



A Short Treatise on the Nature of the Gods

Dan Beachy-Quick

Argotist Ebooks

Cover image by Rebecca Beachy

Copyright © Dan Beachy-Quick 2011
All rights reserved
Argotist Ebooks

Two sections from this poem (those on pages 7 and 8) were originally published on Cellpoems. The quotations on page 21 and 27 are by Rene Char and Emily Dickinson, respectively.

A Short Treatise on the Nature of the Gods

Earth in the deepening groove

Some mind's coruscation the sun

On the blue water fleshes out

The face gathers around a voice

Every day a snake eats its own head.

Night is the eyes in the mouth.

Remember to forget to remember

Everything known. Day is

What swallows itself.

Around every circle another circle

Thumbprint, thumbnail's half

Moon, orbits of

eyes

We say they have eyes the sun is a

Proof

Looking at us because we do

. . . give names to what to that which we
Place names on empty

Spaces we call some forms of blankness
Ideas and others we call pages

. . . call the intimate convergences you
Where no you is there is a hope

You exist so we name you you
Hoping you return to what

To that which we call empty spaces
Some of them these ideas ourselves

Wash out the mouth

Of plurals false pantheon

Teeth strung across there

Is no we only a them

Those pearls

Of wisdom

it steps armored out of the head
and commits itself

to battle
itself and teaches us to prize

the self-made wound
by displaying its purple bruise

I lay down on my shadow
to imagine myself
as the gods lay down on me
to imagine

I lay down at which time the temple
snakes cleaned out my ears

I could hear my own future
though I could not believe

my feet standing on my own head
I could bend over so far backward

Face the violent fact

These wounds are for knowing, these human wounds

The gods have faces but no wounds

The light that pierces our eyes is light

Emitted from their own

We think them but they are thoughtless—

Then the thunder laughs when they close their eyes

And they clap their hands like infants

Not belief but doubt that confirms

Startle the ground-dwelling dove from her gleaning

Her warning call is not her song, but

Air pushed out from her wings' frightened beating

She collects the sea
in a pitcher, she of the prismatic
wings, a kind of

messenger, she waters the clouds

yes, those are rainbows largely
flapping behind her

your eyes have not tricked you again

your eyes whose colored rings we call

witness a circular fact

witness a fact turning in a circle

Now

no one denies now is when now is

what exists by not existing the field

an unfurling pasture whose long grasses are their beds

whose wind-swirling grasses is their hair their own

fingers twist through

I spoke a prayer let me inside

the syllable

as I speak it I speak a prayer

(I do see that green light and that laughter wild I hear)

Their minds intestinal

Light feeds them this light

They eat with their eyes they stare at the sun

With mouths open a kind of awe, if

Awe is for them where shadows gather

. . . discussing among themselves the nature of the day:

An hour, what is an hour?

A flower, what is a flower?

What is a bird

Flying with a strand of dead

Grass in her beak? What is a bird

Eating a line?

Ignorance is their nest

Their eyes are on fire

Consume a page or consume

A field they eat with eyes

What they understand is it

“To abolish distance kills. The gods only die by being among us.”

In the atoms beneath logic, in the logic-clouds
Lightning strikes itself to see itself

The accidental particulars world
World and one other

Secret is they hide inside us to keep away

Laughter in the fact stirs the fundament

These shadows walk around within
Me dropping grain in the holes my
Eyes don't help the work being open

These shadows step nearer to disappear
And of the blade of wheat sprouting out
My eyes pointing at myself is the answer

The gods tell one joke over and over

Again, “A man walks”

A god walks into a man and the palsy begins

A palsy some call knowing

Intimacy none ask for but none ask for

Release the leaf that in the hand trembles

Is the example of a terrifying wind

Blowing only on the inside, blowing only within

Please the atom to pleasure the god

This point surrounds

Nothing makes of itself a future

Sound of which logic is the magic

Regime and the world a gathering cloud

“A Letter is a joy of Earth—
It is denied the Gods—”

Unfold the fold and find
Another fold below, dark
Mine I call mine when I lie

Ink and mind, ink or mind
The letter forms but it denies
What it finds, the gods are

Dumb because they are wise,
This shadow is the bruise
Of the object's surprise

What laughs inside the flame?

To move the light around

Produces shame

In both the seer and the seen

Shadows move elsewhere

To prove they remain

Step out, step out

Of the cloud and let me see you, step

Out, out

As out of moist earth the mushroom steps, step

As steps the dropped spoor out from under its own head,

Step as a cloud steps down from the open blue

Sky, step down, step

Down and disperse

Me

It wears a groove
Around its head
The song being sung

We singers sing
Of you as we begin
Of you we singers
Sing as we end

Where weight has been
There is a groove
That binds the head

And singing makes
The groove shudder

Invoke the gods to scare the gods
A song tears them apart
As lightning tears a cloud or as a spider
In an abandoned well tears apart
The stones by linking stone to stone

Threaten them with praise and they will
Pollinate the sun with gnats
Whose clear bodies eat the sun and shit
The sun and make of the road a solar ode

Write an ode and evict the gods, O gods
And goddesses, hear my voice and lean out
Just a little, and give my song light, so what
Is blank is seen, O lean over and give
My song melody, so what is seen
Won't fall apart, O lean out, you gods
And goddesses, and live in the song,
O live in the song, and not in me.

Fragment

A fragment-hymn more

Whole than the whole hymn

... *O, lovely past[ures] ...*