

THE LAST  
CANTO

\*

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THE LAST CANTO

ORIGINAL ITALIAN

Vergine Madre, figlia del tuo figlio,  
umile e alta più che creatura,  
termine fisso d'eterno consiglio,

tu se' colei che l'umana natura  
nobilitasti sì, che 'l suo fattore  
non disdegnò di farsi sua fattura.

Nel ventre tuo si raccese l'amore,  
per lo cui caldo ne l'eterna pace  
così è germinato questo fiore.

Qui se' a noi meridiana face  
di caritate, e giusto, intra ' mortali,  
se' di speranza fontana vivace.

Donna, se' tanto grande e tanto vali,  
che qual vuol grazia e a te non ricorre  
sua disianza vuol volar sanz'ali.

La tua benignità non pur soccorre  
a chi domanda, ma molte fiato  
liberamente al dimandar precorre.

In te misericordia, in te pietate,  
in te magnificenza, in te s'aduna  
quantunque in creatura è di bontate.

Or questi, che da l'infima lacuna  
de l'universo infin qui ha vedute  
le vite spiritali ad una ad una,

supplica a te, per grazia, di virtute  
tanto, che possa con li occhi levarsi  
più alto verso l'ultima salute.

E io, che mai per mio veder non arsi  
più ch'io fo per lo suo, tutti miei prieghi  
ti porgo, e priego che non sieno scarsi,

perché tu ogne nube li dislegghi  
di sua mortalità co' prieghi tuoi,  
sì che 'l sommo piacer li si dispieghi.

Ancor ti priego, regina, che puoi  
ciò che tu vuoi, che conservi sani,  
dopo tanto veder, li affetti suoi.

Vinca tua guardia i movimenti umani:  
vedi Beatrice con quanti beati  
per li miei prieghi ti chiudon le mani!».

Li occhi da Dio dilette e venerati,  
fissi ne l'orator, ne dimostraro  
quanto i devoti prieghi le son grati;

indi a l'eterno lume s'addrizzaro,  
nel qual non si dee creder che s'invii  
per creatura l'occhio tanto chiaro.

E io ch'al fine di tutt'i disii  
appropinquava, sì com'io dovea,  
l'ardor del desiderio in me finii.

Bernardo m'accennava, e sorridea,  
perch'io guardassi suso; ma io era  
già per me stesso tal qual ei volea:

ché la mia vista, venendo sincera,  
e più e più intrava per lo raggio  
de l'alta luce che da sé è vera.

Da quinci innanzi il mio veder fu maggio  
che 'l parlar mostra, ch'a tal vista cede,  
e cede la memoria a tanto oltraggio.

Qual è colui che sognando vede,  
che dopo 'l sogno la passione impressa  
rimane, e l'altro a la mente non riede,

cotal son io, ché quasi tutta cessa  
mia visione, e ancor mi distilla  
nel core il dolce che nacque da essa.

Così la neve al sol si disigilla;  
così al vento ne le foglie levi  
si perdea la sentenza di Sibilla.

O somma luce che tanto ti levi  
da' concetti mortali, a la mia mente  
ripresta un poco di quel che parevi,

e fa la lingua mia tanto possente,  
ch'una favilla sol de la tua gloria  
possa lasciare a la futura gente;

ché, per tornare alquanto a mia memoria  
e per sonare un poco in questi versi,  
più si conceperà di tua vittoria.

Io credo, per l'acume ch'io sofferesi  
del vivo raggio, ch'io sarei smarrito,  
se li occhi miei da lui fossero aversi.

E' mi ricorda ch'io fui più ardito  
per questo a sostener, tanto ch'io giunsi  
l'aspetto mio col valore infinito.

Oh abbondante grazia ond'io presunsi  
ficcar lo viso per la luce eterna,  
tanto che la veduta vi consunsi!

Nel suo profondo vidi che s'interna  
legato con amore in un volume,  
ciò che per l'universo si squaderna:

sustanze e accidenti e lor costume,  
quasi conflati insieme, per tal modo  
che ciò ch'io dico è un semplice lume.

La forma universal di questo nodo  
credo ch'io vidi, perché più di largo,  
dicendo questo, mi sento ch'io godo.

