

# There are ills the only cure for which is literature

Excerpt

Unleash

2006

I have hidden and covied poetic mead within the thickets of prose bramble-rambles, come and gather in the weeds. There is sweet berry-nectar to gather, a treasure hunt in the hedgelands for random bottles of elderberry wine. Feel free to stumble. Who knows what you might stumble upon? The poet's job is to woo world, with words that are hymns. Rosebushes, stones, mountains need hymns. Deer and rats and ravens need hymns. Trees, beautiful dresses, beer need hymns. Little children and old grandmothers need hymns. God is in all this Godding; God is tickled at praise and glows in gentle pride. Wandering through world, the poet rambles and rants, like Whitman meandering through rhapsodic New York City. Whitman had *Leaves of Grass*. I think I might have Brambles of Berries. These are the brambles Brueghelian peasants ramble through on their way to the lusty groves where they commune with wind-gods, satyrs, fairies, and beer-gods! You may ask, are these prose-poems, rants, short dissertative vignettes? And I will love your question, but I will not answer.

There are ills the only cure for which is literature, sometimes literature not yet written that yet must be written. Sometimes only a Word can heal the heart. Something must be said, a "good word", and not always a nice word, sometimes a gritty word, sometimes a challenging word, sometimes you just need to hear the most fucked up thing to speak to how wrong things are. Sometimes it takes a sailor to speak the word, the spray of salt breeze upon the lips, like the lusty, earthy peasants inhabiting Brueghel's wonderful Renaissance paintings in their sardonic earth-tones. There's always something Rabelaisian about Brueghel's paintings, and if we lose the delight in the vulgar, we lose our contact with the earth itself. The peasants in Brueghel have appetite, the lust for life that is full of laughter even in the midst of hard times, and it is this sensibility which allows the word to flow like magic from humble, rustic tongues ... Incantation. I'm not writing, I'm incanting. We're all chanting. That's how we create the moods that destroy or sustain us. If I were content with what "is," I'd be a passive thrall in the face of creative fate; no, I am a wizard, and unless I write, the horrifying passivity of extinction will extinguish me in its imposition of stupidity. No, the moment must be chanted into being; it's a co-creation or nothing. Clarity's often a delusion masked, so keep your enlightenment, I love the delirium, and here I'll stay; with luck, I'll make a jig of the run-on sentence 'till it gurgles like rambling brooks, and lost of breath, you fall down giggling and amazed.

O drinker of ale, tongue thirsting for drunkenness, put down your mugs, your glasses, your horns; let my naked flesh be cup, pour beer on scintillating skin; your mouth may there taste the intoxication you so lustily seek, in curves and valleys made with scents, smooth and gliding, barley froth in my hair; make me be your dish of mead so wondrous! Like a cat to saucer, your little tongue on the surface of my ale-drenched flesh combines pleasures in unanticipated ways, and there we may lie, dreaming in the hot sun, animals marvelous marching through our drunkenness.

*FE staff note:* This excerpt contains the opening lines from *Hymns for Brueghel*, written and published by the author and available from Cafe Press. A new Fifth Estate Books edition of this amazing work is forthcoming.

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