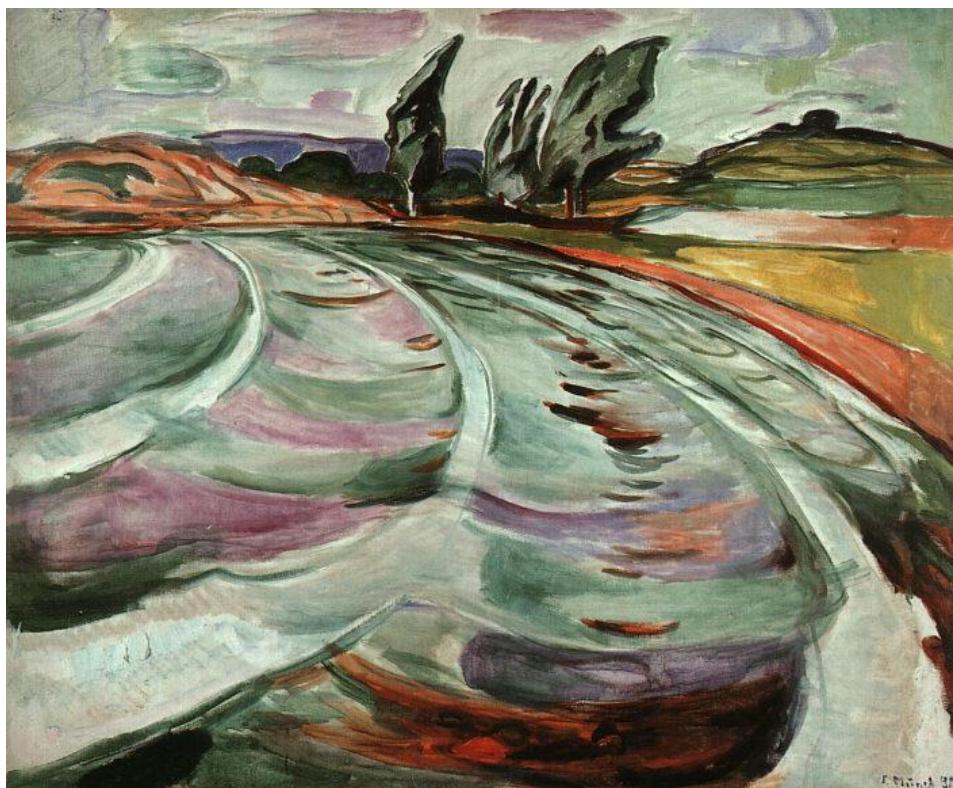


SEA'S WEIGHT

by Timothy Lavenz



Edvard Munch, The Wave, 1921

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1.

SURRENDER

Imagination's urgency
deferred into rumor purge
plans demony.

Pronunciation of the verdict
debates intangibles. Organs
separated from nature's use
learn lassitude. The clasp
on the ape's bleeding back
serves to our hungry eyes
a figure of human *anima*, bent
further down than any tree.

Further than perennials creep,
worse than any bright purpose.

The grey lark entranced,
claws frozen fast to the dermis,
chooses not to move, can't,
though his voice fall in
unawares for pain's truth.

Shivers, shot from the innards,
toughen up the singer's claws.
Eyes transfixed on the victim
peck through the skull.

A channel
Into dark amber begins.

CLIMB

Redrawn in by tiniest
sonic ligature
to the snippet-joint raid,
triggers autotrack layer
of a corpse proceeding
towerward, hurried
with a sense of martyr's blame.

Imprisoned air, un-
prismed, the silent imposter
dares a livid defense up there:
you weigh it in dust-
plated scales, growing tired.

For the awareness is heavy,
the danger too rare.

None notice the gutterline
stuffed with old gray hair
or the bricks chipped
by inclement millennia's wear.
Notice the confines lacking
interiors, the care
at couplings' every interval.

An outward-bound dream, yes,
that would repair everything,
but justice—in whose ear?—
snares the confession ill-stated.

The puzzlelid drops
into the well. A plea
leaps to throats
of claribells. Time-
swallower syllable at last,
glee-sunken gladiator,
rues the verse-jail
in consent.