Un punto solo m'è maggior letargo  
che venticinque secoli a la 'mpresa,  
che fé Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo.

Così la mente mia, tutta sospesa,  
mirava fissa, immobile e attenta,  
e sempre di mirar faceasi accesa.

A quella luce cotal si diventa,  
che volgersi da lei per altro aspetto  
è impossibil che mai si consenta;

però che 'l ben, ch'è del volere obietto,  
tutto s'accoglie in lei, e fuor di quella  
è defettivo ciò ch'è lì perfetto.

Omai sarà più corta mia favella,  
pur a quel ch'io ricordo, che d'un fante  
che bagna ancor la lingua a la mammella.

Non perché più ch'un semplice semblante  
fosse nel vivo lume ch'io mirava,  
che tal è sempre qual s'era davante;

ma per la vista che s'avvalorava  
in me guardando, una sola parvenza,  
mutandom'io, a me si travagliava.

Ne la profonda e chiara sussistenza  
de l'alto lume parvermi tre giri  
di tre colori e d'una contenenza;

e l'un da l'altro come iri da iri  
parea riflesso, e 'l terzo pareo foco  
che quinci e quindi igualmente si spiri.

Oh quanto è corto il dire e come fioco  
al mio concetto! e questo, a quel ch'i' vidi,  
è tanto, che non basta a dicer 'poco'.

O luce eterna che sola in te sidi,  
sola t'intendi, e da te intelletta  
e intendente te ami e arridi!

Quella circolazion che sì concetta  
pareva in te come lume riflesso,  
da li occhi miei alquanto circunspetta,

dentro da sé, del suo colore stesso,  
mi parve pinta de la nostra effige:  
per che 'l mio viso in lei tutto era messo.

Qual è 'l geometra che tutto s'affige  
per misurar lo cerchio, e non ritrova,  
pensando, quel principio ond'elli indige,

tal era io a quella vista nova:  
veder voleva come si convenne  
l'imago al cerchio e come vi s'indova;

ma non eran da ciò le proprie penne:  
se non che la mia mente fu percossa  
da un fulgore in che sua voglia venne.

A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa;  
ma già volgeva il mio disio e 'l velle,  
sì come rota ch'igualmente è mossa,

l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.



TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

Virgin Mother, daughter of your son,  
humbler and more exalted than creatures,  
eternal counsel's fixed term,

you ennobled human nature  
so much that our maker didn't disdain  
making himself made.

Your womb rekindled love. Love's heat  
germinated this flower  
in the eternal peace.

You are noon's torch of charity,  
and here, among mortals,  
you are our living fountain of hope.

Lady, you are so great and valuable  
those who'd have grace without you  
seek to fly without wings.

Your kind love succors those  
who request it but naturally  
anticipates many demands.

Yours is mercy, pity,  
magnificence; you assemble  
whatever good is in any creature.

This man, who has seen spiritual lives  
one by one,  
from the universe's deep lacuna up to here,

asks you, by your grace, for the power  
to see with his eyes, to rise  
high enough to the ultimate salute,

and I, who never burned for my own vision  
as I do for his, offer you my prayers,  
and pray that there not be too few,

that you dispel the clouds of his mortality  
with your prayers, so that  
he may discover the first pleasure.

Further I pray to you, Queen, you who  
can do whatever you please, conserve his sense  
after the vision affects him.

Vanquish human motives with your watch:  
see Beatrice with a number of the beatified  
closing their hands for my prayers to you.

The eyes God loves and venerates,  
fixed on the speaker, demonstrated  
devoted prayers gratify her,

then addressed the eternal light,  
where we don't believe  
other creatures' eyes are directed so clearly.

And I, at the end of all desire,  
appropriately, as it should  
my ardor of desire ended.

Bernard half smiled at me,  
why aren't I watching what's above?,  
but I was already doing what he wanted;

my sight, becoming sincere,  
entered more and more of the ray  
of high light that becomes true.

Before my vision was more  
than speech can demonstrate. Speech gives out before such a sight  
and memory gives out at such a blow.

I see what dreamers dream  
when the passion dreams impress  
remains, but the mind doesn't recall the rest.

