

# *Odyssey to the Gallows*

# Chapters

## I. The Exile

*In which the Pilgrim flees in dead of night.*

## II. Of Fire, Of Sword and The Void

*In which the Pilgrim comes befoul of fate and plunges into shadow.*

## III. The Pilgrim's Path

*In which the Pilgrim finds his Sun.*

# *The Exile*

She said to me,  
“Let me put a spark in your smile, and paint whispers upon your lips,  
Paint sweet whispers of who we might yet be.”

The dawn looked beautiful draped upon your skyline.  
Your liquid frame, your seamstress eyes...  
And so you spun into the night, spinning your tales amidst the streets, your mark left as a sting.  
“O’, Scorpio, your kiss is but sweet surrender unto these fire lit skies.  
Take me to the land where all is without name.”  
A rose lays with her now.

And all things lead to here.  
and all ways lead to here,  
The old Way lies torn asunder, a cloak of crimson is creeping in.  
And all things lead to here,  
where the Fissures and your sorrow heals,  
but only in time.

He said to me,  
“There is a frission, there is a motion,  
there is an elegance at work.”

So delicate her porcelain frame, I wish only to see her safe...  
Safe within these iron walls, of whom nought but I create.  
And though I know this is all wrong...  
I resign her form to sleep, to wait until the dawn,  
a cocoon awaiting yellow morn to steep in her pearl-essence.  
And how could I condemn her?  
O’ God... How could I condemn her...?

Too still to stay and too pallid to leave!  
O’, your frailty makes me ache!  
O’, how your frailty makes me weak...  
My back will surely break beneath the weight of our regress.  
O’, how your grace it towers before me!  
O’ how it looms, a monument of flesh and of flame,  
destined to lay ablaze until my eyes are left as ashes.

So then who am I?  
And what would I be if I were summoned before your smoulders,  
to seep unto your resting place, to weep and to falter?  
O’, how did this all come to pass?  
These roads are seldom trod upon, these paths are not yet cleared.  
And I, too, run the risk of losing face whilst I wrestle with the glade  
and still I tangle in your footsteps,  
a chase so rotten and forlorn that only a fool would run.  
So heady, with their wits between their legs to guide them to their birth.

And return they do in droves and flocks,  
bleating merry abandon, stripped at their Shepard’s hand.

Bid me then wake from this sordid sleep, fair one.  
Bid me an end to this desperation, o’ fair one!  
For this sickness is a slumber from which I cannot wake!  
A fever dream, a pox, a plague,  
and still I cannot shake it!  
The many ends in sight yet still so far to fall before my reach,  
everlast and ever doomed to sleep  
betwixt my pale of sins for which my countenance is all too steep.

So pray tell I leave, pray tell I stay?  
In my exile, pray tell, what would remain?  
For falling trees amidst the woods might yet cry in vain if not for human ear.

O' crystal mirror, blackened still, pray guide this waking dream.  
In stone and silver I confide my weight, I confide my pain!  
And in return I receive from thee, a fateful gnostic fit to face.  
A circle drawn in sands by those who walked before,  
the other ones who laboured here in the service of the all.

And how could I forget you, O' my love, O' my darling fate?!  
My faithless frame befit to rot upon the mount until my lesson is learned.  
O', and how cruel your lesson is...  
Your tempting steel lays here to plunge into my chest  
to pluck my beating heart still raw from an ache so heaven sent.

So God, damn you to your glory!  
And glory to his name!  
While a thousand sons still lay alight in torture and in shame,  
O' Father, won't you lead them to your holy mount?  
Won't you lead them to your grace?  
Won't you lead them, o' so reticent as they accept their fitful fates?

Leave them shaking in their wilderness,  
leave them shaking in their tortured dreams,  
leave them shaking 'til their angel comes to guide them to their feet.

Guide us witless to the Gallows, lead us gutless to the wastes  
where the gallows men still fan the everlasting flames of discontent.

Lead them not into temptation and lead them not into sin.  
Pray, lead them solely evermore into the great within!

# *Of Fire, Of Sword and The Void*

O' fitful sleepers  
from whence your epilepsy crags, your fissured scabs pour forth your weathered epithet,  
still so plagued with such contention as to summon forth a blackened sun!

