

## The Mountain

always the mountain  
soaring up from earth  
stretching far beyond eagle's reach  
noble aristocrat, Olympian presence  
empyrean sovereign bows to none  
head high in tempest or tranquility  
inspires, reassures  
prodigious seduction from afar  
and I  
pretender to the throne  
emulate such grandiosity  
rock solid, I stand aloof  
with pretentious dignity  
one cool remove away  
from the world and its ailment  
man - humankind  
me  
matured beyond the frailties  
of youth and innocence  
having abandoned the three deadly sins  
sensitivity, compassion and consideration  
and ripened into the fullness  
of human endeavor  
thank God!  
for the mountain  
talisman, totem, mentor  
without whose image and presence  
to study, to follow, to model  
surely would I be  
victim, pawn, sacrificial lamb  
in some other's machinations  
O! the fortune  
the serendipity of this proximity  
let others languish and wallow  
in treasonous sentiment  
and baleful soft-heartedness  
childhood's lessons cut to the quick  
young and tender  
the impressionable fall prey  
to familial Darwinism  
evolutionary consequence of original sin  
visited, imprinted, incorporated  
contemporary good intentions  
bushwhacked by repressed heredity  
but I survive, endure  
with the mountain's silent council  
whose strengths I have adapted  
modified for human survival  
mine among them  
yet, though I sustain an existence  
there is an emptiness  
a dispassionate hollowness  
in this strategy of stone  
and stately alienation  
living without aliveness  
until a long silenced voice  
exploiting  
the mountain's resplendent allure  
impregnated by the rising sun

wonders why  
captures mind and body  
in a breathless rush of inspiration  
and flees toward

## The Day Face

I leave the city's urban sprawl  
Responding to an inner call  
Something silent for too long  
Has broken free and sweeps along  
And with a child's exuberance  
Forsakes my current arrogance  
The mundane self has no say  
It's lost its voice for this day  
A day that's bright with freshened air  
A day with secrets to lay bare  
Another serendipity  
This day is free of history  
The road to ruin left behind  
I've no idea what I'll find  
A winding road, a country lane  
I head toward a vast domain  
When, at last, the pavement ends  
I take the trail the mountain lends  
And lose myself in scenery  
Engulfed in endless greenery  
Life is rife, a lavish teeming  
An invitation to redeeming  
It welcomes me with open arms  
And shares with me its vital charms  
Thus here upon the mountain's base  
My soul has found a birthing place  
Luscious ferns and stately trees  
Witness me upon my knees  
As years of tears locked away  
Pour down upon this house of clay  
Dissolving strategies of stone  
Acknowledging my flesh and bone  
This openness lacks frailty  
It's more accessibility  
The Life and I share communion  
Intimate essential union  
Intelligence and nourishment  
Answering my discontent  
The Life itself an education  
Presents to me this contemplation  
Life confined by separation  
Empties one with deprivation  
These words sink in through every pore  
Reverberating at my core  
I rise from deep within this space  
Returning to the alpine face  
The mountain sends a gentle wind  
Which beckons me to ascend  
A lighter step, an easy gait  
Unburdened by oppressive weight  
Treading not on path or trail  
I ride upon the mountain's hale  
To soar above the highest trees  
Far beyond ascendancies

Then stand upon Olympic peak  
 With open eyes sincerely meek  
 And see below the world of man  
 Embraced within a cosmic plan  
 A fundamental harmony  
 Based upon a trinity  
 Compassion, sensitivity  
 Consideration making three  
 The plight of man I see revealed  
 Our very nature is concealed  
 Conceptual reality  
 Supporting personality  
 I see the error of my ways  
 A strategy for runaways  
 A child can't help avoiding pain  
 But as adults this is in vain  
 Defensive walls become a cell  
 Confining us to living hell  
 The clarity upon this hill  
 Makes living life such a thrill  
 My body's flushed, I'm energized  
 By all of life I'm tantalized  
 I want it all, no stone unturned  
 With what it takes I'm not concerned  
 I ask the Life to bare my soul  
 Surrendering all old control  
 I fade into a waking dream  
 Pervaded by a heavy theme  
 All is lost, I've not begun  
 My self defined by