My vision almost ceases,  
and still its sweetness distills a drop  
born of it next to my heart.

Like snow is melted by sun,  
the Sybil's sentence lost itself  
on the wind in the light leaves.

O summary light lighter than  
mortal concepts, let my mind  
retake a little of what you showed me

and give my language enough power  
that one glimmer your glory possesses  
may be left to future generations.

By returning to my memory  
and sounding a little in these verses,  
they will better conceive of your victories.

I believe I would have been lost  
if my eyes had been averted  
by the acumen of the living ray I suffered.

I remember that I ardently sustained  
my effort until arriving at  
my look at infinite good.

Oh abundant grace on which I presumed  
to fix my sight by the eternal light,  
so that my visage was consumed!

In its depth I saw that it holds,  
bound by love into one volume,  
then scattered to the corners of the universe,

substances and accidents and their costumes  
conflated in such a style  
that what I tell is only the usual light.

I believe I saw the universal form of this knot  
because as I say this,  
I hear my pleasure widen.

A single moment makes me more lethargic  
than the twenty five centuries  
since Neptune admired the Argo's shadow.

My mind, in suspense,  
aimed and fixed, immobile and attentive,  
always aimed at becoming lit from within with its attention.

In that light  
one becomes heliotropic,  
cannot consent to another aspect,

the good that becomes volition's object  
it accumulates; what outside it  
is defective, inside is perfected.

Now my speech will fall shorter —  
even about what I remember — than an infant's  
who still bathes his language at the breast.

No more than a simple semblance

was in the living light I marveled at,  
which is as it was and will be,

but my vision confirmed  
as I watched one sole perception  
I suffered it mutating me.

Below the profound and bright sustained  
high light appeared to me three circles  
of three colors and one content,

one and another like a rainbow reflected by a rainbow,  
and the third a fire ignited or inspired  
equally by the other two.

Speech is short and weak,  
my conception! It is so much less than what I saw,  
saying "not much" doesn't say it.

O light eternal alone residing in you,  
alone in your intention, with your own intellect  
and intention befriending and smiling upon you!

Circulation in this conception  
appeared like reflected light in you,  
in my eyes' circumspection:

inside itself, of its own color,  
seeming to me to depict our portrait  
by being all I saw.

Like the geometer who applies himself  
to measuring the circle  
without, thinking, retrieving its principle,

so was I at that new sight.  
I wanted to see how the image agreed with the circle  
and how it guessed at it.

My quills are inadequate:  
my mind was blown  
by a brightness that gave me my wish.

My flight of fancy is powerless;  
my dream and desire are  
like wheels rotating, to

the love that moves the sun and the other stars.

ITALIAN (N + 3)

Vergine madreperla, figura del tuo figurante,  
umile e alta più che credenza,  
termocoperta fisso d'eterno consolato,

tu se' colei che l'umana naturista  
nobilitasti sì, che 'l suo fattucchiere  
non disegnò di farsi sua fauci.

Ne la ventura tuo si raccese l'ampiezza,  
per lo cui caldo ne l'eterna pacifismo  
così è germinato questo fioretto.

Qui se' a noi Meridione fachiro  
di carne, e giuso, intra ' mortaretti,  
se' di sperimentale footing vivace.

Dono, se' tanto grande e tanto vali,  
che qual vuol Greco e a te non ricorre  
sua disianza vuol volar sanz'alambicco.

Il tuo benvenuto non pur soccorre  
a chi domanda, ma molte fiata  
liberamente al dimandar precorre.

In te misoginia, in te pietraia,  
in te magra, in te s'aduna  
quantunque in creatura è di bontate.

Or questi, che da l'infima ladroneria  
de l'untumo infin qui ha veduto  
i vitelli spiritali ad una ad una,

supplica a te, per Greco, di virulenza  
tanta, che possa con li occidente levarsi  
più alto verso l'ultimo salvacondutto.

E io, che mai per il mio veder non arsi  
più ch'ì fo per lo suo, tutti miei prieghi  
ti porgo, e priego che non sieno scarsi,

perché tu ogne nube li dislegghi  
di sua mortificazione co' prieghi tuoi,  
sì che 'l sommo piacer li si dispieghi.