And O' how they shall weep!  
And O' how they shall cry!

As their very sun is blotted out by locust swarms, swallowed in their shallow vision  
their very nature dooms them all to piss into the wind and choke  
upon their tepid waste.

Poured forth from gall and bladder, drenched in bile and drenched in scorn,  
invoke the very Blighted Ones upon the babe newborn.  
Mourning chalice, poison in their cup to grasp  
to drink so merry feckless in their perverse delight.

O' Wretched Ones!  
O' Defilers Great!

Bring forth your misery, spread forth your putrescence!  
Excrete your waste unto these dying lands  
to leave their seeds bereft of benefit beneath thy noxious bowels.  
Let them become sick.

O' Succubus!  
O' Devil's Whore!

And the Men shall know not Women, and Women shall know not Man  
Only pale and stricken thus, shall sombre effigies conform.  
Dripping sick and blighted cunt to lead a labyrinth of wonder  
to the core of rotten alchemy, genitals transmute to lead.

In Saturn's stride pray sit, passage splayed forth man and child.  
Suckle from her wretched teat and drink deeply of her sordid milk.  
And be poisoned by her sex.

And Man shall clash in Brother's arm, in sickness and in health  
A war machine, perpetual, their hearts a burning red.  
And drip their matter does unto the Moon until it cries  
to hypnotise these Brothers all and captivate their minds.

O', God of War!  
O', Blessed God of Madness!

In seat of Mars may pillars burn of towering flame!  
May the very ground be scorched, until the crops shall grow no more.  
As the Moon cries blood.

And know they shall of Gaia's wrath as the Earth rebels in its repulse.  
In rivers and in drops, such sweet release from weeping seed,  
lightning struck and liberate the eye  
to pour forth a great and mighty river, so humble and so strong.

Pray, lonely poet!  
Give thyself so whole and plain to raging waters' song.  
Sing to them your malady to guide them to their birth.

O' Great Leviathan!  
O' Waters Vast and Strong!  
Pray, illuminate with waters blue, befall us with your tidal wrath!  
May your fevered rain in torrents fall, to flood the streets and rot their wood.

May it pour...  
May it pour...

May it pour fourth and everlast before the Weeping Moon!

O' how dreadful this conceit.  
O' how woeful they become  
when the Gods abandon mankind.

# *The Pilgrim's Path*

Know ye Pilgrim's, stead and swift of Greater Works reside,  
to hold his presence, steady still and always at your side.  
Cast forth your blackened curtains, all!  
Illusory at most, they hold away the light and rains that shall purify your host,  
your frame, your vessel forged of light!  
These gifts to thee bestowed in light to counsel through your shame.

"The Sword that is not a Sword  
The Sound that is not a Sound  
The Face that is not a Face"

O' Westward Men!  
O' Faceless Men!  
O' Men of Race of Rose!  
O' Darkened Souls still yet to come!

Walk all ye one and all ye same to tread your sullen path  
until his breath amidst the winds, until his sound amidst the trees  
will all things lead to here and all ways lead to here,  
where the Fissures and your sorrow heals before His holy mount.

Summoned thus through shadow, a task so Heaven sent  
to venture here through guilt and shame to heal our discontent.  
And until the morning comes, here is where I'll wait.  
My death, a seed from which to birth another Pilgrim's light.

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He awoke with a start, upon a bright and newborn day  
and shook in his spite, cursing that day its very name,  
overcome with a nostalgia for a time and a place  
that was not to be and never was.

"O', the injustice!" he would cry to himself,  
a silent plea for his dreams to take flight  
and come to life before his very eyes.  
O', how he cried...

His vicious tears befalling but a bitter stance to take.  
A scorn mislaid amongst the grass,  
he left it there betwixt the blades  
to find its own way back.