### The Mountain

always the mountain  
 cyclopean prominence  
 nullifies life history, dreams and fears  
 my life turns, meanders (avoidance & denial)  
 a chronicle of directions changed  
 neither beginnings nor endings  
 stop, pause, go  
 interminable traffic  
 controlled by signposts  
 measured by milestones  
 confined by curbs, guardrails  
 the road itself  
 and always - the mountain  
 what deed or accomplishment  
 could raise its head  
 from the shadow  
 of this looming, omnipotent presence  
 judge and executioner  
 at the court of castration  
 ever an insignificance am I  
 in this ubiquitous confrontation  
 my pathetic defiance - **I AM A MAN!**  
 impotent whine from flaccid flesh  
 loathsome inadequacy encounters  
 antediluvian immortal  
 a world unto itself  
 invades and violates  
 trespasses on all my sacred ground

heaven and hell  
 agitating my dementia  
 a turbulent void of frantic neurosis  
 rootbound  
 every effort  
 toward growth, nourishment, understanding  
 increases my constriction  
 asphyxiation by desperation  
 to escape the prison  
 of this silent, rebuking projection  
 that penetrates my shallow plaintive veil  
 of narcissistic masochism  
 O! the anguish  
 the utter hopelessness  
 unimpaired deficient hole  
 me  
 loathing and fearing  
 this monolithic abomination  
 yet, it is the very foundation  
 of all my dreams and fantasies  
 (no dream of freedom for the free)  
 my humiliation is complete  
 I turn  
 primordial indignation  
 a raging savage beast  
 consumes the genesis of my abasement  
 a fury deeper than all of hell  
 cries out **NO MORE!**  
 released the cyclone of my soul  
 abandons all regard  
 lays existence on the line  
 and steps toward

### The Night Face

I leave the world of natural sight  
 And step into the endless night  
 Night of dark abysmal black  
 The brightest light could not attack  
 I try to will my eyes to see  
 One small wish for sanity  
 This night consumes even dreams  
 And swallows up primal screams  
 Night devoid of all direction  
 Incapable of reflection  
 Though sight and sound are left behind  
 That awesome presence I can find  
 I feel it there in front of me  
 Cyclopean immensity  
 Exudes a fearsome overcast  
 But my resolve remains steadfast  
 I stumble over rocky ground  
 And grope my way toward that mound  
 Disoriented and confused  
 I dare to face my accused  
 Crawling at a slow snail's pace  
 I finally reach the mountain's base  
 With trepidation start the climb  
 Over rocks slick with slime  
 And constantly slip and fall  
 Until I reach that endless wall

My nose is pressed against a face  
That's lost within this pitch-black space  
Crack and crevice; small toehold  
God I wish I were more bold  
I leave the plane of trepidation  
Discover fear without cessation  
Inch my way to unknown height  
Every move take all my might  
There's no way to turn around  
Just a plummet to the ground  
I'm exhausted, fingers slip  
The fear will not relax its grip  
My chest is filled with blackened dread  
My guts are once removed from dead  
And now the winds of doubt assail  
They use my mind as a flail  
Stripping me of my resolve  
Into failure I dissolve  
From where I am I'll not let go  
Death may come but not below  
All my strength is now consumed  
The savage beast is exhumed  
My body flushed with raging fire  
Again assaults this dreadful spire  
I leave behind the wall of fear  
To find black glass that won't adhere  
My palm will only slip and slide  
The mountain's trapped me on its side  
Hanging there I succumb  
Letting sheer terror come  
A final act of defiance  
Throw my life on that contrivance  
And sail away into the night  
My fall becomes a graceful flight  
To stand atop the monolith  
One lone soul upon the zenith  
Looks upon the once concealed  
The whole night sky now revealed  
And I an empty cup to fill  
Stand in awe upon this hill  
As treasures with no earthly price  
Reward demanded sacrifice  
The night's essential quality  
Emerges from eternity  
The black itself a trinity  
Distils the truth in all I see  
Annihilating falsity  
Quickened curiosity  
About this sea of mystery  
Suffused with all of life's beauty  
I sail this sea far from shore  
And fear it not anymore  
Ebb and flow with the tide  
The ocean's current is my guide  
Float or sink by its whim  
The moon arises from its rim  
She bathes the night in silver white  
And nurses me on cool moonlight

