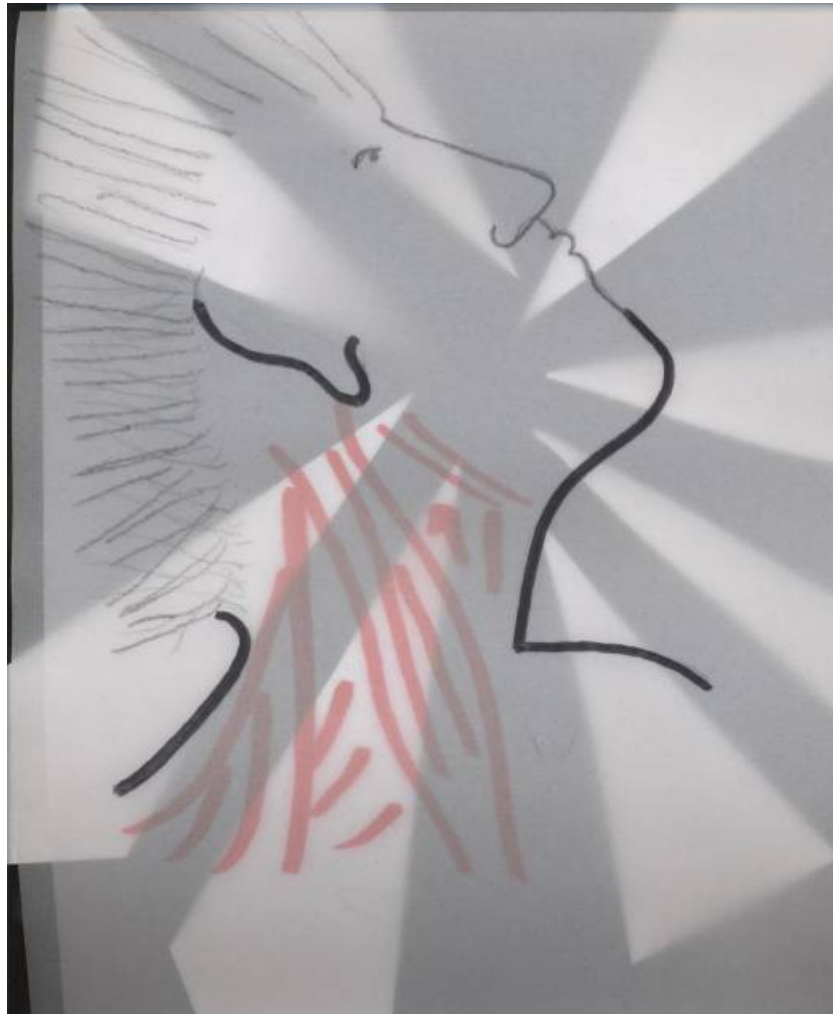


In the Face of Death



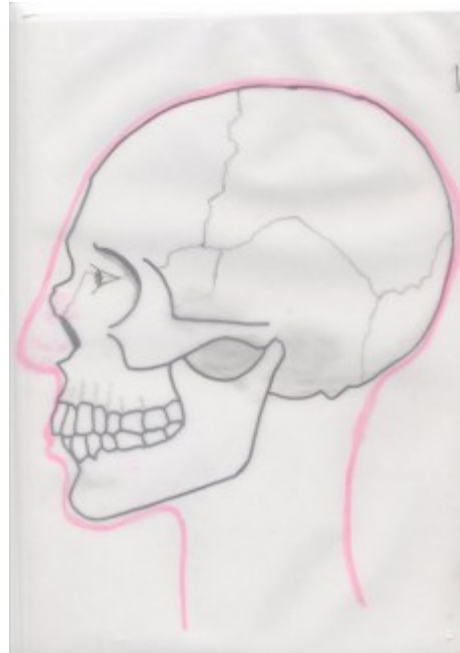
– *The poetic adventures of Roddy and his dying body*

By: Ajahn Kalyāno

INTRODUCTION

I dreamt of helping others to their salvation...

