

# POESIA AO MEIO DIA



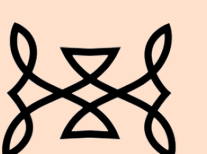
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939)

## WHO GOES WITH FERGUS?

WHO WILL GO DRIVE WITH FERGUS NOW,  
AND PIERCE THE DEEP WOOD'S WOVEN SHADE,  
AND DANCE UPON THE LEVEL SHORE?  
YOUNG MAN, LIFT UP YOUR RUSSET BROW,  
AND LIFT YOUR TENDER EYELIDS, MAID,  
AND BROOD ON HOPES AND FEAR NO MORE.

AND NO MORE TURN ASIDE AND BROOD  
UPON LOVE'S BITTER MYSTERY;  
FOR FERGUS RULES THE BRAZEN CARS,  
AND RULES THE SHADOWS OF THE WOOD,  
AND THE WHITE BREAST OF THE DIM SEA  
AND ALL DISHEVELLED WANDERING STARS.

*FROM THE ROSE.*

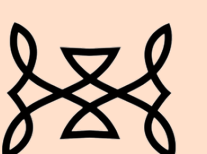


## JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

### THE HOLY OFFICE

MYSELF UNTO MYSELF WILL GIVE  
THIS NAME, KATHARSIS PURGATIVE.  
I, WHO DISHEVELLED WAYS FORSOOK  
TO HOLD THE POET'S GRAMMAR BOOK,  
BRINGING TO TAVERN AND TO BROTHEL  
THE MIND OF WITTY ARISTOTLE  
LEST BARDS IN THE ATTEMPT SHOULD ERR  
MUST HERE BE MY INTERPRETER.  
WHEREFORE RECEIVE NOW FROM MY LIP  
PERIPATETIC SCHOLARSHIP.  
TO ENTER HEAVEN, TRAVEL HELL,  
BE PITEOUS OR TERRIBLE  
ONE POSITIVELY NEEDS THE EASE  
OF PLENARY INDULGENCES.  
FOR EVERY TRUE BORN MYSTICIST  
A DANTE IS, UNPREJUDICED,  
WHO SAFE AT INGLENOOK, BY PROXY,  
HAZARDS EXTREMES OF HETERODOXY,  
LIKE HIM WHO FINDS JOY AT A TABLE  
PONDERING THE UNCOMFORTABLE.  
RULING ONE'S LIFE BY COMMONSENSE  
HOW CAN ONE FAIL TO BE INTENSE?  
BUT I MUST NOT ACCOUNTED BE  
ONE OF THAT MUMMING COMPANY  
WITH HIM WHO HIES HIM TO APPEASE  
HIS GIDDY DAMES' FRIVOLITIES  
WHILE THEY CONSOLE HIM WHEN HE WHINGES  
WITH GOLD-EMBROIDERED CELTIC FRINGES  
OR HIM WHO SOBER ALL THE DAY  
MIXES A NAGGIN IN HIS PLAY  
OR HIM WHOSE CONDUCT 'SEEMS TO OWN'  
HIS PREFERENCE FOR A MAN OF 'TONE'  
OR HIM WHO PLAYS THE RAGGED PATCH  
TO MILLIONAIRES IN HAZELPATCH  
BUT WEEPING AFTER HOLY FAST  
CONFESSES ALL HIS PAGAN PAST  
OR HIM WHO WILL HIS HAT UNFIX  
NEITHER TO MALT NOR CRUCIFIX  
BUT SHOW ALL THAT POOR-DRESSED BE  
HIS HIGH CASTILLIAN COURTESY  
OR HIM WHO LOVES HIS MASTER DEAR  
OR HIM WHO DRINKS HIS PINT IN FEAR  
OR HIM WHO ONCE WHEN SNUG ABED  
SAW JESUS CHRIST WITHOUT HIS HEAD  
AND TRIED SO HARD TO WIN FOR US  
THE LONG-LOST WORKS OF AESCHYLUS.  
BUT ALL THESE MEN OF WHOM I SPEAK  
MAKE ME THE SEWER OF THEIR CLIQUE.  
THAT THEY MAY DREAM THEIR DREAMY DREAMS  
I CARRY OFF THEIR FILTHY STREAMS  
FOR I CAN DO THESE THINGS FOR THEM

