

The Hammock and the Sailboat

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Do hammocks dream of rested men
So they may rest as well?
Well, rest assured! As dreamers tend
To be the best to sell!

“Ev’ry man a king! And ev’ry dame a queen!”
I’ve heard it near and far between,
But never have I seen
As many crowns on heads
As there are counts of beds.
In meadows, moaning, daylight foaming,
Herds of wolves and sheep are roaming
To witness this: An endless bliss
Of conflict climaxed to a hiss.

The curtains lifted, eyes all shifted
To see the soil neatly sifted,
Showing scenes of men ungifted;
Climbing trees
To catch the breeze
Into the winter wind, he drifted.

The judge, jury, executioner,
The dark-cloaked electrocutioner,
The thin-lipped circumlocutioner,
The blue-eyed resolutioner,
Does he too, dream of far off lands
Where wishers wish as faith demands
And faith, as far as faith could stand
Stands sternly, as is faith’s command?

Do caskets dream of sick old men
For simple company?
To rest by tandem beat within
In perfect harmony?

A wise old monk
Got in a funk
And climbed up off his fence.
He looked around
Until he found
A lack of exigence.
His world reborn,
Correctly torn,
Without significance;
No will to be,
He says that he
Has been contented since.

I asked him once the secret
To his enlightenment,
“Should I run free and naked
Or join a covenant?
“Should I fight to reach the top
Or kiss the ground below?
Should I capitalize the crop
Or yearn to feed the crow?”
He answered so, if you must know:

“If ev’ry saint’s a sinner,
The sinner also learns
To heat his peas
With antifreeze
Until his dinner burns.

“If ev’ry man is destined
To work instead of sleep,
He’ll do his best
To earn his rest
Until he’s six-foot deep.

“If ev’ry dog could bury
The sum of ev’ry bone,
The poor old pup
Would finish up
By burying his own.

“And ev’ry man’s a sailor,
And sails by windings blown.
When lost at sea,
He’ll find that he
Must learn to sail alone.”

The meadow’s long been empty,
The kingdom didn’t last.
The sinner learned to eat his peas,
The monk has long since passed.
The hammocks dream up nightmares,
The dog can’t find his bone,
And sailors only sail in pairs
And kings live on their own.
The jury’s reached deliberation,
It’s time to end the long vacation.
It seems you reached your destination
Long before participation.

So sail on you single sailor!
Sail on to catch the breeze!
Sail on to sunsets long since past!
Sail on the endless seas!
Sail on till you’re sick of sailing,
Until your heart doth swell!
Into the ruthless winds prevailing
So you may rest as well!