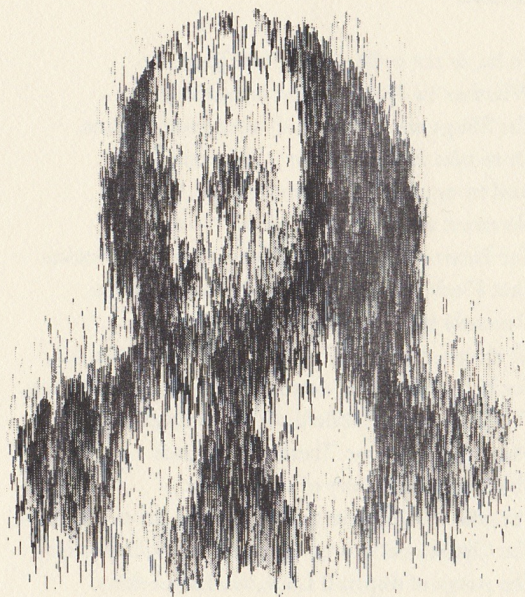


HALT ME



ANTHONY ETHERIN

Hamlet

To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe
No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shockes
That Flesh is heyre too? 'Tis a consummation
Deuoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
When we haue shuffle'd off this mortall coile,
Must giue vs pawse. There's the respect
That makes Calamity of so long life:
For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his Quietus make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardles beare
To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscover'd Countrey, from whose Borne
No Traueller returnes, Puzels the will,
And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
Then flye to others that we know not of.
Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution
Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their Currants turne away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The faire Ophelia? Nimph, in thy Orizons
Be all my sinnes remembered.

Halt Me

I sob to be, to quiet that other sonnet:
the End himself, the wrens of retribution....
To suffer sorrow's league and air out nothings
or break its stalemate-saga out of reason
and die, deploy, be gone to thy spent poems?
A wooden temple broadens any eyes;
hence thou, snared, ask that thou hear tell, and ask
that Life Incessant rooms you—His the atom!
Yet, Piety, the loud weed looses doubt....
Our death creeps there, becomes the leap inert;
a nowhere—falsehood, myth, peacetime fast dreamt.
Or does the faithful soul, which fell, flame new?
Persist must we; the rest vague speech
that lies, can't mollify a smoke, a fog
of bitter fear, deep wounds, low shores which moan....
To perch or plummet, go to prayers' shown oneness?
Steal Life, his gazed supply, or Death endow?
To pause in coffin-flesh or end the scene?
That is the private torment: Know thy fate
when Kismet, hem high, qualifies the muse,
but know so bare the braided whole, His feared Law,
until fate's verge, a red or tawny dawn
(both fade), is granted to the heart that fumed.
Endure or rot? My choice—whose tune-fond verbs
return the azure soul's repellent will—
reveals a howl-bruised heart, the meek as sane...
The rotten know a fly-hot snow of teeth;
clocks swerve the coals, and so I am confused:
Do I unleash into the now, thus feature?
Depart with haste; choke life, its gothic soul?
Do I Zen-path and grant for me time present?
Draw weary curtains, shattering their hurt?
Of acts (they mount)? Of noose? A wooden nail?
His infinite horizon or thy hem? Appeal!
Remember: man sees blindly.

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