succeeded and failed  
and what the world has taught to me  
I affirm in this fashion to your mouth.

Beauty is sensual, is the lover's mouth  
on the lover's breast,  
a hunger the flesh succumbs to  
and delights in as I have delighted  
in the country of your soul—which is to say  
your body.

And spring, after the dark winter, lifts the heart  
and the mind, gives new food for thought,  
gives élan and joy and asks what is your response-

    this is my response  
my loving moves upon its joys and promises  
as if I moved towards your body once more  
as if it were an epic of verbs and clefs

    O bless me with your grace!  
Respond, reaffirm, re-ignite the rites of the season  
into the music and beatitudes!

Nothing is more creditable than your body  
in this country; nothing is more certain  
than the flesh aroused and blessed.

    No, this is not nostalgia  
why should I long for what is past when I can long  
for the here and now of the world?

And it is morning—in this the world we live in  
and take our meanings from.  
Here is a music, here is a grace,  
here is what I offer you



Shall we interrogate the rose?  
Shall we ask it its identity?  
Shall we live according to that?

O buds and leaves and sweet thorns  
you have torn my heart to shreds  
and left me with these pieces to assemble.  
I have seen the beauty of the rose in a mist  
of gray shades of gray,

I have seen it on the ramparts of a medieval town,  
I have seen it in the most unlikely places  
and drawn comfort from that.

Even so its coyness is what remains in the mind  
long after it has faded from the hand.

And are you susceptible to all the symbols  
we have loaded you with and expect you to carry-  
red for the blood pumping the heart in its rhythms  
white for the ones I give my love

yet ever yourself most beloved one  
ever contained in sepals of grace?

So what shall I interrogate you for,  
what hope to extract, what qualities  
expect to imbue myself with?

Let adoration be the grace of this moment  
let buds and leaves and thorns re-fire the passions  
I live according to  
with it as the measure I use to measure  
whatever has been won from the world and the word.



Sun, in your blaze it is easy to believe  
in the burning of the world

so bright you blind me should I attempt to look  
upon the magma of your world,  
and who, by keeping this distance,  
warms the earth I walk on.

But I have no time for temperance or modesty

I would rather know the sweet annihilation you bring

so burn me now—let the gods and goddesses  
of the air attend the fire

and let that fire burn away  
all that is not compatible  
with your soul!

Failing that (and no doubt this is what I really want)  
attend me with your blessings

light, as I go, the song-lines of the world  
and these songs I sing

give me new words, bless the rhythms, anoint the  
lyrics and steps that I follow in your shadows.

---

Shall we ask the stone of its mysteries?  
Shall we ask it to explain and expose  
whatever it knows?  
Shall we be moved accordingly?

Stone, you are as tangible  
as you are cold in my hand

you bequeath a legacy of cohesion

your stone-heart shudders and leaps  
once a million years, yet you are coy  
regarding your diamond virtues.

It is true I carry you in my hand  
but which one of us is master  
to the other?

Am I not, and without reluctance,  
more subject to you than you are to me?

Am I not obedient to your whims and longings?

Above all are we not companions and lovers?

Delightful, yes, even in your coyness and reluctance  
to share whatever you know, you are delightful to me  
and have (o beauty of this word) my allegiance

So be what you are—yield to or resist,  
as you see fit, my probings,  
hold your mysteries to yourself  
and I will not reject you.

Let your mysteries absolve me of my transgressions.  
Let your song be my song.  
Let there be rightful commerce between us.

---

Even though I cannot tell the one from the other  
let me tell you a blasphemy or a truth—  
the earth itself is sacred!  
Let me tell you another—  
I would not trade this for any other!

And the sensual is sacred to the flesh  
and the soul longs for the body's delight  
and you can and cannot tell one from other  
nor should you try to choose between them.

O sweet obedience of spring  
to which I willingly bow!  
O rites of summer I look forward to!

Yes, the world is sacred and a delight  
and I would have no other  
content as I am to live by such grace  
in this or any season.

---

Ah yes, it is true,  
the beauty of the world  
is something I cannot utter;  
cannot define, cannot express,  
can only express  
my failure to fully praise it.

Have I failed also  
to map your body sufficiently?  
Have I been lax in my devotions,  
have I offered silence  
where I should have offered homage?

With every spring I make fresh promises  
to be faithful  
but by the time summer has arrived  
I have broken these promises a thousand times.

And will you believe me when I say  
that such infidelity is also sweet to the tongue  
and as such is the fidelity I practice most?

Wine cannot make me as drunk as you can.

My sins are my glory.

There are no books I live by but the books  
of transgression and indiscretion,  
no song that I'm as faithful to  
as those of offence and omissions.