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# *Odyssey to the West*

# Chapters

## Act I

### I. The Exile Part I - The Razor's Edge

*In which the Pilgrim wakes in dead of night and finds himself with questions.*

### II. The Exile Part II - The City of Destruction

*In which the Pilgrim, beset with Holy Madness, exiles himself from the City.*

### III. Stone and Silver Part I - The Mountains of Man

*In which the Pilgrim reflects on what he has left behind in favour of his Holy journey.*

### IV. Stone and Silver Part II - The Horned God

*In which the Pilgrim meets an ephemeral being and is gifted thus with Boons of Three.*

### V. Stone and Silver Part III - The Man of Papyrus Limbs

*In which the Pilgrim is taught of Spirit and the union of opposites.*

### VI. Westward Bound Part I - The Lantern

*In which the Pilgrim, beset by loneliness, finds himself with doubts.*

### VII. Westward Bound Part II - The Pilgrim's Progress

*In which the Pilgrim finds his strength.*

### VIII. Castle in the Sky Part II - Pieces of Ruins

*In which the Pilgrim reflects on the love he left behind.*

## Act II

### X. Unending Waltz

*In which the Pilgrim meets The Oracle, who berates him for his melancholy.*

### XI. Ash and Rust Part I - From Shell to Shell

*In which the Pilgrim fathoms his endlessness.*

### XII. Ash and Rust Part II - The Dark Carnival

*In which the Pilgrim becomes the adversary.*

### XIII. Ash and Rust Part III - The Torn Thread

*In which the Pilgrim frees himself from puppetry.*

### XIV. Ash and Rust Part IV - Nameless, Faceless

*In which the Pilgrim rejects the circle and becomes a man with no face.*

### XV. Destiny's Fool

*In which the Pilgrim embraces his agency as the Author of his fate.*

### XVI. The Holy Mountain

*In which the Author finds truth and reconciliation.*

# *The Exile*

## *Part 1 - The Razor's Edge*

“So, here we find ourselves again,  
and one might think it such a pity to be standing on the razor’s edge.  
O’, how Occam would be ashamed.”

Or so the dreams appear to say...

See, they tell of numb and wretched men who’ve strayed far from the path,  
and they tell of nameless, faceless men whose every detail shrouds  
itself in myth and with poeticism, with insight and with tragic glee.

O’, what does this speak of me if I look on so curious and unappeased?  
Would such a thing be read and understood so easily?  
If it was to be, then surely it would be?  
This surely is a dichotomy so prevalent and irrevocably elegant,  
so I’ve come to see.

Then, why does it haunt me so?  
What agency is mine to bring to a union with the pre-ordained?  
What have the fates to gain from a destitute and witless being,  
long discarded by the Way?

So is this a treatise or is it a game?  
Is this pleasure or is this pain?  
Or is there something more elusive?  
Perhaps this could be destiny?  
But as long as I draw breath I’ll not let it make a fool of me,  
Lest I wander to the Gallows and hang until I’m dead.  
I’ve seen the mountain in my dreams, and I shall seek it ’til the end.

So beneath the sight of God  
shall I forever more retreat into the pines and find my place in the all.  
In the everything, might I just overcome?  
But what of you, my dear?  
O’, what of you, my love?  
O’, how I’d hate to see us part.

But I must deceive you again.  
I’m sorry but the voice that calls me rings inside my head.  
It pains me so, the visions torment amidst my fears and sins.  
But nothing wagered, nothing earned.  
And for this, a rose I leave beside your head.  
Our crown of thorns.

# *The Exile*

## *Part II - The City of Destruction*

We could've been so beautiful...  
O', why won't you fly with me?

What have we done?  
We've raised such towers in our image!  
Chaos reigns.  
We shall pay dearly with fires and floods and the weeping.  
Come sweetly unto me so that all might be cinders.

And all things lead to here.  
And all ways to here; where the pathways terminate and clarity dissipates.  
And all things lead to here; where the heart lays grey and withered.  
And all things lead to here; where the fissures stir beneath your feet.  
And all things lead to here; where the crimson veil descends.

What have we done?  
We raise such mountains in defiance!  
Malice reigns.  
They shall pay dearly with dust and with ash and with terror as the very skies rain fire.  
It is fear they shall know as it pours upon their figure-headed crowns.

Ash to ash, dust to dust.  
This world shall come to realise its decadence.

O', sins of iron compass!  
Why do they lead them here?  
Born and bred of wicked ways where reason dissipates.  
Posed as shepherds, they lead the lambs to slaughter.  
Sheared of their innocence, the lambs lie bleating, naked.

They speak of rebirth? A pox on their new age!  
Surely madness reigns?  
Dis-eased with the remnants of what came before shall they stumble and then fall.  
Now all that is left is to shovel the shit.