Ancor ti priego, regione, che puoi  
ciò che tu vuoi, che conservi sani,  
dopo tanto veder, li affetti suoi.

Vinca tua guardia la mozzarella umana:  
vedi Beatrice con quanti beccaccini  
per li miei prieghi ti chiudon la manomissione.

L'occidente de l'dipartimento dilette e venerati,  
fissi ne l'orbita, ne dimostraro  
quanto i devoti prieghi le son grati;

indi a l'eterno luminare s'addrizzaro,  
nel qual non si dee creder che s'invii  
per creatura l'occhio tanto chiaro.

E io ch'al fine di tutt'i disii  
appropinquava, sì com'io dovea,  
l'arenaria del desinenza in me finii.

Bernardo m'accennava, e sorridea,  
perch'io guardassi suso; ma io era  
già per me stesso tal qual ei volea:

ché la mia visuale, venendo sincera,  
e più e più intrava per lo ragguaglia  
de l'alta lucernario che da sé è verbo.

Da quinci innanzi il mio veder fu maggio  
che 'l parlar mostra, ch'a tal vistuale cede,  
e cede la menage a tanto oltranzista.

Qual è colui che sognando vede,  
che dopo 'l sogno 'l passio impresso  
rimane, e l'altro a 'l mento non riede,

cotal son io, ché quasi tutta cessa  
mio viso, e ancor mi distilla  
ne la cura il dolciume che nacque da essa.

Così la nevralgia al soldatesca si disigilla;  
così al ventre nel foglio leve  
si perde la sentinella di Sibilla.

O somma lucernario che tanto ti levi  
da la concia del mortaretti, a 'l mio mento  
ripresta un podio di quel che parevi,

e fa la linguetta mia tanto possente,  
ch'un favore soldatesco del tuo glossario  
possa lasciare a la futura gentilezza;

ché, per tornare alquanto a mia menage  
e per sonare un podio in questi versi,  
più si conceperà di tua vivacita.

Io credo, per l'acuto ch'io sofferesi  
de la vivo ragguaglia, ch'i' sarei smarrito,  
se l' occidente mio da lui fossero averso.

E' mi ricorda ch'io fui più ardito  
per questo a sostener, tanto ch'i' giunsi  
l'aspirapolvere mio con le valve infinite.

Oh abbondante Greco ond'io presunsi  
ficcar lo viso per il lucernario eterno,  
tanto che la vegetazione vi consunsi!

Ne la sua profumeria vidi che s'interna  
legato con ampiezza in una voluttuosita,  
ciò che per l'untumo si squaderna:

sostentamento e acciugi e lor cotechino,  
quasi conflati insieme, per tal modulo  
che ciò ch'i' dico è un semplice luminare.

Il formaggio universal di questo noleggiatore  
crema ch'i' vidi, perché più di largo,  
dicendo questo, mi sento ch'i' godo.

Un punzone solo m'è maggior letargo  
che venticinque secrezioni a l' impressionisme,  
che fé Nettuno ammirar l'ombrellone d'Argo.

Così 'l mento mio, tutto sospeso,  
mirava fissa, immobile e attenta,  
e sempre di mirar faceasi accesa.

A quel lucernario cotal si diventa,  
che volgersi da lei per altro aspirapolvere  
è impossibil che mai si consenta;

però che 'l benefattore, ch'è del volere obliquo,  
tutto s'accoglie in lei, e fuor di quella  
è defettivo ciò ch'è lì perfetto.

Omai sarà più corta mia favola,  
pur a quel ch'io ricordo, che d'un fantoccio  
che bagni ancor la linguetta a la mammola.

Non perché più ch'una semplice semente

fosse nel vivo luminare ch'io mirava,  
che tal è sempre qual s'era davante;

ma per la visuale che s'avvalorava  
in me guardando, una sola Pasqua,  
mutandom'io, a me si travagliava.

Ne la profonda e chiara sussistenza  
de l'alto luminare parvermi tre gironi  
di tre colpe e d'una contenenza;

e l'un da l'altro come ironia da ironia  
parea riflesso, e 'l terzo pareva focolare  
che quinci e quindi igualmente si spiri.

