

## THE MARINER

I have seen a mariner with stars on his brow,  
navigate the black bowl of the sky  
like a pale flame borne upon wings of storm -  
His name was Humankind.

I met him in the garden where sin was first born,  
slumbering in blue-spun twilit hours;  
and we played amid birdsong when the world was still young  
amid dewdrops and silver showers.

We danced like flame flickering by gates of spring,  
and we rollicked in golden sand.  
I had snowy-white hemlocks within my dark hair  
and he an apple in his hand.

He sailed forth from the garden where sin was first born  
and unleashed countless deeds of woe  
from the jar of Pandora within his own hand  
upon all those who breathed below.

I have heard the maidens' songs grow shrill  
with the death knell of the bells of war;  
I have seen the unnumbered tears of widows  
and felt the relentless grief they bore.

A mother weeps for her child whose illness  
slew his bright sun-rayed beam.  
A nation weeps for their youth who were slain  
by a tyranny who crushed their dream.

I have seen a mariner spring from the rim  
of the starless black bowl of the sea -  
His ship was assailed by foul wraiths of despair  
but from him I never did flee.

Yet why was it Time came and led us way back  
with his grey hand, weathered in ours -  
And why was it we did not find the same garden  
in those same blue-spun twilit hours?

Yet we found in the dawn our lost childhood play  
in the garden that he forsook -  
In his perilous journey across the wide waters  
Humankind I never forsook -

For I alone lingered in Pandora's jar,  
in Humankind I am last to die -  
For I am the spirit that he named high Hope  
as he sailed through the black bowl of the sky.