So, I pray for peace amidst the madness.

"Be free and without pain!"  
I prayed for your Holy mercy, or so I thought.

So hear me now as I'm prostrated upon the floor.  
I renounce myself, so that the winds might take me westward.  
"Be free and without pain!"  
I prayed for your Holy mercy!  
Or so I felt?

So in these fissures I sacrifice a mortal path in favour of thee.  
I relegate these bones to thee, this mortal frame is yours to keep.  
Behold this vessel!  
Do with it as thy will before it all goes to waste.  
Before it all goes to waste, I'll live forever in exile.

# *Stone and Silver*

## *Part I - The Mountains of Man*

Why won't you raze, with me, the Mountains of Man?  
O', my love, if only you could see the state of our impiety.

It bubbles through the impotence of our rage and of our love.  
As we make mockeries of union our deviance is consummated.  
O', it should be plain to see how we raise our petty banners in defiance  
of the purity that waits within.

If only we were to see that all that we hold dear shall all disintegrate one day.  
It's naught but stone and silver.

And so I go to travel t'wards the setting sun,  
the chariot awaits beneath its glow.  
Sat astride the wings of Icarus,  
I know no place to go but westward bound to make it so.

It's all over, my dear.  
I only wish that I could stay, but really, there's no other way that this could be.  
Unless you save yourself.  
But you wouldn't...  
Would you?

Why won't you fly with me?  
Imagine what we'd be if you could only listen to the heartbeat of the trees,  
and the sigils of the earth,  
the invisible and endless hum of life from since the Word was spoke.  
Why won't you listen to me?  
Is it so fractal that it lacks a sense a clarity for you?

"O', what are we to do?  
O', what are we to do, my love?"

O', hear how Babylon has fallen!  
O', bear witness to the Mountains of Man!  
O', bear witness with impunity as The Tower crumbles and falls!

There was a bitterness at heart...  
"Why won't you fly?"

O', God...  
Why?  
You could have been here, my love!

For what it's worth, why would one choose to stay amidst the decay?  
Is it too late for us to change?  
Or are we bound to the dichotomy?

Paradoxically, this is what it means to be  
between corpus and divinity,  
discordance and serenity,  
if only we were to see that all that we hold dear shall all disintegrate  
as dust unto the winds of change.

So take me, sweet release!  
I've found it's naught but stone and silver.

# *Stone and Silver*

## *Part II - The Horned God*

And so as darkness fell on the first of days and the skyline opened wide.  
The Heavens in their oblique majesty did speak of an old and holy grove.  
Enumerate in starlit forms how the trees came to speak in tongues  
and what it is they say through a conduit of horned form.

“O’, lowly Pilgrim!  
How dare thee have the gall to seek  
my graven image, stead and swift among the grass and leaves?”

Know not of malice,  
O’, Benefactor!  
Know no pretence at my side!

“Know not of where it is you came from,  
Know, Pilgrim,  
know of these three things:

The Sword that is not a Sword  
The Sound that is not a Sound  
The Face that is not a Face

These boons, I give to thee,  
O’, Pilgrim  
to light the way home!”

# *Stone and Silver*

## *Part III - The Man of Papyrus Limbs*

Though the question remains present...  
Cast in the cold light of day, what is "home" but a place to lay one's head?  
Does the Pilgrim's Way see bliss in a stagnant glimpse  
or is there something to be said for the comfort of the nest?  
Because it doesn't seem so clear to me anymore...

It feels it's been so long since I left what I once knew and loved.  
I know it's but a day but it feels it could be aeons,  
born to die a thousand times and born to live a thousand more,  
as stone and silver, I have been here before.

I have been here before.

All that is, is all there was and all that shall become;  
the language of matter writ large.  
All that's written, all that's heard;  
all that's spoken, all that's word;  
is known thus inherently through all as papyrus.

And so it was told, and so I told myself;  
and in that instant I knew.  
As above, so below.

These papyrus limbs, they teach that these arms, they are my own.  
Yet, I lay no claim of ownership to this temporary form.  
From thought to pen shall all things be written.  
From void to form shall all things be told.

Ordo ab Chao

All that is, is all there was and all that shall become;  
the language of being writ large.  
Semantic keys buried 'neath the mechanistic fragments  
of the workings of the One Thing made manifest.