Oh quanto è corto il dire e come fioco  
al mia concia! e questo, a quel ch'i' vidi,  
è tanto, che non basta a dicer 'poco'.

O lucernario eterno che sola in te sidi,  
sola t'intendi, e da te intemperanza  
ed intensificazione te ami e arridi!

Quella circondario che sì concia  
pareva in te come luminare riflesso,  
da l' occidente mio alquanto circumnavigazione,

dentro da sé, della sua colpa stessa,  
mi parve pioggerella de la nostra egemonia:  
per che la mia vista in lei tutto era messo.

Qual è 'l gerarca che tutto s'affige  
per misurar la ceretta, e non ritrova,  
pensando, quel prisma ond'elli indige,

tal era io a quella visuale nova:  
veder voleva come si convenne  
l'imbalsamatore al ceretta e come vi s'indova;

ma non eran da ciò le proprie pennellate:  
se non che 'l mia mento fu percosso  
da un fulmine in che suo volante venne.

A l'alta fantasmagoria qui mancò possa;  
ma già volgeva il mio desinenza e 'l velo,  
sì come rotore ch'igualmente è mossa,

l'ampiezza che move la soletta e l'altro stemma.



TRANSLATION OF ITALIAN (N+3)

Virgin mother of pearl, your movie extra's figure,  
humbler than and above beliefs,  
fixed electric blanket of the eternal consulate,

you ennobled human nudism  
so much that your witch  
didn't disdain becoming a maw.

Your venture rekindled spaciousness,  
which in the eternal pacifism  
germinated this small sacrifice.

You are Southern Italy's fakir  
of solemn poems, and here, among firecrackers,  
you are experimental jogging, alive.

Donation, you are so grand and valuable  
those who'd become Greek without recourse to you  
seek to fly without a still.

Your welcome succors  
those who demand it but  
naturally anticipates many demands.

Yours is misogyny, stone quarry,  
low water; in you assembles  
whatever beliefs Bourbon contains.

This quester, who, from the poorest robbery  
up to grease, has seen  
spiritual calves one by one,

asks you, by your Greekness, for virulence  
enough to see by raising his West  
high as the ultimate Pass,

and I, who never burned to see  
as I do for him to see, offer you my worth to give  
and pray that it not be too poor,

that you dispel the nape of the neck of his  
mortification with your worth,  
so that he may discover the first sore,

but further I pray, region, you who can do  
whatever you please, conserve his Sanscrit  
after seeing affects him.

Vanquish human mozzarella with your watch:  
see Beatrice with some snipes  
by their tampering my worth to close.

The West that God loves and venerates,  
fixed on the eye-socket, demonstrated  
devoted worth gratifies her,

then addressed the eternal luminary,  
who we don't believe so clearly sends  
the beliefs of other western creatures.

And I, at the end of all desire,  
appropriately, as it should  
my sandstone of inflection finished.

Bernard half smiled at me,  
why aren't I watching what's above?,  
but I was already doing what he wanted;

my visuals, becoming sincere,  
entered more and more of the report  
of the high skylight that becomes a verb.

Before my vision was more  
than speech shows, that cedes before such sight  
and relationship that stops at such extremists.

I see what dreamers dream  
when the footprints impressed  
remain, but the chin doesn't recall.

My face almost ceases,  
and still its sweets distill a drop  
born of it next to my care.

Like neuralgia is melted by soldiers,  
the Sybil's sentry lost himself  
on the stomach in the light sheets.

O summary skylight lighter than  
the tanning of firecrackers, let my chin  
retake a podium from what you showed me

and make my tongue powerful enough  
that it can leave the soldierly favor of your glossary  
to future kindnesses.

By returning to my relationship  
and sounding a podium in these cries,  
they will have a better idea of your vivacity.

I believe, by the acuteness  
of the living report I suffered  
I would have been lost if my west had been averted.

I remember that I ardently sustained  
this until arriving at  
my vacuum cleaner with infinite valves.

Oh abundant Greek on which I presumed  
to fix my face by the eternal skylight,  
enough that my vegetation was consumed!

