



the LOVIN'DRINK

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the LOVIN'DRINK, in three fluid fragments: TRÍSTRAN & YSÓLT

I. HOW THE SLEEPING TRISTRAN BROUGHT YSOLT ACROSS THE IRISH SEA FOR HER TO WED HIS UNCLE MARK, THE CORNISH KING

She can't sleep / the full sail rides a sea of moonshine
Before the dawn of Ysolt's wedding day / creak and groan
The timbers / whirlpools yawn and sucking sing
Beneath the pitch-sealed hull.

Her hand shaky from gin extends against wind
And pulse of wave / verses undulate fold upon fold
In her bridal bouquet / a verbal sorceress Tristran
Conveys to charm the king.

Your hand searching the sea's erratic surface / drift
Dreamless Ysolt from the moonlit Irish shore / vaguely
Complex your fuddled wakefulness with waiting and Love's
Liquid licks / a wave of incontinent folly
Piques your vagrant musing.

By the mossy back of whales / pilot cut the shallow sea
Between the rocks an irresistible tide runs
A paper boat in a tub / sleep lovely Tristran below
Among your hounds asleep or not / the hero's curving
Bow that bobs below above the soapy suds
Invites dogs' hot licks and the tickling tongue of a queen
Who laps the foamy sea.

Across the flat back of whales the ship skips and jostles
The muse midstream / Ysolt of the white page in essence
Nothing with sails spread wide to the wind that does not
Blow across my writing table / these words make no sound
Except a little scratching that runs down this pencil
And up high in the cordage a dogged wind howls / seals
Baying run words down.

Swêpt away ûnder a grêy wave of pâssion / Mark loads
His harpoon with imagery supernaturally
Fluid I'm bleeding in a submarine garden he shakes
His blade she swallows he shoots salty bullets her cheeks

Puff pufferffishfful pulse once twice 3 4 5 6
& sink as Ysolt falls & rises & yields to the deep
Phallocratic drink.

II. INCUBUS

...when in the lighthouse late at night Tristran would leave his bed, which stood but two still steps from the queen's, and troubled Ysolt in her insomnia, and sparked fresh frights nightly in the restless king's dreams, Mark, his uncle. Sometimes he would take her as the eagle that snatches up the lamb, and his immense wings slapping her ears made her temples throb to bursting before she fainted. Or a horseman, he mounts her, and his crop.... Or now he threatens to torch the bed and her, too, in his arms. So she drifts as the pyromaniac poet articulates in a lover's whisper, fearful of waking the queen's husband Mark, who lay on the other part of the bed too frightened to wake from dreaming.

III. MARK'S COMPLAINT OF LOVE SPOKEN IN SOUND BITES

Grey water green sky Ysolt lie ever wake
Ful eyeful alpha waves kinetize
Your laughter electromesmerizes
My hearing whose voice is that god
Astral tongues the sky turns so slowly who
Hounds my solitude?

When I am dead where will you am I dead
Put me? on my hands and knees howling or
Heavenly wind-borne I rename the world
According to airy spirits' voices
And explore the sky between our minds where
Who knows what lies.

Where Ysolt what the hawk said to the legless
Lies the sky's center? serpent you take my breath
Away the fox warns the long-legged doe falls
Below the crescent moon's bow at second sight
Heaven's names become other on second hearing
Echoes of no-Thingness.

Words ears conceived inwardly I hear these sounds
In god's garden thunder wind and moonbeams
Falling the garden wall has ears the winds
Have ears to hear my intimate tongues
Love's eager saints lie down on a bed of fire
Their spirits sing out.

Words e-m-er-erge with urgent meaning
Prayerful my vowels drop at her feet frank
And simple Ysolt laughs beneath her wimple
And our voices reach the skies with wings of Art
iculate stuttering Love's utterances
Belying rhyme and reason.