

**Wilderness House Literary Review 8/2**

*David Rutter*

**SEVERANCE PRAYER**

O' God

O' fickle, capricious God

Unbind my hands

Unbind my tongue

Let me be severe

Allow me to slice away the fat

Of cheap and cowardly cleverness

Let me be severe

Let me be

As misguided

As wrong

As I need to be

Whether or not

You are ready

To hear it

O' God

O' dull and listless God

Unleash my wit

Unblock my bile

Let me be severe

Allow me to separate the sturdy wheat

From the facile chaff

Let me be severe

Let me embrace my darkness

That I may

Spew forth

Light

Whether or not

You are ready

To see it

Amen

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**THIS BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS**

Something big  
Moving in the sky  
All my life  
First we see the outline  
Can you look me in the eyes?  
Long, square, flat shape  
That shouldn't be  
As far back as my cloudy memory reaches  
Moving  
It tries to be a cloud  
I've been broken  
But it's not  
This is it, isn't it?  
In some profound way  
Creeping angrily across the sky  
Swirling hot chaos  
Put aside your ego  
That shimmering diffusion  
This protective shell  
Please talk to me  
Someone is screaming  
Where peace should reign  
It's coming down  
Man to man  
It knows we're here  
This best of all possible worlds  
This sick  
Malfunctioning mystery  
Stop  
For just one minute  
Think  
Did you do this to me?  
My well of rage

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What is it, really?  
For real  
They said it was solid cloud  
The real me  
What is it, really?  
Bottomless, it seems  
What is it, really?  
The real you  
They said it was just a dream  
Do you even know?  
What is it, really?  
They said it was  
An undignified, naked march  
Through the snow  
Stop this polite performance  
Please tell me  
What is it, really?  
We insist on this  
This best of all possible worlds  
Static numbers  
Moving through the sky  
It's the best we can do  
The equation is here  
Year after year  
After endless fucking year  
I wish they'd just tell us  
What this is  
Will we even, ever get that?  
I could drown myself  
In it's depths  
I can see it clearly  
Trying not to be seen  
This best of all possible worlds  
I can't see it now  
I'm too deep down

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Will we die?  
You and I  
I can feel it, though  
Moving above me  
Why is it so endless?  
No matter how far we grow  
We evolve  
Ears to hear  
This new language  
Never having touched  
Each other's souls  
Enduring this mockery  
Of human speech  
Will we wait out our days?  
In this best of all possible worlds  
There are times  
Outside  
We change  
Touching the ground  
Full to bursting  
A rainbow outline  
Hesitantly circling each others' facades  
Ready to explode  
We're still just  
Ass scratching apes  
Throwing our own shit  
Pretending we don't remember  
Endlessly traversing  
The same damn eggshells  
Idiots!  
They'll destroy us for this  
This world unfair  
This wrong  
This best of all possible worlds  
Was I born this way?

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Constantly terrified  
Of taking one wrong step  
Of saying one false word  
Of making one false move  
The child runs to touch it  
I want to shake you  
Don't be stupid  
To slap your silly face  
Don't be stupid  
To scream loud enough  
For you to hear  
"Do you know what you're doing?"  
I'm going to lose you  
They'll  
Destroy us for this  
Don't be stupid  
For just one  
Motherfucking  
Second  
It's not supposed to be like this  
This best of all possible worlds  
Running away  
Why do we bother?  
My way is blocked  
Trying  
I'm picked up  
Can you accept it?  
Fighting  
I can't see their faces  
Can you admit it?  
Breathing  
I don't know what they are  
Can you deny it?  
Screaming  
So they can't help but hear

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Can't you see?  
I just want to love you  
I don't want  
To be damaged  
Like this  
This best of all possible worlds

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### TENDING MY PASSION STONE

Don't bother me  
I'm tending my passion stone  
While passing my kidney stone  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
Every time  
I left my peacoat at the fair  
I can't use it anymore  
A long, black cloud is coming down  
I feel I'm blackin' out the world war  
Black  
Black  
Blackin' out the world war  
C'mon everybody  
Black  
Black  
Blackin' out the world war  
Sad, bitter tears  
Roll down her face  
No one left the cake out  
In the rain  
It's raining on the records  
Instead  
The icing is all wrong anyway  
And who's fault is that?  
Don't bother me  
I'm tending my passion stone  
While passing my kidney stone  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
Every time  
Dudes and...  
I guess...

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...female dudes  
If we only had one day  
Is this the way we'd want to spend it?  
Ask yourselves  
That one  
Hard  
Question  
And if there was only one thing left  
That we could scream  
Wouldn't it be  
I will not go  
To the Festival of Testicles  
I will not go  
To the Festival of Testicles  
I will not go  
To the Festival of Testicles  
This year  
Don't bother me  
I'm tending my passion stone  
While passing my kidney stone  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
It's the dichotomy that gets me  
Every  
Time



## Wilderness House Literary Review 8/2

### My One Regret

A maddeningly unfinished  
Sepia tone photograph  
Of your lovely face  
Haunts the last 21 years  
Of my life  
I want you to know  
How many faces  
In how many dreams  
Belonged to you  
How many tears  
Bearing your unique name  
Have fallen to the floor  
To lie  
In useless puddles  
Your absence has been  
A chronic illness  
From which I could not find relief  
Overwhelming and debilitating  
At times  
Dull discomfort at others  
A scab to pick  
Until it starts to bleed again  
Bursting into frenzied paroxysm  
Each time I'm engulfed  
In the tidal wave  
Of you  
I hope you perceive  
No reproach  
In the weight of my words  
For you are blameless here  
My grievance  
Is only my own  
There is so much more

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I could have done  
So many towers  
Could have been built  
From these ashes  
Yet I shut myself up  
I walled myself out  
I cut out my crux  
I choked off my core  
I do not bemoan  
One second  
Of your blessed life  
I hadn't the courage  
To feel you completely  
And that is  
My one regret