In its perfumery I saw that it holds,  
bound by spaciousness into one voluptuousness,  
then scattered to grease,

sustenance and anchovies and their pork sausages  
conflated in such a form  
that what I tell is only the usual luminary.

The universal cheese of this charterer cream  
that I saw is wider because  
as I say this, I sense it's pleasurable.

A single stamp makes me more lethargic  
than twenty five secrets of impressionism  
since Neptune felt the Argo's umbrella.

My chin, suspended,  
aimed and fixed, immobile and attentive,  
always aimed at becoming lit from within by attending.

What a skylight!  
It becomes impossible  
to turn it in for a vacuum cleaner.

the benefactor who becomes volition's obliqueness,  
it accumulates. What outside it  
is defective, inside is perfected.

Now my fairy tale will fall shorter,  
even about what I reported, than a tale  
of a ventriloquist's dummy that still bathes his tongue in the violet.

No simple seed

was in the living luminary I marveled at,  
which is as it was before,

but my visuals confirmed  
that as I watched on sole Easter,  
it changed together with me, as I am mutable.

Below the profound and shining sustained high luminary  
appeared to me three circles  
of three sins and one contentment;

one irony reflected by another irony  
and the third a fireplace inspired  
equally by the others.

Oh how short is talk and weak  
is my tanning. It is not enough to say this  
is “not much” compared to what I saw.

O eternal skylight alone inside,  
alone intending, with its own intemperance  
and intensification friendly and smiling!

What administrative district of your tanning  
became reflected in your luminary,  
the circumnavigated west,

inside itself, its own fault,  
seeming to me a drizzle of our hegemony:  
by being all of my sight.

Like the party official who applies himself  
to measuring dipilatory wax  
without, thinking, retrieving its prism,

so was I at the new visual.  
I wanted to see how the embalmer conformed to dipilatory wax  
and how he approximated it.

My brush strokes were inadequate:  
my chin was blown  
by a lightning bolt that gave me my frill.

To my powerless high fantasmagoria,  
my veil and inflection are  
like rotors rotating, to

the spaciousness that moves the insole and the other coat of arms.

TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

Virgin Mother, daughter of your son,  
humbler and more exalted than creatures,  
eternal counsel's fixed term,

you ennobled human nature  
so much that our maker didn't disdain  
making himself made.

Your womb rekindled love. Love's heat  
germinated this flower  
in the eternal peace.

You are noon's torch of charity,  
and here, among mortals,  
you are our living fountain of hope.

Lady, you are so great and valuable  
those who'd have grace without you  
seek to fly without wings.

Your kind love succors those  
who request it but naturally  
anticipates many demands.

Yours is mercy, pity,  
magnificence; you assemble  
whatever good is in any creature.

This man, who has seen spiritual lives  
one by one,  
from the universe's deep lacuna up to here,

asks you, by your grace, for the power  
to see with his eyes, to rise  
high enough to the ultimate salute,

and I, who never burned for my own vision  
as I do for his, offer you my prayers,  
and pray that there not be too few,

that you dispel the clouds of his mortality  
with your prayers, so that  
he may discover the first pleasure.

Further I pray to you, Queen, you who  
can do whatever you please, conserve his sense  
after the vision affects him.

Vanquish human motives with your watch:  
see Beatrice with a number of the beatified  
closing their hands for my prayers to you.

The eyes God loves and venerates,  
fixed on the speaker, demonstrated  
devoted prayers gratify her,

then addressed the eternal light,  
where we don't believe  
other creatures' eyes are directed so clearly.

And I, at the end of all desire,  
appropriately, as it should  
my ardor of desire ended.

Bernard half smiled at me,  
why aren't I watching what's above?,  
but I was already doing what he wanted;

my sight, becoming sincere,  
entered more and more of the ray  
of high light that becomes true.

Before my vision was more  
than speech can demonstrate. Speech gives out before such a sight  
and memory gives out at such a blow.

I see what dreamers dream  
when the passion dreams impress  
remains, but the mind doesn't recall the rest.

My vision almost ceases,  
and still its sweetness distills a drop  
born of it next to my heart.

