

2pm

Momus

Post morning, pre-mortem
I promised the ghost of Meleager
I would marry Deianira
So I went to Calydon where Oeneus was king
Stopping to fight the river god Achelous on the way
I won when I broke his horn
In the pyramid at Giza
I become lost in a succession of chambers
I am blind like Homer yet strangely I still see
Screenprinted cows and silver foil
Gigantic ants scuttling on a motherboard
While I sew with Ariadne, the white rabbit
Scurries away down next door's burrow
Two in the afternoon
In an ephemeral hospital
The radio therapy ward is filled with tiny lights
A pile of dim barely perceptible earth in a heap
And spiritual distant music
At two in the afternoon
I wander in Venice with Von Aschenbach
Seeking a lost child in a red cape
Coughing blood
And the swine of Circe come running to their deaths
Maddened by the singing of the sirens
Winter fog rolling in off the lido
Sometimes a god crosses your path here unannounced
In the pyramid the mummy grows mouldy at the last
At two in the afternoon
Haile Selassie orders a stamp collection to be brought
Lifts the stamps with tweezers and places them back
I leave him to his pastime
For time will probably pass regardless
I strike out from Alexandria to the Athenian apartment
Of my ninth year
Lycabetus blasted in monastic rock
The hot mountains snow capped with marble
Dust storms over Psychico
Lime Cordial on Eucalyptus Square
Where is it now?
And where also my Parisian child bride?
Into the sea they flow
With Villon's medieval snow
Four legs in the morning, two in the afternoon
Three at evening,
Flat on our backs by dawn
Two in the afternoon
Gracchus the hunter joins me now
He offers me the oars and I row
From one Greek island to the next
While Gracchus writes, if it be possible so deep in
death to write
The secrets of the world
In the margins of a little girl's spidery pencilled
Spice Girls scrapbook
Picked up from the ground in Hackney
The crows of Tokyo are sombre umbrellas
Flapping atop telegraph poles in the rainy season

A writer hurries by dressed in a restrained check
pattern
Composing in his head the 31st syllable of a tanka
Leigh Bowery is sitting at his sewing machine
Corpulent, pale eyed
Flash forward: he is stammering "a few more days"
As they threaten to turn off his life support machine
And the ECG bleep goes spastic
Slavic women decorate their anguish with ullulations
The mongolian terror is fresh in their memories
Grim dawn comes from the east bringing carrion
Over the grass of the highlands
Gulls girn, denouncing all culprits
The skull prickles, the hairs rise
Poe indulges in voluptuous melancholia, polysyllabic
Like the grass the horsemen know
We perish
For me it's 2PM
For the moment life goes on
And the Minotaur plays Nintendo
Basho squats before the emperor
The former thirteen and a half year old genius
Exposes himself in a subway passage
To a halfwit girl he scares half out of her wits
As Brahms completes his Requiem
Shakespeare and the Bishop Of Winchester
Are teasing the fraus in the stews of Southwark
They are baiting bears in the nearby pit
The arena has been flooded
Shakespeare and the Bishop take their seats for the re-
enactment of
The sea battle between the Genji and Haike
The imperial boat is already on fire
The battle was lost centuries before
Deianira agrees to be my wife
We purchase an ivy green Lexus, flagship of the range
And live, discreetly luxurious, in a premier shell loft
conversion in the Hollywood hills
The converted observatory at Palo Alto
Three at evening,
Flat on our backs by dawn
For me it's 2PM
For the moment life goes on
Four legs in the morning, two in the afternoon
Three at evening
Flat on our backs by dawn