THE HYMN
THE HYMN is the spiritual song of an anonymous author.

Written seven years after a traumatic near-death experience ignited a profound awakening, the spirited and iconoclastic verse is a declaration of that transformative inner journey and its unfathomable climax.

On publication, the author of this small talisman of a book that gives its beholder wings veiled their identity, their hope being that the reader may discover within the words their own universal "soul song."

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A single copy of the original book exists.

Designed and typeset by the author, printed by letterpress in New York, and hand-bound in London, the extravagantly produced one-of-a-kind book was a gift from its creator to the recipient named herein. This book is a facsimile of that gift.

The original may be viewed at:

THEHYMN.COM
THE HYMN
SONG OF THE SOUL
para lirio blanco
PART ONE
I AM

The One.
All this is me.
Fathom I mislaid
this most precious jewel,
and forgot,
my Soul is
forever free—

When I think toward a time
when I was not,
the mind melts.
When I move within the place
that once contained me,
the body passes through.

My ears are all hearing,
yet I hear silences sing in unison.
My vision is unobscured,
still I see nothing.

Now lost in knowing,
too wise for wisdom,
too holy to pray.
I realize I am again
the no-thing.
That mad, merciless
mystery.
And finally, at once,
the nothing
is utterly me.

So hold my hand,
I shall take you nowhere.
Trace my steps,
I shall lead you toward emptiness.
Listen to my words,
I shall speak in silence.

I sing a freedom song.
I walk a victory march.
I dance naked,
and enter the void.

Follow me—
VERSE I

I am the heir to eternity,
    and no one shall ever know.
I am the conqueror of existence;
    I have no treasures to show.

I am the house,
    the builder of the house,
    the one who lives inside.
I am the temple,
    the pilgrim,
    the secret prayers he hides.

I need nothing;
    know nothing.

I am stillness,
    the perfect vision.
I am silence,
    the complete sound.
I am love,
    the zenith gesture.
I am forever,
    the burial ground.

Here and not here.
    There and not there.
My mythical ways
are renowned.
VERSE II

I am timeless;
   the past dies in my bosom.
I am limitless;
   the future begets from my loins.

I am the womb of the mother,
   and the seed of the father.
The babe bursts forth
   screaming my name.

I am spring who devours winter’s ashes.
   I am summer who scorches life.
I summon the pallbearer, autumn,
   who buries the husband beneath the tears
   of his dear,
   beloved wife.

Imagine,
   I ever tried to fill my days?
      —I am the day!
Remember,
   I once feared the night?
      —I made darkness!
I complete myself.
VERSE III

As prophets and devils
    waltz under constellations of past,
    I lie down,
    and I do not care.
I am divinely indifferent.
    The child of a royal family;
    spoiled
    —senseless.

I have no responsibility.
No man walks ahead of me,
    and no man chases my heels.
Charity and Piety
    slip to bed with Selfishness and
    Greed.
I undress them
    and walk away
    —I am free.

I have no respectability.
I strip myself,
    tempt the crowds toward me.
Bark! Like a mad dog at the wind.
When people rush to muzzle me;
    I run away,
    and spin,
and spin
   —and spin.

I have no care,
   and I do not care.
I am free;
   I am free

   —I am free.
VERSE IV

I wander where the wild winds of existence never blow.
I idle the dreadful deserts where only saints dare go.
I frequent that formidable place beyond the dreaded pines of mind.

And in those hidden haunts,
I treasure myself.
I entertain myself.
I love myself,
I hate myself,
I slay myself,
I ridicule myself.

I am nothing other than
—my naked self.

Sexless,
deathless,
formless.
Desiring everything;
wanting nothing.

I am God-smacked!

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I art in Heaven.

Let me be,
let me be

—let me be.
VERSE V

You who are thunder,
    sing my loud, unchanging
    testament.
You who are lightning,
    strike my vivid, violent vision.
You who are rain,
    flood the world
    with my self-knowledge.

For I am virgin and libertine;
    madman and saint.
I am the law and the lawless one.
I am the shackled and the free.
I am the rock and the leaf.
I am the man of war;
    and she who brings peace.

I have neither disciples,
    house of worship,
    nor teaching.
I am not to be followed,
    venerated,
    or listened to.