MYTH

Insert sunset's grip,
insert inner obstacle
brave: bids
beyond answering, blinds
reraised.

Ancient
of Days the impeccable
returned to sender without address
in connotation's marrow
preparing
the holy fuse's phase.

No way of knowing it
but out: speed of being
laced erratically
into radio-arrows, so that fearless
dreaming reigns in seeming true,
softening the terror
piercing sharpest night.

(Gravestate amazed
unembarrassed undelayed
in coming, narrow
thoroughfare of the just
entrusted to you,
placating the unveiled
voidcraze, still counts.)

In rustled figurance,
finally spare:

The im-
placement inself, O clear
with you, clears
space.

HIDEAWAY

Pursuant to the thrice-timed revolution in character, inside the emblem's tragedy for my turnabout's prepare, this letter, mighty vocable incinerator, shares the intoned plight.

Dim, in droves, our contriving; dimmer still the smoke of no goodbye.

A batting lid sanctifies the losing battle-cry. Another lid carries to coldest distance mourning screams. Last lid embraces all paraphernalia of remembering dropped below surface echoes into fire-naming.

For a second's humble harrowing, it sees, thawed, jaw-locked in exasperation, anticipation's exhumation overreal.

LESSON

Plague of the nameless? No—
fortified atrium for the aimless,
canopied by vervo space recouped
in silver timing's ageless method,
the slow encroachment of Idea
upon history's dawdling stage
laid to appearance-waste
by each small saying heartward
to meet the potential of light
in a coax of heightening quiet,
warm as the ominous outside.

So if misfire is to none begrudged;
if the tonic is by ghosts chugged;
if each word's deed is undone,
then let dawn the reign of instant's fact
in one breadth, one causeless
irradiation of caesuras, inhabitable,
surging purifications
staged into destined figures on the rise
in disguise of imperfect tract.

What a trade! That dynamic landing
shred into such distances, our bond
redeemed at last in latest stage
by a hairsbreadth of faith cinched down
and trembling understood.

KINDLING

None who aren't awaiting
grilled in the grand engagement
delirium's fire – 'gnosis'; or how
the brisk, whipping motion
of beauty's spike-sequined cloak
drapes itself over the frowning maniac's
bent sulk, his stale despairing
demeanor perforated into so many
matchboxes of meaning agog,
fillings to the teeth of flinting stone,
fiction's unreal frictions, stimuli on loan
heaped high to stipple the clouds
with glows unmasterable, glints
of Vesta's abiding hour sown,
monstering into unshakeable faith
light's rightful crackling sound –
so that here, in how's remembrance,
every latent woe undergone
shines in ready context like a remnant,
till truth's inflammatory rub
assuages the clenched brow
and every stubborn mountain
moves in the immaculate change
– for here we shape real thrones,
now hearths, inviting in all
with rejuvenative smiles
whose corners cover all the blanks,
this being unmistakably our fate,
bent over the grand conflagration,
blessing whatever's left to burn
in the 'struggle of God' to know.

LEGEND

Ode to rue back the torpid day
from so many indecent presupposals,
the geniality of all stray actors
realigned into one sultry emulsion
itching at the sun's shivering membrane
for a hit of need's pelt above
and rip fast at the rippling
channel that is our swollen happening
into is what, our happiness
rediscovered? or at strained incidence
hold tight, long at abidance in the tune
lengthening loss into all stone,
mimicking scatter in the stirring awe
with thunderhand claps, sifting
wheat from guilty chaff, you see,
day's bread, for such is the main
concourse, our concept folding over
time itself, glittering into the stark
unfrozen, harboring no marching orders
but surreptitiously all it blossoms
like smoldering ground in lack of space,
like a human face in art.

SYNC

Spittle of discontented wills
mixed with merrymore digits
intuit the masticating code
valence on slightly resurfaced
blight-node registry
with a crowbar for a nose
and a thousand squashed homes
stirring in that vortex-ciliation,
call-name: broken manifold
at lowliest price, fighting
tender ramps into the cold;
raw, naughty backstab
of metaphor's stranglehold
downed in the accident exhaled:
what I keep, I don't know.