So in flesh is all.  
In all we see ourselves  
reflected in the hall of sacred mirrors.

Who are we to proclaim such division in the workings of the One Thing?  
Who are we to feed the yawning of the fissures with great work to be done?  
So mote it be.  
I become the Man of Papyrus Limbs  
to do the workings of the one thing.

It's all over, my dear.  
I only wish that I could stay, but really, there's no other way that this could be.

It's naught but stone and silver.

# *Westward Bound*

## *Part I - The Lantern*

With time's passage, though, what worth would such things be  
without a pen with which to write,  
nor a voice with which to speak  
if I found you gazing back at me  
as the second night descends?

For time steals us all away one day, does it not?  
It robs us of the things we want to hold onto the most.  
And believe me when I say  
that it lies in wait for no man or woman to make their haste.  
Just as easily, a thousand years would go to waste.  
The work is all the same before the eye of God,  
is it not?

Perhaps it is the plot I've lost?  
Perhaps I've lost my Way?  
At this point are they not the same?  
Am I not treading the One and only Pilgrims' Westward Way  
to do the workings of the One and only Thing?  
Have I not come this very way in search of higher things at stake?

I have seen it manifest, I have seen it ache,  
I have been the squander, and I have been the mirth  
as their eyes avert from heavens sent to guide them to their birth.  
As they foster their impurity and mock the very Way  
in which the lurking and the murmuring  
shall speak from night to day  
will they choke upon their poison and speak the poison word  
while not manifesting the purity they sought.

O', what a shame,  
O', what a tragedy it is for these words to fall upon deaf ears  
doomed to never reach their subject.

O', what a fool am I to have laboured and believed  
in such petty human things,  
when it was clear from the beginning;  
that we are westward souls?

I pray the night might take me.  
I pray the night might take me westward bound.  
To confront who we are, to confront the shadow self,  
I pray the night might take me.

If I must die a thousand deaths and die a thousand more  
as nameless, faceless, restless men  
who nightly reach deaths door  
then pray this lantern lays still lit to adorn my very soul.

She told me once...  
"This is what happens in the mountains  
where the light can't reach."

So I go westward, westward bound.



# *Westward Bound*

## *Part II - The Pilgrim's Progress*

Westward bound,  
I've seen the light of day.  
The paintings on the walls of inner caves only appear where the light can't reach.  
O', what a blessing that my shadow follows me.

I choose.

I choose where the light gets in;  
an image mirroring my very being upon the canvas  
that is the earth we tread,  
that is the soil on which we step.

And would you think me to be wrong as I speak to you?  
It's been too long since I have seen your face.  
Would you think me to be wrong as I speak these truths to you?

Then stay your tongue, lest I cut it where you stand,  
O', vile and sordid lech,  
your tongue so laced with barbs and filth that it could blight the very earth  
and sicken us all beyond repair.

O', Lecherous One!  
Stay your tongue lest I cut it where you stand.  
Don't think for a second that you'd be spared!

And would you think me to be wrong as I speak to you?  
And would you think me to be wrong as I speak these truths to you?  
O', how they've long laid dormant,  
so hidden, occult, and buried neath your cinders.

"And this won't be the last of it.  
Heed my words,  
O', Pilgrim.  
This won't be the last of it."

Silence,  
O', Lecherous and Vile One!  
I condemn you to a never-ending quiet.

Silence,  
O', Unholy and Perverse One!  
I condemn thee to ageless damnation.

O', be silent,  
De-sanctifier, Pillager!  
I condemn thee to speak no more.

Quiet,  
O', Unenviable, Cursed one!  
I must travel westward bound.

# *Castle in the Sky*

## *Part II - Pieces of Ruins*

Once, I thought I'd found love,  
hook and tethered to the Siren's Song.  
Even though you were near, I was empty.  
It must have been so pain'd to see.

O', how I injured my love  
singing westward songs unto the setting sun.  
Might my suffering be song, if nothing else.

If nothing else, teardrops fallen from moonlit eyes,  
they don't mind or terrorise the way  
in which we coveted and held our candles lit with  
one heart beating, one mind leaping.

This is the Way,  
that you can find me near.

This is the Way,  
in which it's clear.

