

And El Greco Dreams Of Pentecost,
A Prelude, In Three Movements
by Sara Kumar

I. For Behold, Wherein Doth Compassion Remain, Early May 1599,

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For behold, there is no little seed within my womb
What light upon the white-washed wall doth remain
That eyes within this mortal being see with colored light
Stones are welded together with a paste similar in hue
That changes now mayhaps within my very eye

Let grief come like words that wish to flow from my tongue,
Now touched by a sky-blue-like flame, yet still unmoved the man,
Unfound compassion, and he painteth with blurry vision.

My soul now touched by some similar flame
Fathoms some beauteous vision within this blessed dwelling-place
Pasted still-like with depth and proportional magnitudes,
White-black flamed entities that fall upon eyes there
At least ten faces, counting; he is so well named, with a gentle hand.

Older in this frame, methinks, than when we married here,
Sweet son of Stratford, man in London hue

Dost named man know love, and wither doth his thought remain?
Touched by black-white flame; I do not know his name

How many days since Easter have come?
And how much has remained,
Within the golden hues of the globe?
Methinks the number is nearing fifty truly,
Man in London hue.

And here in this eve of harvest summer
I see, in this vision, a lady, with face near loving, named man
She prays without strain in harmonious quietude

I am called to pray for peace now,
And pray, let Spanish melodies come to us,
In dark-night with orange-hued moon
Oh Blessed Mother, who is this bearded man now?
Will he pray for wine-like wisdom that flows like rosin sap,

Yes, let him sing of men in London with loving knees and hearts.

I saw a beautiful pigeon once in Stratford
He flew in from the rectory door
And sat beside the chalice before prayers began

Sweet Jesus, I feel your presence still within these walls,
And Hamnet is no longer living upon rocky soil.

II. The Man Was Moved By Dreams, Mid-May 1599,

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I saw a woman, being with moved man
Her eyes were nearly closed, noble,
Unlike the other people I saw, so fortunately,
In a vision, with white-black-smoothing-fire,
And there was no arrowed smoke,
But I felt some sweet cooling vapour in the air, Will.

Dear husband man, you needs to sleep,
Perchance to come home and help bear my grief
There are less than a thousand natural springs here

And my whole body needs new Baptism,
Like I've seen in the vision at Holy Trinity.
Mine eyes were rubbed with holy chrism oil,
And the priest, in quiet whispers, murmured hymns
About a metal coil and some unstrange orange flame
I saw it, methinks the coil, and it was with the black-air.
In the sleep of slumber, there are coils in her dreams, Will
Her skin was like a porous porcelain though,
Protected mayhaps from unruly inflammation,
How have we survived such calamity in actuality?
I'm unafraid of Spanish oppressors now,
And I dream of a new Isabel, who seeks no conquest,
But in a small saint-like village, she helps grow olive trees.

They do not know what will happen in London, do they?
Write soon, I'm no longer afraid of birth pangs, Will,
And I despise no longer the officers of pageantry.

III. Our Farm Is A Stage For Chickens, Said The Child, Mid-June 1599,

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Let me commend to you, dear Earl, I am not well.

She sent a letter to me, to me, and mentioned not their chickens,
Yet Judith loves the little stage, upon which, they will not walk.
All the world's a little stage to her
She does not know how men play many parts
I exited with a bear, an old brutish bear, truly I did.

When I was seven, dear chap, methinks I saw mi father,
I stole a pair of gloves from mi mother,
Because methought pageantry was beautiful,
And leather can stretch, you see, and he said,
I was a whining school-boy who couldn't count faces,
Because I wanted to wear porcelain-powder.
His acts being temporary ages, movéd man,
And shining morning face, no hair, to crimp, to crimp
Unwillingly to school, and then to the unmovéd woman,
Sighing like a furnace, woeful songs of rue and rue,
Made to his mistress' back, and like a soldier,
Full of noble pleas, and needing bearded, mossy shrubs.
Time stops by the chicken stages and weep with moss in hand,
Meneeds to sleep and give up the bubble reputation,
She has written, so unplainly, dear friend, of her beauteous vision,
I'll let the hammock catch mi whole pantaloons and more

There, there, I see a Spanish vision too of noble, movéd man,
With eyes, with nose, and two beardy brows,
With hand, to catch a safe-flame and dreams of melodious coils,
Meneeds to dream of a Warwickshire Yeoman and Arden-trees,
And slippered-slippers, old friend.