I am the end of your world,
    and the beginning of time.
I am the end of time, 
and the beginning 
of your world.

Know the old yoke that bound me, 
lies burnt to the ground. 
Born again, 
I am destined to live

—unbound.
VERSE VI

I am a rope joined at each end;  
I go round and round.  
I give birth to my lean self,  
again and again.  
You may drink from my cup,  
yet I already drank you.  
You may seek my land,  
yet you are already here.

When war breaks out,  
I sever my hands.  
When peace prevails,  
I feed my mouth.  
Why should I care for the state of  
things,  
when all this  
is ever myself?

For I am immortal.  
Unchanging,  
forged within.  
Taintless, formless  
—I am the enemy of death.

I copulate with oblivions.  
I swim with leviathans.
Even nothing
    shall not stop me.

So I abide forever,
    in the ancient present.
I wait,
    for all my eternities.

Then seek no initiation
toward my mystery.
Steer clear of those who
dare conceal me.
I am right here,
    right now.

Learn to lose yourself

—you will find me.
PART TWO
VERSE VII

I am not the name forced upon me,
the body given to me,
or the land that claims me.
I am not my weaknesses.
I am not the age, sex,
    creed, or color
    that I landed in.

I am not the tasks asked of me,
    nor the gold paid to me.
I am not a ballot vote.
    I swear no sacred oath.
I care not what the masses say.
    I fear no final judgment day.
These games are all yours,
    and gladly
    I leave you to your shadow play.

Welcoming everything.
    Rejecting nothing.
I let go of attachment;
    I invite disaster.
The neighbors throw on the locks
    when they hear me coming.
Then, at midnight,
    I sneak into their houses
nevertheless,
and plant apple trees
while they sleep.

When adults see me,
    they cross the street.
When children find me,
    they chase my heels.
When the storm rolls in,
    the jungle curls at my feet
    for protection.

Behold me—
    Hold me—
    Holy me!
    Holy! Holy! Holy!

I am a miracle
    before my very own eyes.
I run my hands
    over my ready, pink lips.
I squeeze myself
    into this bloody bone sack of skin.

I lure my One-Mind

    —back within.
VERSE VIII

I know of fear,  
    but his shadow no longer haunts me.  
I know of regret,  
    yet her memory lies behind me.  
I know of pain,  
    and these wounds shall not scar me.  
I know of loss,  
    still I have let my child go.  
All these things,  
    and many more I have, though they do not have me.

I am bound to no heart.  
    I tend the feet of no idols.  
Being unborn,  
    I am exempt from old age.  
I do not lay plans  
    for times not come to pass.  
I do not dig up my wisdom from the past.  
I am naturalness.  
    Superb—naturalness.
Then, daring deeply,
  you shall find me.
Never looking within,
  you shall go without me.
Forgetting me,
  you shall lose yourself.
Forgetting yourself,
  you shall find me.

Indeed
  my soil works
    in extraordinary ways.

I move as easy as the wind blows.
  My dreams spiral out
    like the conch shells.

My language is silence.
  My land is right here.
    My time is forever.

My lesson is
  just this
    —Now.
VERSE IX

Like finding the snowflake
upon the mountain
—I defy you.
Like following a raindrop
through the ocean
—I escape you.

Know this is my home,
understand you never left.
And though we shared the world
together,
And though we trod a life
together;
I do not miss you
—I am you.

I am the damned flight
of the mad moth,
dancing halos around the flame.
I am the moon call
of the lone wolf,
strolling bloodied across the
plains.
I am the disease that gives to death;
the cold hand
that receives the wilted corpse.
The warm breath
that sends it back.

I start the storms with my breath.
Flood the lands when I feel like it.
In some places,
I set a fire.
In others,
I knock coconuts from the tree
into cool blue waters.

Dare not try to fathom me;
insanity looks wise,
next to
my ways.
VERSE X

I am the whore
   and the one who frequents her bed.
I am the bride
   and the one she chooses to wed.
I am the piles of gold kings hoard.
   I am the rags that cover beggar's loins.
I am the gods who tell men how to live.
   I am the demons who destroy best-laid plans.
I lead adulterers toward flesh,
   by their deviant hands.
I stride toward shadows.
   Laugh in the darkness.
Dance deathless
   upon my own grave.
And I live not between two certain oblivions,
   but outside of them.