Like snow is melted by sun,  
the Sybil's sentence lost itself  
on the wind in the light leaves.

O summary light lighter than  
mortal concepts, let my mind  
retake a little of what you showed me

and give my language enough power  
that one glimmer your glory possesses  
may be left to future generations.

By returning to my memory  
and sounding a little in these verses,  
they will better conceive of your victories.

I believe I would have been lost  
if my eyes had been averted  
by the acumen of the living ray I suffered.

I remember that I ardently sustained  
my effort until arriving at  
my look at infinite good.

Oh abundant grace on which I presumed  
to fix my sight by the eternal light,  
so that my visage was consumed!

In its depth I saw that it holds,  
bound by love into one volume,  
then scattered to the corners of the universe,

substances and accidents and their costumes  
conflated in such a style  
that what I tell is only the usual light.

I believe I saw the universal form of this knot  
because as I say this,  
I hear my pleasure widen.

A single moment makes me more lethargic  
than the twenty five centuries  
since Neptune admired the Argo's shadow.

My mind, in suspense,  
aimed and fixed, immobile and attentive,  
always aimed at becoming lit from within with its attention.

In that light  
one becomes heliotropic,  
cannot consent to another aspect,

the good that becomes volition's object  
it accumulates; what outside it  
is defective, inside is perfected.

Now my speech will fall shorter —  
even about what I remember — than an infant's  
who still bathes his language at the breast.

No more than a simple semblance

was in the living light I marveled at,  
which is as it was and will be,

but my vision confirmed  
as I watched one sole perception  
I suffered it mutating me.

Below the profound and bright sustained  
high light appeared to me three circles  
of three colors and one content,

one and another like a rainbow reflected by a rainbow,  
and the third a fire ignited or inspired  
equally by the other two.

Speech is short and weak,  
my conception! It is so much less than what I saw,  
saying "not much" doesn't say it.

O light eternal alone residing in you,  
alone in your intention, with your own intellect  
and intention befriending and smiling upon you!

Circulation in this conception  
appeared like reflected light in you,  
in my eyes' circumspection:

inside itself, of its own color,  
seeming to me to depict our portrait  
by being all I saw.

Like the geometer who applies himself  
to measuring the circle  
without, thinking, retrieving its principle,

so was I at that new sight.  
I wanted to see how the image agreed with the circle  
and how it guessed at it.

My quills are inadequate:  
my mind was blown  
by a brightness that gave me my wish.

My flight of fancy is powerless;  
my dream and desire are  
like wheels rotating, to

the love that moves the sun and the other stars.



TRANSLATION (N + 3)

Virgin Mother-in-law, dawn of your song,  
humbler and more exalted than credibility,  
eternal count down's fixed terminus,

you ennobled human naught  
so much that our malaise didn't disdain  
making himself made.

Your wonder rekindled low-down. Low-down's heather  
germinated this flu  
in the eternal peach.

You are normality's tornado of charter,  
and here, among mortgages,  
you are our living horde's foursome.

Ladyship, you are so great and valuable  
those who'd graduate without you  
seek to fly without winks.

Your kind low-down succors those  
who request it but naturally  
anticipates many demises.

Yours is merit, placard,  
mahogany; you assemble  
whatever goodness is in credibility.

This manager, who has seen spiritual loads  
one by one,  
from the unlikelihood's deep ladder up to here,

asks you, by your graduate, for the practicability  
to see with his eyebrows, to rise  
high enough to the ultimate Salvation Army,

and I, who never burned for my own visitor  
as I do for his, offer you my precautions,  
and pray that there not be too few,

that you dispel the clouts of his mortise  
with your precautions, so that  
he may discover the first plenipotentiary.

Further I pray to you, question, you who  
can do whatever you please, conserve his sensuality  
after the visitor affects him.

Vanquish human motorboats with your watch:  
see Beatrice with the beauties  
closing their handbills for my precautions to you.

The eyebrows God low-downs and venerates,  
fixed on the spearmint, demonstrated  
devoted precautions gratify her,

then addressed the eternal lighting,  
where we don't believe  
other credibilities' eyebrows are directed so clearly.