Ask yourself how
and I shall show you
my face, this fading
hurrah of freedom
where we meet.

Ask for this meter-jacket
reexposed to ruminant heat,
one continuous radio-fever
lathed into locks of meaning
dressed in cherryrobes;
clutch of my stomach's roar
stinging the now refocused
by relayed mournanchors
of what contents, iridescent
feathers in the acid
slurped with their own say;
jazzed ears rattle
to sustain the mocked
rubbish-body and its puke,
as muse, lobbed remote,
dribbles out its holy fear:
what's known, none keep.

The mind that shakes
shapes the hand that shakes,
truth two collided antennae—
I reach you
no other way.

LAUDS

Naked, the aching oblate
suns himself in pig guts,
new habit for perfecting
contrite prayer.

Troughed with the slaughtered,
a wish to coat it with
merit; but his brains
stench up until blended
with the horror.

The runaway wager
cloaking him
takes its mark, sweats
out a doubt-
manager, vexed praise
in that dead stare.

Interrupting naturalness—
when starts the economy?

A rubbing of it all
lost in confusion's logic
floats on consciousness'
veneer of worry;
is the fallen state
leathery,
permanent.

WAIL

Reiform muse-spatterings
muter than wild animal's
anticipation of understanding
an ecosystem's tools—
cove, channel, backskin,
petal-flute's moisture
coupling vigor and fortune,
noises snailing the bell
antennae for ordered signals
predisposed—the heuristic
obsession transmuting
clime into satisfaction,
eager lips affixing
ardently a burial's closeness

with a reasoned guess
whose binge overcomes it,
where nests the mulish wind
do abide, as the next
infatuated insight of life
incubates baby scare
and fumbling precocity
till suddenly one night:
chirp, whizz, wings
elevating a novel organism
into the venerated vale,
mortal habitats proclaimed
suitable for repairing
pray-tells in larynx-portals
tugged by tissue's parade

splotched full with aces,
leading lines, a golding
being-character inside
an otherwise-blooming range
of gripless meanings,
milestones lodged in pitiless
rings of free variables
colliding hard against
spun mind who mirrors
imminent plunge with
indirect love-construction
in verbalized parallels
to find recompense possible,
uncontrived, a generosity
stark as the manna
nature delicately prepares
for real knowledge.

3.

AMBITION

"All that is personal soon rots; it must be packed in ice or salt." —Yeats

Dizzy, with flashlights able,
paper lilies of pleasure
unfold one in one, retain
letters of the squandered pearl,
sign exodus of mirth into
an absolutism of fables.
Never disheartened in the place,
its vagabond mission tools
in what's the case. Rhyme
undecided shows its carapace:
blind echo-transferrer
from clever interferent
illustration, a lost clock
with its tomes. Voluptuous
necks manifest the infatuate
embrace, hairs of communication
tickling the circuit-addicts
whose tender strokes replace
stoked ash. Slowly
the embalming gains traction,
gives a swirling lesson to
chassis in careen. Clouds
pass the same way, you can't
contain it, only a cliff could
face the lingering. Burrowing
thus into the refreshed beat,
honored by the frequency
of woes in khôra's veil
affectively laid, a figure
blazing in awaiting the peak
astounds the grain. What counts
never disturbs the circle's
gape, only a widens the span
vaulted by care focused
consequently. A rule gets
apportioned gracefully: how
glass focuses a spectrum
channeled aware, no
sequence wasted. A cooling
pluck admits the latency,
escapes leniency's snare,
while tumors lying fallow
hold the endeavor in prepare,
claim a living part of
the exploding frame. So

begins an outliers' constant
nature, to hearken insight-lasers
here, powering how's hysteria
seeking for a ground.

GAME

Cartography
of stayed ground rain
swelling in dazed areas
round temples of the fray
disbands.

Little latches
cold in manners with
caution lost, on spine's
gaze.

The mind, with its
spreading mist,
itches later
with the shame of
showed nerves,

Heads off to write
crawll map in sludge,
thorax and hindparts
nature-dirty.