---

Hail to the earth-the world is what the world is!  
The grace of this world is not to be misunderstood.  
Shall we ask it of its certainties?  
Shall we bow down in homage?  
Shall we attend it as lovers should?

See the visible,  
embrace the tangible,  
the world is what the world is  
and we are its pilgrims.

I have walked where rose and briar conspired  
to trap the eye and mind;  
I have listen to the shrill voices of accusation  
and listened as the defense of humility of those  
who moved there was offered in return.

Who accuses the earth accuses himself.  
but even that will be forgiven  
for the earth embraces our infidelities.  
Who sings its praise finds that praise returns  
to bless and drench him with light.

Hail to the earth -it is beautiful!  
Hail to all beauty and its melodies!  
Let me sing, if only for a fraction,  
some befitting lyric to its name.

I practice the rites of summer on your body  
and your body responds-  
that epic of verbs and clefs I'm drawn to  
and delight in  
as I delight in the wave on the sand or the light  
on a stone or simply how

the earth holds itself in the greens of summer  
and then greens and browns of autumn.

I have no other knowledge than this.  
I have no other understanding I can live by.

Hail to the earth –and everything is said.  
The rest remains in silence and arousal.

---

Shall we question the shell?  
Shall we ask it of its knowledge?  
Shall we respond?

The shell resists my probings and interpretations.  
The shell keeps its knowledge closed  
within its own ambitions.

---

Ah moon, it is true the light you give is not your own  
but what does that matter when you give me more  
than enough light and substance  
to write this by

you are excessive with yourself  
are the darling of poets and witches-  
both fly by your permission-  
both moan long and plaintive songs to your power

so, giver and recipient,  
what you give to me I give back in this way  
one more howling one who claims to be  
original with fervor and admissions of your light

---

Praise for the day's glory!  
Praise for nighttime's delight!

The sensual is the spiritual  
and flesh is sacred to the touch  
of flesh and its attendants.

I have robed you with words  
and undressed you with desire.  
I have practiced all the arts I could master  
and those in which I am a novice.

In the dawn-time or night-season  
I have sought what the day has exemplified  
and no less the night  
to which, let me admit it, I'm addicted.

Holy! Holy! Holy!  
are the words I want to say  
and give a substance to  
being what I live by  
on this the graceful earth.

Your body is the country I love  
and is what in this spring  
I adhere to and search for new configurations  
by which I might say  
all that I need to say to you and you.

Let me tell you a truth or a blasphemy-  
with kisses I awake the earth  
as I awake what you respond with  
and there is no other act that is so beloved,

I inhabit the earth and the places of desire  
I find my faults and longings in this singing.



And I have dressed that body  
with oils and words  
as I address the world with these lines  
until I cannot tell one from other  
and cherishing both  
get lost in a beautiful confusion.

Be with me ye holy ones  
for the heart knows nothing  
but longs to know all,  
and though I say 'the heart'  
it could well be 'the soul'  
as if you could  
separate one from the other

as now, in moonlight,  
figure at a window  
looking towards the stars,  
these keys click out these longing lines  
of recognition and that ignorance by which  
I am defined and blessed.

Hail to the earth! -  
nothing was ever more beautiful  
unless it be the verbs and clefs  
of your body;  
nothing so sweet to the taste,  
nothing so tangible to the hand.

Be with me now  
or leave me alone-  
in this given life the heart finds its true home.

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Father of verbs and the feminine nouns-  
I'm down to my skin at last!

I play with the forms of water and earth  
I dally in sunlight when I should be elsewhere.

Merely to be is my delight  
meandering on these paths through the woods  
as if all purpose was banished and defeated  
never to return.

How such beauty pierces the heart  
as if I'd suddenly come upon an unknown shrine  
to the gods of the woods and the water  
where stripped to the bone  
I play in its sanctuary.

Those playful gods and goddesses  
of the wind and the trees are comely  
and easy to live with-  
requiring only our ascent  
to their joys for such joys to be our own

as the verbs fall away  
and I live in the pronoun of Thou  
that word of the wood and your body.

So come with me and celebrate  
the earth as it is,  
dally at the waters edge, or in the woods,  
and homage the father of verbs.

O small ones of water and earth  
I am also like you-  
therefore let this kinship be productive  
most of all let it be seductive.

Gods of the air give your blessings,  
father of verbs give me new words.

Every tree is a shrine  
every water a prayer  
every stone a believer worshipping there.

Who would be a citizen  
when he could be a vagabond  
of such delights and joys?  
Who would be elsewhere  
and away with concern  
when he could dally in the woods?

You can find me there  
if you care to look  
and if you do not it does not matter

I need no sanction but what the gods require  
and the small ones of water and earth are adept in.

Hail to the earth is all I have to say  
and say it again—a believer in  
the verbs and themes of this-  
my act of praise and celebration.

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