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Drops of Sea, XXV

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DROPS OF SEA, XXV

Doughty: Drops of Sea, XXV

This is the sea . . .
And sleeping shoulders of power,
And rippling flanks of power;
And bird forms reflect in its silver skin.

This is pastel morning of soft wind.
This is placid fury of prehistory.
This is exile from subtle hate of culture.
This is the naked, the lonely, the terrible with awe.

Marsh grasses gently wave the venturer back.
Curls of foam hardened into driftwood
Look wry warning to the venturer.

If one go back by the causeways,
Passing the little store proud with tin badges,
Crossing the drawbridge tense on marrowy swivel,
Splitting the village squat in languid smoke,
Skimming the hillsides pocked with portraits of
commerce—

If one return on purring metaphor
Of Paleozoic monster-power so smooth it hardly purrs;
If one retreat crestfallen
Fearing his self-exile was cowardice,

Screaming silently new doubt
Lest he defiled societal crime too much—
If one turn back . . .
He will come to a fork among structures
Leading to a spire and a tower.

He will choose theologian standing beneath rose window
Waiting with the cheer of an upright coffin;
Or choose psychiatrist ambushed at clinic arch
With the promise of a miseracord in jeweled hilt.

They speak primly of abandonments:

Repent. Come unto the fold of the Lord . . .

Confess. Dissolve abnormal consternation . . .

But they are saying:

"Repent logic and mumble platitudes . . ."

"Confess insight and throttle rebellion . . ."

Barren dunes implore the venturer back.

Dramatic palm leaves wave the venturer back.

For this is the naked, the lonely, the terrible with awe.

But one in exile clings to his prints on the sand.

Surfbathers take the causeways back

To stonescape crystallized in ethic sloth.

LE GARDE S. DOUGHTY

RECEIVE HER GENTLY,
THERE IS MUCH TO LEARN

Receive her gently, there is much to learn

In years that will dissolve like snails to clay:

You shall become each other, turn by turn.

The dark dark roots are where the trees sojourn,

Make you no feast of proverbs, love her way:

Receive her gently, there is much to learn.

Divided from each other being born,

Attend her wisely, for she moves to stay:

You shall become each other, turn by turn.

Deny the showboat and the apple worm;

Be in each other, let the horses neigh:

Receive her gently, there is much to learn.