

Metaxy

by *Nathan W. Harter*

I.

Disturb me in my mute, laconic youth;
 Divulge the questions; paint the rainbow black;
 And offer me sweet symbols of alarm
 That revelation posits in our age.
 Unmask the comic; hide from manic guile
 The gross mechanics of a tempting smile.
 Strike down the barriers of unbelief,
 And sidle me up to unblemished dread.

For I am troubled by tranquility;
 Untouched, I reason that I am unloved.
 Beset me with the elements of truth,
 The hopelessness, the desperate condition.
 Show me man.

Clouds, disaster, burial --
 Such are the evidence of providence.
 I can find peace in tempests; what I fear
 Is artificial order, unripe thought,
 and fisticuffs to straighten what is smooth.

II.

Deliver me! I stand against unreason
 And am overwhelmed. Ugliness is meant
 To twist the senses into timid parts.
 Oh, martyrdom is easy among friends;
 It is the sound of hammering and wood,
 The taste of vinegar, mixed with last sweat,
 The smell of rabbled dust, and your own rot,
 The wet, averted eyes of family
 That bore into the sensibilities,
 Erasing everything you would avow
 If only you could stop and rest for now.

Transport me on, I welcome death or flesh,
 So long as ethical considerations
 Unsettle nothing but the other guy.