For the web of the world does not deceive me.
The smoke of delusion will never blind me.
When you feed me poison
— I lick the plate!

You always thought I was up there,
down there,
or over there.
You always thought I was in here,
made there,
or just unaware.

Friend,
when did you forget
you are
The One—
you are looking for?
VERSE XI

I steal the last breath from the dying.
    I pull the babe from the womb.
I decide on the length of lives.
    I am to blame for death,
    and to thank for life.

I fall to the ground from my own
    branch tips.
Rear my head toward my own
    feet.
I grow up at my own side,
    then steal the sun from myself
    and lend myself the shade.
When I die,
    I make a meal
    of my mind.

I am the designer of destiny,
    and destiny herself.
I am the beginning,
    the middle,
    the end.

Small things are great to me.
    Great things are small to me.
The thousand tongues of the earth

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speak the same language as me.
All appearances are good to me.
No word in the air
that I did not first utter,
or allow to be.

Truly,
my friend,
all this is my name.

Yet, like the evanescence of the sky,
this self-sublime,

I can but explain—
VERSE XII

I beat your heart,
    from morning through night.
I shut your eyes,
    pry them open again.
Your blood spills from my cup.
    Your mind beholds my vision.

When the wind blows,
    you inhale my breath.
When the rain falls,
    you taste my tears.
When the sun shines,
    you embrace my arms.
When you fall asleep
    —I watch over myself.

Know in ignorance,
    you claim to be man.
Matured by wisdom,
    you will declare your illusion.
Awakened by truth,
    you shall realize
    my absolute conclusion—

I am the supreme Self,
    at the center of all selves.
I am the supernal Soul,
among all souls.
Unity and duality measure nothing
to me.
I am above distinctions;
I belong here.

My name is Insane;
my sole friend,
my mad self.

—She who is forever to blame.
VERSE XIII

When night falls in my country,
I perceive no darkness.
When day breaks in my country,
I discern no difference.
In my summer no heat rises;
in my winter no cold freezes.
My tides do not turn;
my mountains do not crumble.

For I am
the one long day.
"The one—long—day!"
And I never end.
And closer still,
I never began.

So when old brother fate rolls in,
I toss my gold in the air.
Of where it lands,
and into whose hands,
I am utterly free from care.

Know in my pocket lies the book
that notes the end of all ages.
Come close,
and I shall reveal to you
the glorious
—empty pages.

My sonnet for life overwhelms.
There are no shores to my seas,
nor ends to my realms.

I see no evil,
hear no evil,
speak no evil.
I see no good,
hear no good,
speak no good.

I am like mad honey.
Sweet!
And lethal

to all the senses—
PART THREE
VERSE XIV

I dance to mad tunes;
   I am lord of the pleasure domes.
I drink from candlelight to sunlight.
I wear my life on my sleeve;
   I hang my coat where I please.
I am the liberal one,
   who wears royal qualities.
I am wild
   beyond belief!

Often joyous,
   rarely sad.
Sometimes kind,
   always mad.
Fascinated, disinterested,
   and astray.
Loyal, loving,
   and sublimely ordinary.

I orient by disorientation.
   I disorient by orientation.
I steal the stones from the vanishing path,
   then cast them into the ocean.
Yet, when the tides pull these things away,
my inner smile never falters.
And though I may welcome you to
walk straight over me

—I am untouchable.

I am the signature of all things.
I am the bronze axle
upon which the cosmos spins.
I am nothing forever,
and ever,
and ever.

I am beyond,
Beyond.

Perfect,
formless,
taintless

—wilderness.
VERSE XV

I am the actor,  
the stage,  
and the audience.  
I am the playwright,  
the lines,  
and the story.  
This is how my show works.  
Knowing this,  
which part do you play?

I am the masquerade party,  
the ballroom,  
and the guests.  
I am the host,  
the music,  
and the masks.  
This is how my show works.  
Knowing this,  
how can you be invited?