The boomerang lands
on the wind, wound
dusts into world.
No one wins.

CORE

A collage of poorly painted fliers
adorns all the crooked walls
of my plummeting cave,
edges overlapping not braided,
hanging on just
by dint of inertia's miracle.

What room in here is left
to focus, contemplate?
So many rabid colors
of the too-much-known stage
flash across the eyebrow,
jiggle the fable in my knees.

The ceiling is spiked, too,
wherever I raise my head.

Everything I thought
I'd left behind instead
came back: expert script
and torturer's weapon,
the playfulness of shape,
grief and every
other observational.

My weakness was not noble;
it's what kept me from turning
the pages, from hustling
out of this damp place
for somewhere less blistering
with unfound brilliance.

Still, I have my small fire.
At times I can even see in it
the most perfectly nimble
universe imaginable.
It dries my socks, makes
the lines readable. I've
no other alibi really
for sitting here twinkling
among the shadows, twiddling
the thumbs of Being.

Whoever else is here
may never see me from the shade,
watching as they do
the bright atmosphere.
I stomp my feet

over all the naked cracks,
eyes downturned,
but nothing in earshot gives.
Only the feeling shifts
as the callouses wear.

What else? I return
to the edges, stroke
the plastered images, think
up my own wild bodies
with my own charcoal fingers,
dream the immemorial
future yet relived.

Eventually I'll jump,
a mellow wooden instrument
or an organ's toxic stare,
into that glow, gladly
fueling nothing but it,
the mystery known,
the cave landing bare.

POWER

Shadows of running bear
blink left nor right into the tundra,
exhibit for the unprepared
core's pound of lost umbilical;
a liminal race into gates
of spherical middles, mirrored
in the terrain's budding snare—
this tugged rebus, no, cantilever
whose claws scratch a marauder
into land's stoic bell, eyes
an invisible container without shelf
holding only extension's breadth
out into the cold fair deal
upon which sings the sparrow
of its boundless obsession:
"Where's mother been?"

Wherein the quiet of season
sets in, pace of raving animal
quelled. By the wind it ropes
through undaunted toward
horizons stretched forth between
frozen eyelids and the sun's
breaching hoary nub of the sky.
It looks left, right, down
into the hole of shelter earth
agonized by dominion's trudge
and empyrean abyss' bounty,
no luck buried under it,
just hatred for the place's abuse.

Now, everything is sacrifice,
even when the day pops
the bubble of clock's veneration;
even how this orphan weight
bends down deep into the forest
in its quest for ruddy grail
of untrod pavement, azalea,
hallucination, drift,
the soft congealment pressing
its chapped lips upon the veil
until a burst of birdsong comes
to brighten thorned fate.

LIGHTHOUSE

Never was an ambit so pure,
a panel so night-ready
to be stapled to the heartdoor

for the waves coming in
ravage of future power,
the daimon's ream
recording soul-gather
stacked high inside the tower
in piles
of overgroaned sound,

late, in coal-pain,
poor in the chargers,

though life, you said,
was the last refuge,
life that holds its hammer out
to the storm—

builds, as if our word
depended on yours,
as if wind knew
how to count the hours,

as if you, unprotected,
had sown the only fortress
that could hold.

SONG

Hero of the faceless eye
Came sweetly once upon the night
That bade the sorrows of the dike
Release thy water's height
That sight reborn may be yet true
To what is smooth and light.

But reservoir did muck contain,
Nor bore along the neck-crane vessel
Over precipice's warrant
To emergency brake, balked
Instead at darkness' strain
And kept its flood of secrets for itself.

Twice over then did love so squint
Hard into that distant murk
That silence blind emerged, late,
Blindness doubled down into a bawl,
Where final drops now fell
The withering call to requite.

Lip and cheek, crown stone brow
Whose cringe no luck betrays
Still gazes the request bereft of all
Into that slosh, a line
Its love could yet not save
Cast out, wrinkled, upon the salt.

No more! This light whose plague
Thrusts mourning head to the sky!
Blaze upon thee, smooth magnitude,
For hiding sea's weight
Where drowns and verily ought to
This song of the night.