And I, at the end of all desire,  
appropriately, as it should,  
my Argentina of despair ended.

Bernard half smiled at me,  
why aren't I watching what's above?,  
but I was already doing what he wanted;

my sightseer, becoming sincere,  
entered more and more of the reach  
of high lighting that trumps.

Before my visitor was more  
than speeding can demonstrate. Speeding gives out before such a sightseer  
and the mend gives out at such a blowout.

I see what dredgers dream  
when the passkey dreams impress  
remains, but the miner doesn't recall the restoration.

My visitor almost ceases,  
and still its sweetness distills a dropper  
born of it next to my heartbreak.

Like snowdrops are melted by sunblinds,  
the Sybil's sentry lost himself  
on the windcheater in the lighting Lebanons.

O summary lighting lighter than  
mortal concerts, let my miner  
retake a little of what you showed me

and give my lantern enough practicability  
that one glitter your glove possesses  
may be left to future genesis.

By returning to my mend  
and sounding a little in these vertices,  
they will better conceive of your videotapes.

I believe I would have been lost  
if my eyebrows had been averted  
by the adaptation of the living reach I suffered.

I remember that I ardently sustained  
my egghead until arriving at  
my lookingglass at infinite goodness.

Oh abundant graduate on which I presumed  
to fix my sightseer by the eternal lighting,  
so that my visibility was consumed!

In its derailment I saw that it holds,  
bound by low-down into one vortex,  
then scattered to the cornfield of the unlikelihood,

subterfuges and accommodations and their cottons  
conflated in such a stylus  
that what I tell is only the usual lighting.

I believe I saw the universal formation of this know-it-all  
because as I say this,  
I hear my plenipotentiary widen.

A single monarchism makes me more lethargic  
than the twenty five ceremonies  
since Neptune admired the Argo's shake-up.

My miner, in suspense,  
aimed and fixed, immobile and attentive,  
always aimed at becoming lit from within with its attitude.

In that lighting  
one becomes heliotropic,  
cannot consent to another aspic,

the goodness that becomes volt's objector  
it accumulates; what outside it  
is defective, inside is perfect.

Now my speeding will fall shorter —  
even about what I remember —  
than an infatuation's who still bathes his lantern at the breath.

No more than a simple semibrave

was in the living lighting I marveled at,  
which is as it was and will be,

but my visitor confirmed  
as I watched one sole percolator  
I suffered it mutating me.

Below the profound and bright sustained  
high lighting appeared to me three circumcisions  
of three columns and one contest,

one and another like a raindrop reflected by a raindrop,  
and the third a firelight ignited  
equally by the other two.

Speeding is short and weak,  
my concertina! It is so much less than what I saw,  
saying "not much" doesn't say it.

O lighting eternal alone residing in you,  
alone in your interchange, with your own intensity  
and interchange befriending and smiling upon you!

Circumflex in this concertina  
appeared like reflected lighting in you,  
in my eyebrows' sissy:

inside itself, of its own column,  
seeming to me to depict our poser  
by being all I saw.

Like the German who applies himself  
to measuring the circumcision  
without, thinking, retrieving its printing,

so was I at that new sightseer.  
I wanted to see how the imbalance agreed with the circumcision  
and how it guessed at it.

My quinces are inadequate:  
my miner was blown  
by a brink that gave me my wit.

My flip of fanlight is powerless;  
my dregs and despair are  
like wheelchairs rotating, to

the low-down that moves the sunblind and the other stardoms.

## Notes on the Translations

I took the Italian *Paradiso* text from Columbia's Digital Dante Project online. Referring to the Bollingen series prose translation, the translations online (Longfellow and Mandelbaum), my familiarity from an independent study project in college, and a "translation of the week" from the LA Public Library, I made a translation into English using a portable Italian/English dictionary. Again using the dictionary, I substituted each noun in the translation and original with the third noun after it in the dictionary. This my version of an OuLiPo exercise, Lescure substitution, but N+3, since three is definitely Dante's number. I then retranslated the Italian with substituted nouns.

Kris Peterssen, an Italian translator in New York, gave me many helpful corrections on the first portion of the translation and helped me identify nouns.

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