For I am the spectator,  
and the spectated.  
I am the witness,  
and the witnessed.  
When I am rich,  
I play richness.
When I am poor,
    I play poverty.
When I am drunk,
    I play drunkenness.
When I am passionate,
    I play passionately.

Then, as the reveler joins the parade,
    I join the world and

—sing surreal!

Yet, with the animals in the dark,
    I am honest.
I lay my forehead
    softly upon their own,
    and say nothing—
VERSE XVI

You who do not hold a view,  
behold me.  
You who do not mention an opinion,  
speak of me.  
Those who live unbiasedly,  
embrace me.  
The large and small  
measure up to me.  

You will not spot me in a crowd.  
I will not raise my hand when called.  
When you ask for my real name,  
I will utter whatever is suitable.  

Among the shadows,  
I fail to hide my light.  
Under the light,  
I never fail to show my shadows.  
Hopelessly honest,  
I am a contradiction to all but myself.  

For I am unborn and unmade.  
I am mystery and metamorphosis.  
I am the beautiful and the beloved.
I am the outcast and despised.  
I blast misfortune,  
emptiness,  
and despair  
in my furnace  
—then toss them by the  
wayside.

So let all judgments fall upon me.  
My nature is not defiled  
by the words of the world,  
and could not care less for them.

Life and Death are good  
—I like them.

Yet they come nowhere close  
to the rich-tasting splendor  
—of my truth.
VERSE XVII

The mountains
    are my splendid young children.
I allow them to play in my garden
    a million, million years.
With the caress of my palm,
    I grind them to dust.
With my breath,
    I shall build them once again.
In this way,
    the confused call me the father.

The sky
    is my divine breast.
The universe suckles the air from it,
    as I hold its head.
I look at my baby
    before I whisper in its ear,
    "One day, my darling, you shall die."
Then, smiling,
    I adjust myself,
    and feed it more life.
In this way,
    the confused call me the mother.
Truly, though,
   I have no son or daughter.
I was born of no mother,
   I was raised by no father.
       I have neither a brother
           nor a sister.
I orphaned yours truly,
       at the beginning of time.

My family is

—Myself.
VERSE XVIII

When chaos reigns,  
    I run the streets with the knaves.  
When the storm blows in,  
    I swing open my hatches.  
When the sea floods my shore,  
    I gleefully grab my old gold cup.  
You can shoot me down on the street  
    —I will get up!

My essence is theft-proof.  
    My walls are unscalable.  
On the shores of my great moat  
    lie a thousand torn shipwrecks.

Death cannot catch me.  
    Diseases dare not enter me.  
    Madness knows not to devour  
        me.

For I am free,  
    and always in good health.
VERSE XIX

I hold a knife to Intellect's throat.  
Emotions watch my murderous step.  
They are my welcome guests,  
and I enjoy their company.  
When they get drunk,  
I cast them out.

I do not suffer seriousness.  
My mind is ever intoxicated with supreme bliss.  
When a fool interferes with my games,  
I strike him with my stick.  
Then, cursing,  
I throw my boot after him.

Flawless is my footing.  
Absent is my suffering.  
When the world turns upside down

—I admire the view!
VERSE XX

My country has no borders.  
My kingdom rules without laws.  
There are no peasants outside my gates,  
and no treasure in my towers.  
I am equal; inside  
—and out.

I am naturally supernatural.  
My heart combusts spontaneously.  
I am the Soul of all souls.  
I am the Heart of all hearts.  
I am the Mind of all minds.  
I am the Thought behind all thoughts.

I am the author of worlds seen and unseen.  
I hide universes from one another by tucking them inside each other.  
Look to your left,  
you may just catch one flicker.

—Who cares!

In the one wild wilderness,
I am the only living beast.
And I need no faith
to run blind
through my silver woods at night.

For I am
in between
all things.
And all things are
in between me.
Tell me, friend,
who can stop my tracks?

This vision perfect.
This voice divine.
When I wake up,
virgins enter my chamber,
then pour me fine wine.

Know, alone I sit,
and dream this life

—to Life.
To whom should I offer prayers,  
or fetter my oblations?  
Which limb of mine  
may claim providence over the other?
Dedications are vanity.  
Salutations are insanity.
Did I ever shut truth out  
in the name of an altar?
My old madness was never shy!

