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## "Shade of the Earth"

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## On The Mountaintop

In the Shade of the Earth blocking the Sun  
The Nighttime haze fills in and covers the Mountaintop.  
Spirits rise with fuming sighs, tortured echos  
Rasping throughout a devils mist of starless black  
Poison, which swallows and becomes nature's Tower.  
The Sun took a swan dive off a Skyscraper  
Not but an hour ago and already the infernal  
Army has spread a gashing cloak of Ink.  
Penetrating and wracking what once was a Beacon  
Of primeval green, ruddy trampled brown, and silver.

## The Burning Boy

I stand on the Mountaintop, blooded and bound  
By the Fallen Assassin's of cold wind and scattered hope.  
This is the Night that surrounds and the peak  
With which I make my Final stand. There is nobody.  
Noncompatriots stride like wraiths with vaporous hands  
That hold with Iron upon the chains that lock me  
To my knees. Rupturing chains which need no lock.  
Their binding is of pain and loss. A blade for each,  
Like a scorpions tail they pierce into my forearms,  
Cutting bone, slicing muscle, necrophiling skin, expulsing blood,  
Which slides down my arms, forming pools that  
Spread and encircle in occult glyphs, a ritual completing.  
But there is blood that does not fall. Instead it is drunk  
Up by the chains and flows, streaming tear by drop along the links  
To the Nightmares, who by their turn gorge upon heavens liquor,  
Filling their feast, becoming drunk as a well.  
Wrought with rot, these witches, these Banshee's consume  
Gargling with my life, draining of care and absolving aspiration.  
In this void there is revelry and I, like a stuck pig,  
Am at its center, kept alive purely for the good that I may give.  
I am spinning, tumbling, falling and out of this  
Black hole I ascend,-- to see that I am not on a Mountain,

But in a pit. The dream transcends and I am in a dungeon,  
Not a tower, joined only by a man of Faith, another of  
My brood, another who could never challenge, rise, or break free.

He grins with a look that tells me to get comfy and  
Rolls up his sleeves. Hairy, muscular, firm and repulsing are  
His forearms, for halfway in they bare the same wounds  
As me but far older and clearly never healed. They're  
Covered in pussing green, Mottled tortured brown, and silver shackles,  
All too similar to mine. I stare at him, daggers with no words.

“How can you stay like this? How can you live down here? Why?”

He looks at me and with cracked, bitten lips he mouths  
“How can you?” And there is something more to him,  
This outcast, this downcast Man, sleeping in his waste, living in  
Pain. There are red fingernails. Self-painted. A joy. He is me  
And I am him. Baneful fury becomes us both. We rage  
And where wounds were, open and bleeding or old and  
Disease-ridden, fire leaps outward crackling along veins  
That weave around our arms until they are pillars of  
Flame that shroud our souls in light so bright as  
To blind ourselves from the darkness inevitably still there.  
From this fire, which is ferric orange, the yellow of an  
Exploding sun, and the red of a dismantling mind,  
It is our hands that still show, even as the flames  
Extend, flicking like lashing forked tongues across our  
Bodies until we are beacons of this starlight inferno.  
It is our hands that we raise and push down  
And like the rocket kin of angels, we roar upwards.  
We wake from our dreams and with a last parting smile,  
I am once more alone on the mountaintop, the greatest  
Height, the tower of earth. I am once more alone  
And it is the death of Night that surrounds.

The horned, scorned, and hidden cackling at my weakness  
Once more...

## May Live or Die

I am the burning boy. The spectres that surround  
Me are the nothingness that threatens every heart.  
Back among the Night of dead stars, I must be more  
But with the fire in me and out, I cannot be more.  
I am returned to the mountaintop. Was it all a dream?  
The demon mistresses spin in a hectic dance around me.  
Drunk and high with their red hair turned black in the cold.  
Then assassins, brutal like the midnight moon of frozen blood  
Continue to clench firm, unwavering hands upon the  
Chains that pierce and draw and alleviate the self.  
My body is dizzy from the blood loss and it is with  
A running pulse that should not have been that I am  
Able to look down and realize that I have been so  
Focused on the claws of darkness that surround me  
That I have neglected the watching of my surrender.  
I turn my eyes downward, as from wings upon my own  
Face. And there are tears pouring down. The face is squinched.  
I am crying and screaming. My eyes are closed and there  
Is rampant torture in the muscles of my face. And  
Still my face which has so much pain in it does not move.  
It is me and it is unfeeling or rather unrevealing.  
My knees dig into the earth and my arms with their  
Palms upward, blood pouring from their center, splay forward  
Into a position of bowing but with collapse, without strength.  
Blood loss. Blood, so much blood. Loss, so much loss.  
Once more, I am my heart, where the biggest blade has  
Pierced. My eyes open to stare down at crimson mud.  
They snap shut in despair.

