

## I

Say not that thou art cheated of thy part  
Nor lamentation make, nor tempests move,  
For though it is an oft seducing art  
It will not soften liking into love.

But thou, as oceans oversalt the shore,  
Or rivers burst their banks and start anew,  
Take what I give thee and desire still more.  
The seed o'erwatered will not show his head,  
Cannot be coax'd like milk by maiden's hand,  
Not every rose falls blushing to the bed;  
Some wither ere they rest on fertile land.  
    To yield sweet interest golden flow'rs must stay  
    As dry by night as sun-touched during day.

## II

The master of himself is truly free  
Without the bonds of duty to restrain  
All his desires, base as they may be,  
For only shouldered angels stop his gain.  
In asking if he might do this or that  
He asks himself alone, and answer makes  
Without a check against his swinging bat  
So if he misses, loses while he takes.  
And if he strikes himself, he is to blame  
And if he bleeds, no other holds the knife  
There is no foe to beat but his own name  
Which crumbles at the slightest threat to life.  
    To pledge unto another, make the choice:  
    Hold on to lonely freedom or rejoice.

### III

The only number that is real is naught  
Which stands with nothing there to hold its hand  
Against display has zero proudly faught  
Not seeming other, neither small nor grand.  
Why should an absence wear a mask to hide  
Its essence, or to fool a judging eye?  
You cannot join a harsh condemning side  
Against both lack of truth and lack of lie.  
But naught wraps round to meet its darkest shade  
Infinity, which too is always true  
And boasts an endlessness on which to trade.  
From this real number then you should take cue,  
    Shun all illusions and false faces yet  
    But give without the need to ever get.

### IV (Le déjeuner sur l'herbe)

Two men in hats, and suits, and well-shone shoes  
Enjoy a picnic in a wooded green  
The woman, nude, beside them is not news;  
You care not that you see but being seen  
To look, to gaze, to stare at her bare skin  
You find yourself on moss beneath a tree  
Consorting with a prostitute - a sin  
Which, much against your wishes, all can see

Which, much against your wishes, all can see.  
For though you lauded naked flesh before  
You stood esteeming far removed in time  
And left, unnoticed, once you looked no more,  
Content that secret sin is not a crime.

But as you gaze at others so might they  
State back until you let them have their say.

## V

Use only pronouns one and two with me  
Don't ask my name or gender; do not guess  
I know you're looking, but you'll never see  
Past smudged up lenses waiting to confess  
That they're not ready to reveal the world  
To one, as you, who gulps before he chews  
Perhaps one day the map will be unfurled  
You'll button up your jacket, tie your shoes,  
And hear the things you never thought you'd taste  
The softest velvet smells will waft your way  
You'll stick your tongue out, not a drop to waste,  
And drown in dark harmonics every day.

But while your glasses still obscure your sight  
I'll thank you to shut up and trust I'm right.