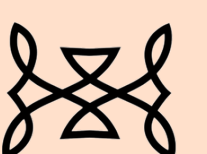
THROUGH WHICH I LOST MY DIADEM,  
THOSE THINGS FOR WHICH GRANDMOTHER CHURCH  
LEFT ME SEVERELY IN THE LURCH.  
THUS I RELIEVE THEIR TIMID ARSES,  
PERFORM MY OFFICE OF KATHARSIS.  
MY SCARLET LEAVES THEM WHITE AS WOOL.  
THROUGH ME THEY PURGE A BELLYFUL.  
TO SISTER MUMMERS ONE AND ALL  
I ACT AS VICAR-GENERAL  
AND FOR EACH MAIDEN, SHY AND NERVOUS,  
I DO A SIMILAR KIND OF SERVICE.  
FOR I DETECT WITHOUT SURPRISE  
THE SHADOWY BEAUTY IN HER EYES,  
THE 'DARE NOT' OF SWEET MAIDENHOOD  
THAT ANSWERS MY CORRUPTIVE 'WOULD,'  
WHENEVER PUBLICLY WE MEET  
SHE NEVER SEEMS TO THINK OF IT.  
AT NIGHT WHEN CLOSE IN BED SHE LIES  
AND FEELS MY HAND BETWEEN HER THIGHS  
MY LITTLE LOVE IN LIGHT ATTIRE  
KNOWS THE SOFT FLAME OF DESIRE.  
BUT MAMMON PLACES UNDER BAN  
THE USES OF LEVIATHAN  
AND THAT HIGH SPIRIT EVER WARS  
ON MAMMON'S COUNTLESS SERVITORS  
NOR CAN THEY EVER BE EXEMPT  
FROM HIS TAXATION OF CONTEMPT.  
SO DISTANTLY I TURN TO VIEW  
THE SHAMBLINGS OF THAT MOTLEY CREW,  
THOSE SOULS THAT HATE THE STRENGTH THAT MINE HAS  
STEELED IN THE SCHOOL OF OLD AQUINAS.  
WHERE THEY HAVE CROUCHED AND CRAWLED AND  
PRAYED  
I STAND, THE SELF-DOOMED, UNAFRAID,  
UNFELLOWED, FRIENDLESS AND ALONE,  
INDIFFERENT AS THE HERRING BONE,  
FIRM AS THE MOUNTAIN RIDGES WHERE  
I FLASH MY ANTLERS ON THE AIR.  
LET THEM CONTINUE AS IS MEET  
TO ADEQUATE THE BALANCE SHEET.  
THOUGH THEY MAY LABOUR TO THE GRAVE  
MY SPIRIT THEY SHALL NEVER HAVE  
NOR MAKE MY SOUL WITH THEIRS AS ONE  
TILL THE MAHAMANVATARA BE DONE.  
AND THOUGH THEY SPURN ME AT THEIR DOOR  
MY SOUL SHALL SPURN THEM EVERMORE.



MARY O'DONNELL

## **MY MOTHER SAYS NO ON BLOOMSDAY**

IT IS NOT EASY, IT IS NOT EASY  
TO WHEEL AN OLD WOMAN TO THE SHOWER  
ON BLOOMSDAY, WHEN THE WORLD  
AND MOLLY CRY YES, YES, YES,  
AND SHE IS SAYING NO, NO, NO,  
BECAUSE WHAT'S LEFT OF HER LIFE  
DEPENDS ON THE FREEDOM OF NO.  
HOW JOYCEAN OF HER  
TO RESIST THE CLEANED-UP CONSCIENCE  
OF FILIAL ATTENTION, YOUR NEED  
TO FIX HER TAINTS AND ODOURS,  
WASH HAIR AND TEETH,  
ATTEND TO TOES WHEN ALL SHE WANTS  
IS TO FLOAT ON THE LILY-LEAF OF HER OWN  
GREEN BEDSPREAD, DROWSING MOLLY  
IN A TANGLE OF SNOW-WHITE HAIR.  
NOW, DREAMS ENCLOSE HER  
MORE THAN TALK OF SHOWERS OR MEALS,  
THE FLOWING WATERS OF MEMORY  
RISE AND TOUCH HER SKIN  
JUST WHERE THE MATTRESS EASES  
SPINE AND BONES  
IN THAT YELLOW-WALLED ROOM.  
HELLO, MY DARLING, SHE GREETES  
HIS PHOTOGRAPH, FLINGING KISSES  
TOWARDS MOTTLED FRAME.  
TO HER THEN,  
THE LOGIC OF LOVE,  
TO HER, THE LOGIC OF NO,  
HER TONGUE UNTAMEABLE.



JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

## **ECCE PUER**

OF THE DARK PAST  
A CHILD IS BORN;  
WITH JOY AND GRIEF  
MY HEART IS TORN.

CALM IN HIS CRADLE  
THE LIVING LIES.  
MAY LOVE AND MERCY  
UNCLOSE HIS EYES!

YOUNG LIFE IS BREATHED  
ON THE GLASS;  
THE WORLD THAT WAS NOT  
COMES TO PASS.

A CHILD IS SLEEPING:  
AN OLD MAN GONE.  
O, FATHER FORSAKEN,  
FORGIVE YOUR SON!