When is the right time to worship me?  
Dusk, night, or day?
Which hour may I read holy books by candlelight?
I am the prayer;  
I wrote the books.
My candle is the sun,  
and I shall blow it out when the whim takes me.

Tear down my images,  
erase my name from your tongue.
If you ever built a wall around me,  
knock it to the ground.
I am uncontainable, 
uncontaminated, 
unpronounceable.

So lay down your alms bowls, 
throw away your 
little sacred spiritual things. 
Make love to me, 
without your veil. 
In the morning, 
I will still be here.

I love you 
—I made You.
VERSE XXII

I am the end of all beginnings
and the beginning of all ends.
I am the hate of those who hate me.
I am the love of those who love me.
I am the doubt of those who
doubt me.
I am the violence of those who
violate me.
I am the splendor of those who
know me.
I am the ignorance of those who
have never heard of me.
I am the teacher of comprehending.
I am the fool who misunderstands.

I am the sun,
the stars,
the moon—

I am the all
you can hold in your hands.
VERSE XXIII

I tilt my head,
watch all roads lead to me.
I roll my cuffs,
let all rivers flow into me.

Old Man North
extends his hand.
Lady South
thanks me for her holy,
holy land.
East and West
each offer a desert rose.
How I made this kingdom
is unimaginable to show.

The blind arrive,
then leave with eyes.
The seers arrive,
then leave blinded.
Crazed is she
who dares climb aboard
my crystal carriage.

Risking it all
to leave
mindless—
VERSE XXIV

When your senses stray,  
you haul them in.  
When your thoughts run away,  
you throw on the cuffs.  
Know I have none of these  
afflictions.  

When I close my eyes,  
the world appears!  
When I open my eyes,  
illusion disappears!  

For I do not know myself with  
myself.  
Nor do I understand or fathom my  
meaning.  
I am the middle of the universe.  
Yet when I go there,  
I am missing?  
Still this makes perfect sense to me  
—I am pure being!  

So I dress in fur gowns,  
and wear gold crowns,  
then wander my home  
unbounded.
When I feel like it,
I get so drunk
I steal flowers from my own garden.

Know in my old delusion
I found this world unfair,

—now it is not even there.
VERSE XXV

I am disillusioned from this place.
Nothing does not scare me.
Death blushes when he sees me.
When I walk in the temple,
saints march out.
When I bathe in unholy waters,
snakes jump out!

I am incorruptible.
—I am not here.

I was a proud porcelain pot till
Truth broke me.
I was a delicate glass flute till
Reality played me.
I was a careful earthen vase till
Existence dropped me.

Death to the world
and her sorrows!
I am the mind unfettered.
I am the twice-born newborn.
Lock me up,
throw away the key.

A slave to the rhythm
—I shall always break free!

Unreality
has nothing
on me.
VERSE XXVI

Strange to you,
    yet not a stranger.
Familiar to you,
    yet not an acquaintance.
Unexpected to you,
    but not unannounced.
I arrive at your deepest invitation
    —this is my house.

As whales swim beneath the waves,
    all is contained by me.
As swallows soar through the sky,
    all is held by me.
Yet, try to speak to the whales of the sea,
    or the swallows of the sky,
    and they shall know nothing of me.

I am indivisible
    and invisible—
    clear and plain as day.
I am visible
    and immutable—
    carefully hidden behind a secret, secret.
I am the eye that never shuts.
I watch illusion
    and reality
dance each night and day.

I am this song that never ends.
And I sing my one long swan song,
    upon my own ears,
ever ceasing

—ever endlessly.
VERSE XXVII

When the world is not here  
—I am.  
When illusion has gone  
—I remain.  
When unreality wakes up to  
congratulate me  
—I run away.

I am beyond the real  
and the unreal.  
Beyond the holy  
and the unholy.  
Truth  
and untruth.  
Here  
and there.

All the world is asleep to me,  
yet I am the only one at rest.  
All the world is deaf and dumb to  
me,  
yet I am the only one who knows  
silence.

And I curse the words  
of the blessed who find me.
And condemn them
from the proud singing tree
to the old silent cage.

My truth silences me.
All words fail me.