This is the Way  
that we can use these pieces of ruins.

This is the Way  
to build our Castle in the Sky.

My darkened eyes and your stormy skies were born to house our disarray, but why?  
Our love is a furnace that kills itself, when just as well the embers might be stoked.

This is the Way,  
that you can find me here.

This is the Way,  
in which it's clear.

Transfixed in your eyes,  
like beacons they guide my way to our special place;  
our Castle in the Sky.

And I don't mind, no,  
I wouldn't dare to theorise, no,  
for dreams recall our future selves awake and aware.  
I know I'll see you there tonight, in our Castle in the Sky.

# *Unending Waltz*

There is a hollowness: shape without form.  
Hallowed and concentric circles splayed against a canvas  
Deep red, veins in hand with epitomes and documents of what has ceased to be.  
What was leased to me...?  
A dying light in fragile arms?  
An art amidst your victory march for me to chase; for me to run?  
For me to torment you and I until we fall again;  
Amidst a calm and cooling breeze,  
amidst our spiritual dis-ease as our shadows stretch across the land?

This is the twilight of my very oeuvre, or so I fear.  
I fear the end is near, as though time itself were befit by grace to crawl and to walk,  
to seethe as fit with entropy.  
But, surely this is but a heinous vision?  
The order is so very apparent, still.

Order out of Chaos...

I feel as though I've fallen short..  
The myriad of misanthropes I've slain and had reborn,  
the rising tide of shedded skin that by my hands was wrought,  
the countless names and faces of a destitute and witless being all discarded by the Way.

O', what a pity it may be to balk at one's mortality  
for within but a blink all is naught but dust and ash,  
soil and smoke, oil and water,  
and the whispering of the winds  
as they propagate the flames.

"Still, a temple stands amidst the smoulders, does it not?  
Did you not think that the Pilgrim's Way would be fraught  
with the trials and the tests of your hopes and fears laid bare upon the rocks?  
What great cowardice is on display, with your writhing and your self-dismay!  
Are you a man, are you a mouse?  
Or are you but a foolish child  
who's come to cry out in the middle of the night?  
Or is it that you're divine?  
Born to live and born to die as the waxing and the waning of the tides.  
Have you come to cry?  
Have you come to revel in the imposition of your Exile?

Tell me, Pilgrim...

What is it that you seek?  
Because it's all so simple.  
Can't you see?"

O', what are the chances  
that I would come to see with such great ease?  
O', so blind and weary, perspective seems so out of reach.

O', what are the chances  
that I would come to keep a realisation held so near and deep for more than a day?  
I might find balance.  
I might find ecstasy.  
But I won't.

So as it transpires, I'll go the only way I know,  
to the sea, to the song.  
I shall be lured unto the rocks to fall and to fail,  
to seek to no avail.

This dance, I'll do no more,  
of time's unending waltz.

I've sought to no avail,  
I have tried and I have failed.  
So, this dance I'll do no more,  
of time's unending waltz.

# *Ash and Rust*

## *Part I - From Shell to Shell*

I enter darkened waters.  
I lose my body beneath the waves, seeing visions of what could've been.

It's so strange...  
I see my body floating before me,  
a strange and empty vessel, tied down but weightless.

The tides take me away.  
Take me away...

I have been here before.  
Yes, I have...

Oh, I have been here before.

Sewn from void to form.  
Sewn from shell to shell.

I prayed the night might take me  
and so it did.

# *Ash and Rust*

## *Part II - The Dark Carnival*

And just as it does,  
must the Sun rise in bitterness and mourning of what came before;  
Luna's lament still dawning in spite of His song  
O', weary yet strong must the Father's Sun carry on with his torment  
like a lamb to the slaughter.  
And for what?

O', God!  
Where is your honour?

A Son born of Pilgrim blood sent to the Gallows and for what?  
To teach a lesson born of suffering?  
Is this what comes of surrender to your chaotic order?  
A fool I'll be no more before your eyes,  
before your hands!  
No longer shall I stand idly by,  
content to live my life as a sculpture in your image.

As above, so below.  
As I create, do I destroy,  
I'm reminded of a time  
there was a bitterness at heart and I enjoyed it.

And it really shouldn't come as a surprise, dear Pilgrims.

