

For Franz

by Bruno Pappalardo

Do men misinform,
or darkness they obscure?
When facts are stark and plain,
do great myths begin to play.

I, the eldest in a patriarchy
of two boys and three girls,
too quickly twice I mourned
the heavy loss of male blood.

I gave my life to care
for the safety of others.
The yearning will to stall
what pleases most to our God.

The God act gave me purpose,
a Machine Era I supervised.
But one day in 1917,
I bled too unsafely and unscrutinised.

I preached salvation gospel,
while big questions reign in the opened.
I ditched my place and robe,
to attend the church of my own soul.

I escaped my own self's distance,
and my heart got due assistance.
Long gone Father, thought forgotten,

a great repression you had conquered.

I feel most secure

nostalgic urges reign my longings.

For all his dominance and his harm,

I piece together the broken glass.

Reconstruction a first construction,

for these images I've never seen.

Never felt monastic punishment.

Never felt imagined pain.

At the twilight of my musings

maimed soldiers largely abound.

While awake with the fallen

my memories snore aloud.

The return of lost children

to fight another war.

Didactic bullets and dialectic bombs,

the words of parents to them warn.

At a play I envisioned

the New Zion in Palestine.

Through honest trade and sound skill,

we will find the Holy Land.

Is perception a great big puzzle

designed to mystify?

Or is perception a good man blinded

destined to look inside?

The grace of true prophets
in parables can never lay.
The ambiguity of wordy contracts
built to numb the mind.

Should I ask what it looks like?
Should descriptions let define?
Should I keep to appearances?
when I should look inside!

The individual must decide
what is old must stay outside.
As the old order falls,
the individual anew arise.

What shall become them
in the tyranny of the State?
What is will, guilt and freedom
when I coerce and subjugate.

Find resolve to our problems,
or build problems to innovate?
Our experiences can simplify
but the Spirit can never lie.

Could you find any meaning?
Any meaning one could follow?
If I can't find any at all,
it is not where I was told.

A riddle, a sacred passage.
An enigma, a secret key.
Come and interpret me!
and escape the pharaoh's pique.

Did my father mean to kill me?
Was Gregor a real tick?
If death isn't like me,
let Grete play her violin.

The bulk of our memories
walk the fault lines of our yearnings.
Our struggle to remember
is our fear to enable.

Will I embitter my unhappiness
when a child lived so lightly?
In the fluidity of the being
you go outside to get in.

On a swing at my parents
became aware of those passing by.
A friend leaped through the window
and we sigh ready to cry.

In a life full of fleeting seconds
we butt heads long into the night.
As long wind hits our skin
we break free from predetermined speed.

Dusty quarks pulse in the night sky.
Drizzle light falls upon mankind.
Run the woods at the speed of light.
In the search of the city fools lay.

The crumbling confidence of the adult speakers
was not disturbed by the steady bicker.
At the platform of a public tram
ruminate uncertain of its world and plan.

Unable to get over
an invite from unwanted friends.
The more he haunts the city,
the more he preys the herds,
sooner the unmasking
of the confidence man.

A short stroll around the block from her house.
Reveals a sudden wish to taste fate from her mouth.
An atmosphere of love condensed in the clouds of storm.
A growing duty calls to spread the love at rainfall.

As I sink to the bottom of my misery,
to savage level I allowed to relegate.
The brutish gaze stare in the coming scene
brought a halt to one and everything.

The rising altitudes of my isolation
took this trip to the mountain tip.

A place soundless words find the space to speak.
A place amnesiac memories remember to omit.
The lone and idle gaze that watches from the window
offers an opportunity out from the inward.
The least imagined ground to contact other people
offers a last attempt to make a social circle.

Linked by complex monetary transactions,
small businessmen will forever be small.
Living in a world of commercial abstract dealings.
Where money and wares speak and buyer is the meek.

A battle cruiser sinks as it is coming home.
The crew atop was heard cheering loudly and full-blown.
Between the place of work and the place of rest,
the lift takes me to sleep or to the place to slave.

As a tree rooted over hidden truths,
the soil must be worked to reveal its roots.
As the value of country living havens in the soil,
a band of virile lords drink from its oil.

The horse-riding hordes of new money gentlemen
meet the Red Indian Chief at the disputed frontier land.
The communion of two peoples marked by wearing of tailcoats.
Business a pursuit more trusted than wearing exotic clothes.

If women's glow decay
and self-preserved through fine wears,
can wearing shabby garments
reverse the onslaught of their anguish?

When I speak to her
a past rejection starts to ache.

When I cry
her ghost's shadow starts to pace.

As images superimpose,
a darker blackhole is imposed.
The single point from the surreal.
The single time I see what is real.

Life at the Samsa household ordinarily humdrums on,
with its financial problems, moral ones and many more.
And Hermann's mean and harsh behaviour on servants and descendants,
Franz at pains to tell us; 'It wasn't a dream. I'll say this much.'