I am done.

I am afraid.

What now, what next? There is nothing. Nothing I can see.  
No radiant path forward, just the blight, just the darkness.  
Just my heart, which when searching is empty. It is not  
The Night. It is not these witches. It is not life that  
Is nothing, cold and dark and unfeeling and heartless. It's

Me.

The last of my blood drains from my spirit  
And the hags which lap like a pack of wolves close in  
As I collapse in final fate. They race forward pouncing  
And slipping, loosed to hate to dig out and claim my  
Heart. They tear apart my chest, splaying ribs  
And pulling off flesh and as they raise my  
Heart above them laughing in manic joy, it is found  
That there is not a coven of stoneturning witches,  
But one single controlling wave of shattered emotions  
In this one woman with hair turned pale in the Night.

### Must Burn to Feel

I am what it means, that we may live or die.  
Not a heart that is blown up, but one that chooses  
To explode and in its final moments, standing at  
Heavens gate, between clouds and the sun, there is fire  
That swirls and takes your death like fuel to claim  
You from the ashes.

The Midnight Mother in robes of Ice is still in her  
Rejoicing to finally have a heart of her own. She dances  
In ruby red rain, jumping and splashing with bare feet  
In puddles of the same ichor. But I am dead. Aren't I.  
I finally did it. I gave up. I was too weak. The sadness  
Of not feeling sad took over. The worthless pain worth  
Too much to sell. It took my heart, my last refuge.  
The only thing I still had to cling to hope. Gone.  
But I let go of my attachments. This is serenity. Is not this peace. Isn't it?  
So I'm not sure I miss it. But where there  
Was weakness, there is strength. Where there was  
Death, there is life. Where I had reached my  
Destination, reached my end, I find that I am  
Still on a journey and in the Blankness  
Where my heart used to be where there was  
Blankness even when it was there, A phoenix now  
Kindles whatever part of me still remains even when the  
Rest has given up or given in. There is fire of rebirth

In the cavity of my chest and with passion the  
Flames roil and fill the network of my veins. They  
Replace the blood that was lost with not hope or  
Brilliant kindness or anything good, but with Anger  
And spite and hate at myself for what was lost  
Because I couldn't keep it. The fire surrounds me  
And like I was in the pit, as I always am  
I turn into a beacon of searing heat, My arms  
Pillars of light and fury, my hands the only uncloaked.  
My body rises from its crumpled, discarded fetal position  
And with Ra and Apollo and Freya standing in a line  
Behind me, my arm stretches out making a grip  
In the air and the heart in Night's hand bursts  
Into Flame washing over her. My heart, the apple,  
Courses towards me and returns to my grasp. Our  
Touch causes an eruption and as I shove it  
Back into the gaping hole of loss, I am able to feel  
Everything that I thought I never would again and  
At the top of it all, the rage that brought it back.  
Night's robes now drip and she covers her face  
From the light. "Give time its due. We'll be here once more."  
"The nothing is in you not me. The frost natural, not the  
Flame." "Yes. but this heart is mine. I may be cold, but I'll  
Fight not to freeze. Because I despise you more than  
I could ever hate myself"

### Shade of the Earth

I must burn to feel for I am the burning boy.  
Night stands before me and she is all the pain  
The future holds. She is a depression nap because  
Being awake is too hard. She is a mouth  
Clamped shut out of fear. She is every  
Unrealized desire. She is surrender. Silver manacles  
On rough hands somewhere unknowably deep within  
The earth. She is the weakness I hate in  
Myself. So I take this hate and I mold it  
into whatever can be used to combat the

Chains that try to take hold. I sculpt anger  
From a block of pain and an arsenal from loss  
So that the next time I find I have  
Climbed to the top of the mountain and  
Once more am surrounded by Night and  
Her sisters, I can search in my heart and  
Discover more than nothing, So that when  
Night hurls her scorpion chains I can deflect  
Them with a sword of fire and burn them  
To molten ash with the light of the sunbird in my  
Heart. I am the shade of the earth and I am the burning boy