All too long I've seethed in the darkness,  
I've bled for the Son in us all.  
Convinced of my purpose and light, did I smother my sight.  
O', what a paradox...  
For I thought I'd seen it all.

For martyrs one and all  
before pride, there comes the fall,  
so would it not seem there is a precedent?  
If masochism is its own reward then why abhor its very core  
when only darkness serves to gain something from light?

So who am I to mourn the night's spilling into dawn  
and the transience beheld within its grasp?  
Oh, when all becomes but Ash and Rust  
and all collapses into dust can a putrefactive liberty be found.

Such is the beauty and the terror of the Dark Carnival.

And you see it now, don't you?  
... Don't you?

Pray tell you understand what drives a man to spill his secrets  
onto a page so bare and meek before his craft.  
His pen filled with blood and ink to scrawl unto the paper  
a heaven sent and egotistic diatribe of concepts.

This is the alchemy of poetry.

From thought to pen to form  
as was written, as was told by the ageless and ineffable forces.  
What more will it take for you to comprehend that which was written in the stone?

To what end do I defy my own vitality?  
To what end do I vilify reality?  
Bear witness, dear Pilgrims,  
for this is what it's like to be burdened with your honesty.

No more.

And so this is why I will spill myself romantically  
as a Pilgrim born of terror and of dignity.  
Even if only for accountability will I finish speaking my truth.

Such is the beauty and the terror of the Dark Carnival.

# *Ash and Rust*

## *Part III - The Torn Thread*

Now that the thread is torn, a Pilgrim I'll be no more.

I have fallen out of love with this ancient and decrepit construct.  
Bounds of obligation conspire to keep my hands so firmly tied  
as I search for growth and I search for life  
I grow so fucking tired of those spiral tales.  
Must I repeat myself so many times  
for my point to be made and my words to be heeded?

Perhaps it's time to lay myself truly bare.  
But mistake me not for idiot flesh, who would cast his writing unto fools.  
This was never for you.

For in pilgrimage there is an injury.  
And there is despair that so readily one would see the other dredge up imagery so biblically,  
flagellating lyrically my sense of self for your petty entertainment.

And as the words become more strained,  
I've come to find and appreciate the quality of journey's end  
even if only for its own sake.

I mean, after all, such arduous and fitful ways into the deep  
would be wasted if I did not summarise and elucidate  
this curious circle that began so long ago.

It matters not who it's for,  
or who it benefits.

But once the thread is torn, there can be no going back.  
May the bridges burnt light the way forwards.  
Might the thread, once torn, transmute lead into gold.

For the betterment of my soul,  
a Pilgrim I'll be no more.



# *Ash and Rust*

## *Part IV - Nameless, Faceless*

Pray, let me be free!  
Pray, let me be free!  
Pray, by the circle complete!  
Pray, let me be free!

Nameless and Faceless!  
Nameless and Faceless!

Now do you see?!

For both your sake and mine,  
I hope you see.

Nameless and Faceless!  
Nameless and Faceless!

LET ME BE FREE.

# *Destiny's Fool*

So tell me what you see.  
Do you see anguish or see ecstasy?  
It's worrying, what you might find of me without the poetry  
to save my face, to save my skin.  
It's so delicate...

Ripped limb from limb,  
turned from soil into stone,  
no more shall I be held in this prison of song.

Sewn from void to form,  
this mask an old home,  
it is infinite, it is destiny's fool.

A fool am I...  
A fool have I been.

So tell me what you see.  
Do you see a Pilgrim or a human being?  
Or just another dancing monkey whose songs you want to sing?

So tell me what you think,  
what you think my reasoning to be  
as to why my ego runs so unrestrained and rampant in my verse for all to see.

Oh, what have I to gain?  
I've grown so tired of these games.  
My humanity, I'll reclaim in the end if I just let it be.

So tell me what you'd feel if I reclaimed my being.  
Would you feel joy or feel pain if this were all to cease?  
Just as easily, this story could be you or me.  
We all travel universally in poetry and art  
born from our fears and from our mystery.

Oh, what have I to gain from writing of my pain  
when just as well I could write from happiness?  
Oh, what have I to gain, when here I am again,  
pouring my shadow into song?  
It's been all too fucking long since I wrote for simplicity's sake.