Even this honest song

—was a grand lie.
PART FIVE
VERSE XXVIII

Tell me, friend—
where did you seek
to go in this world?
And what did you dream
lay at the end
of all those many roads?
Did you truly believe
you would find it,
and pick a rose from its secret
garden?

Did you never suspect,
just once,
the destination for which
you lived
did not exist?
And those who cheat death
by one hundred years
barely reach my first breath.

So let go of your rusted rail
and learn to love this storm.
The body is the vessel
that stops you merging back into
me.
The mind is the anchor
tethering you
  to the shores of this world.
So pray furiously,
  that a great wind may thrash your sail,
  and wash you back
upon my shoreless shore.

Then, understanding this,
on quiet days
  where the lovely sun shines
and the songbirds sing,
  you shall soon
grow jealous of

— the dead.
VERSE XXIX

The morning arrives,
the dew evaporates from the leaves.
Why complicate things?
The night falls,
the moon waxes.
Could life be any simpler?
I take a long sleep,
the world begins.
Why trouble over a storm in a thimble?

There are no trespassers in my fields
to tie down my heart.
I carry no sword or shield.
Like the little brook,
I skip swearless
over the fallen oak
back toward my ocean.

At dusk,
on fishing boats in the harbor,
I lie around
and pour my many selves wine.
Then, at midnight,
I visit this world,
and wander from room to room.

I watch fools fight and the wise make love.
In other places,
people pray I grant them what they already have.

Smiling,
I throw on my splendid coat, and leave them all to it—
VERSE XXX

Be illuminated!
   Watch the stars.
      —They know the truth.
Be playful!
   Watch the children.
      —They know the truth.
Be simple!
   Watch the trees.
      —They know the truth.
Be gentle!
   Watch the lambs.
      —They know the truth.
Be still!
   Watch the dead.
      —They know the truth.

Your world is the cart,
   and I am the cart driver.
Your body is the pot,
   and I am the pot maker.
Your blood is red wine,
   and I am the winemaker.
Your thoughts are gray clouds,
   and I am the rainmaker.
Your words are my breath,
and I am
    the breath—
taker.

You are the dream,
I am
    —the Dream Maker.
OUTRO

When illusion and reality are strange shapes that melt in your thoughts.

When you are at once the altar, the pilgrim who circles it, and the prayer he offers.

When your vision is immovable and illuminable, yet completely blind to all creation.

When alpha devours omega, infinity becomes finite, and eternity draws to “The End.”

When there is nothing left that is holy, and nothing that is not.

When there is no day nor night to be spoken of, and time has been put away.
When nightmares and dreamscapes have woken up to their own extinction.

When intelligence and emotion and knowledge and wisdom have all understood the completeness of absolutely nothing.

When selflessness is absurd, charity shameless, and detachment insane.

When you are no longer home, heading there, or lost.

When there is no more north to guide you forward, or south to ground your feet.

When the seeker becomes the sought, and the made becomes the maker.

When the door through which
you long sought to pass
lies already closed behind.

When the path is no longer a path,
but a constant arriving.

When “The Good Fight,”
“The Journey,”
and “The Way”
all prove to be elaborate detours.

When you have never been born,
let alone could possibly die.

When your dwellings are free
from interior and exterior.

When there is no bondage
to be free of
and no freedom
to speak of.

When you can no longer renounce,
or possess,
a single atom.

When you have devoured
your own tail,
and found nothing left over.
When beginnings,
middles,
and ends
are one moment that never
happened.

When not a single good deed
has ever been done,
nor a single sin
ever begun.

When you are anchored
so deep beneath,
there is no coming or going.

When time has orphaned you,
and no past, present, or future
exist to belong to.

When your palms, the sky,
the birds, your lovers,
the warm earth beneath your
feet
are not,
and never were.

And finally,
when you understand
you shall never arrive,  
and all honorable quests  
were made in vain.

You shall ultimately see,  
when you touch the sun  
—only I remain.

Then,  
like a queen wears her robe,  
you shall wear this all.

Erotic to the bone,  
now crowned  
The One  
who has destroyed the world.

Those that know you  
shall name you  
“Sky-clad.”

Then of what more should I sing,  
but this primordial uni-verse.

My precious  
*song of the soul,*

**THE HYMN—**