My belly swells and takes it fill  
Of unencumbered pure good will  
Everlasting milky stream  
Manifesting cosmic dream  
Held within this flowing current  
I sleep a soothing deep descent  
And when the river's course is run  
I awaken to

### **The Mountain**

always the mountain  
sentinel of the gods  
universal sacred ground  
progenitor of myth and legend  
preverbal terrestrial  
ancient  
before a thought of time  
and I sitting at its foot  
ponder, question, admit  
ignorance  
of man and mountain  
my priorness a pretense  
a surface event  
affected familiarity  
of self, others, mountain  
imaged associations  
experience abducted by the mind  
guttured of aliveness  
stripped of its soul  
filed for sterile reference  
knowledge and experience  
reduced to endless triangulations  
projections, assumptions, identities  
death in a tenuous charade of life  
exposed lack of substance  
ceaseless activity  
masking internal poverty  
true to a fault  
ignorance is bliss  
the extent of my ignorance  
revealed  
a child in the wilderness  
longing  
to know, to love, to be  
sits  
empty  
upon the foot of sanctity  
a true question embodied

Grace

the mountain  
stirs, responds, opens

Grace

I  
rise, step, enter

## **The Crucible of the Heart**

I enter through the mountain's door  
Into a realm of ancient lore  
The mountain stirs, the door unmade  
I'm swallowed whole and unafraid  
Time and distance can't be gauged  
A new dimension I've engaged  
I'm ignorance and emptiness  
Or openness and innocence  
In blackest night my sight returns  
In nothingness a question burns  
Deep in the hall of the mountain king  
Solid stone is whispering  
It speaks the tongue of primal earth  
Antiquity's very berth  
Descending bedrock passageways  
A labyrinth, a quarried maze  
I'm deep within the mountain's veins  
And sense the life it contains  
This world within ageless stone  
Is more alive than flesh and bone  
The energies are rich and sweet  
A rhythmic pulse, a sound heartbeat  
I'm swept upon a swift downdraft  
This artery an endless shaft  
Pierces ore and molten core  
Beyond a dream's farthest shore  
A crystal cave, a work of art  
The crucible of the heart  
Here within the heart's lodestone  
Love of truth sits on the throne  
I'm carried to a rendezvous  
An alchemist steps in view  
He's clothed in every ancient rune  
His energy a vast typhoon  
He welcomes me with words unsaid  
In his hand my heart of lead  
The light and sound an orchestra  
The world implodes supernova  
Everything is muted light  
Opalescent pearly white  
The alchemist is pure presence  
The heart a golden eloquence  
No art or words could touch this spell  
That permeates every cell  
It speaks of love, but not a word  
It sings a song no ear has heard  
Everything I've suffered for  
All the longing at my core  
The emptiness, the poverty  
The burning hunger just to be  
Is all fulfilled by what I see  
A merging gold sublimity

I reach to take this blessing in  
I'm back in chambered crystalline  
The alchemist shakes his head  
In his hand my heart of lead  
Listen to the words I speak  
They hold the key to all you seek  
Quicksilver slips through grasping hand  
The heart's desire one can't command  
When you reach to take control  
You lose the grace of the soul  
Life is one simple choice  
It's made without a human voice  
To search for life is in vain  
The Life is closer than your vein  
This lump of lead to you seems dead  
The bright light show you seek instead  
But everything you have known  
Exists within this leaden stone  
The key to life lies in the heart  
The Life and it never part  
It's always there inside of you  
But may lay hidden from your view  
There's nothing you can really do  
But open up and let it through  
The heart, a loving crucible  
Makes lead itself reducible  
Allow yourself to disappear  
For all of life volunteer  
I look into his eyes again  
Reality begins to spin  
First I'm me then I'm not  
Then I'm him and then unwrought  
All is but a leaden tomb  
Or possibly the mountain's womb  
A living solid nothingness  
A pure and pregnant emptiness  
Something else that permeates  
Solid space it saturates  
Penetrating density  
Filling up what seems empty  
Whatever this reality  
I am it and it is me  
Life a boundless living sea  
The heart connects humanity  
I'm accessibility  
A heart of receptivity  
An endless well of sweet honey  
An elemental mercury  
Everything and I are one  
The Life, the Heart and

## **The Mountain**