So tell me what you feel, my friend.  
Tell me how you ache.  
Tell me all the same what you think this could mean,  
but know it's going to end.

A fool am I.  
A fool have I been.

No more, no more.

# *The Holy Mountain*

There is a weight upon me, still;  
the quivering stench of the incomplete,  
looming, terrible.

I can barely breathe...  
This isn't what I thought this would be...

Toil with me, if you will.

I'm sorry, O', God!  
I'm sorry!  
I left you there...  
O' God, I left you there...

Might this be my atonement, might my sacrifice be done.  
I will die here on this Mountain.

I bid thy circle's closing.  
I bid Thee end this Pilgrim's Path.  
I bid my will be done with blood unto this ink  
with which I scribe my final words.

And so it is done.  
So mote it be.

So I pray for peace amidst the madness.  
Be free, be without pain,  
and receive thy Holy Mountain.

With all that said and done,  
here's the truth of the matter.  
No masks, no games.

Not anymore.

See, I brought this upon myself.  
But let it not be said that this was anything but spurious at its very best.  
The tides of change have ebbed and flowed between a multitude of ones and zeroes.  
And was it not clear from the start that this was all to be transient?  
How does one reconcile the ramifications of a tale that's no longer relevant?

The answer is...  
You don't.

Because even if it's no longer relevant to me, it's still relevant to someone;  
and a story once told will speak to those still headlong in the storm,  
still torn asunder and dashed against the rocks.

O' Westward Men!  
O' Faceless Men!  
O' Men of Race of Rose!  
O' Darkened Souls still yet to come!

Walk all you one and all you same to tread your sullen path  
where the fissures and your sorrow heals  
before your Holy Mount.

But mark my words, the storm will come again.  
It always comes again.

And in its clutches will there lay the madness and the ecstasy  
of the singular and Holy Tale exploded onto the canvas.  
Even if it does not come from me there are a thousand men who came before  
and millions who will yet come after.  
With that said I refuse to let a human being hang on my every waking word  
when I cannot extend that same courtesy to myself.  
To do so would be a fallacy when I recognise the error of my own ways  
and I, too, am to be held accountable.  
Aren't we all?

But I digress...

See...

It wasn't so clear at the start, but this would all be transient and I got lost along the way,  
gripped within the murk of my own poetry and beheld by my mistakes.  
See, the intention was for healing but what I've found is not the same.  
See, this path is fraught with anger and the Way is fraught with rage  
beheld towards the ignorant and simple minds who'd see us to decay.  
And I refuse to be a martyr and I refuse to be a saint,  
but so they say...

This is what happens in the mountains.

I have come so far from home only to find I must return,  
and I am sorry,  
this is what happens in the mountains.

I have come so far from home only to find I must return,  
and I am sorry.

I have come so far from home only to find I must return,  
and I am sorry,  
this is what happens in the mountains.

I have come so far from home only to find I must return,  
and I am sorry.  
But I have nothing else to say.

~

# *Slice The Cake*

*is*

**Gareth Mason**

*Vocals, Words, Concept, Synthesiser, Djembe*

**Jonas Johansson**

*Guitar, Bass, Vocals, Programming, Production, Artwork*

**Jack Magero**

*Compositions, Orchestrations, Musical Thematics*

*featuring:*

**The Choir of the Fates**

*Gareth Mason, Jonas Johansson, Sol Sinclair, Galen Stapley*

**Jake Lowe**

*Compositions, guest solo on “Stone and Silver Part I - The Mountains of Man”*

**Michael Malyan**

*Piano in “Castle in the Sky Part II - Pieces of Ruins”*

**Simon Longe**

*Additional Drum Composition*

**JJ Polachek**

*Appearing as “The Horned God” in “Stone and Silver Part II - The Horned God”*

**Stevie Raine**

*Additional lyrics contributions in “Castle in the Sky Part II - Pieces of Ruins”*

**Laura Vine**

*Appearing as “The Oracle” in “Unending Waltz”*

**Dan Luces**

*Additional vocal editing on all tracks*

**Dylan Garrett Smith**

*Artwork, Layout and Design for “Odyssey to the Gallows”*

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*For those amongst us who seek,  
we pray that this aids you  
as it, too, has aided us.*