In my heart I talked to Roddy, my imaginary disciple, who was living in the face of death...



RODDY

Poor Roddy was dying, forlorn and sluggish
Amongst the rubbish
Full of questions he was desperate to know
How to let go
(and how fortunate it was that Roddy
Rhymes with body)



*Why in this place, so unclean?
Is your gaze so serene?*

Because all rubbish smells the same
Like a newspaper in the rain.

*Now you seem to play
I don't understand yet there's a truth to what you say.
Tell me why today such a happy face
To see those crows hop with such menace?
Why too, do they get in our way
When they could soar so high away?*

Because they have a part to play
As signs that we shall die one day
Just like the oracles say
Being so very very black
Like the black cat crossing the track.
Are you not happy too

That the world shows us the way
To escape the perils of the zoo?
For in the heart
Free of craving's dart
Isn't light always right
And dark a warning stark?

So what sign does the rubbish give?

That it is clear what is good and bad
What in the heart must die and what must live.
Furthermore that it is not sad
For the rubbish knows itself too
What is false and what is true.

Now can you tell me
If beauty, like health, is bright
Why is ugliness to the heart a brighter sight?
You cannot for I fear your every look
Is still caught on craving's hook
If not for this moment then for the next
In the ground of your beseeching
Your truth is not yet reaching
Beyond the mere text.

The answer lies beyond the senses grip
It is here in this beautiful rubbish tip
For this scene lights not passions fire
That traps the heart with craving dire
Instead, cool yet brighter than ever
The free heart may live forever
For it is no longer bound
To smell, touch, sight or sound
And so no longer to this body
Dearest Roddy.
Sit quietly with me a while
Calmly amongst all that's rotting and vile
Let's not be averse
But amuse ourselves with more playful verse.

Where are they from these lofty gestures
From armchair, cave or garret?
Actually all three but it matters not
If they serve their purpose
As my donkey heart's stick and carrot
And keep me going through the circus.

What are these reflections
They are not lies, I guarantee
So they can be for you and me.

They are of a reality, often fleeting
The gestures and greetings
Between me and my Lord within
No, further within

RODDY'S BODY

Dear Roddy
Just sitting getting on with its own biz
The body just is...
Consider, dear Roddy
It's just a body –
For bodies do we need to feel sorry
Or unduly worry?

For them they ask not to be saved.
For bodies do we need to unduly crave?
Or for their needs?
That rise and fall like a wave
For them they do not plead
Even at the brink of the grave.
Can we get excited about their deeds?

Even those so very brave
If we remember the flesh and bone that acts?
What are the facts, dear Roddy
About the body?

**The fact is the body will not last
Time runs so very fast.**

Now take courage, dear Roddy
Look closely at this body...
To consider so is not life denying,
It is death defying
For the heart that sees may withdraw
Without the body hitting the floor
Believe me, dear Roddy
Such is the body

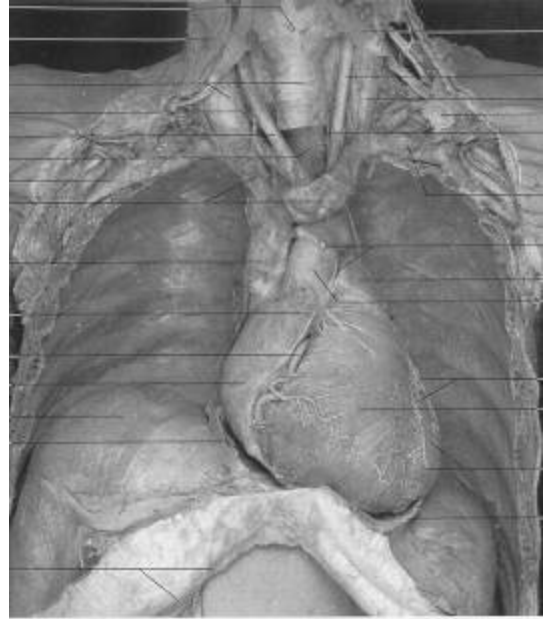
When the heart is too calm to be flustered
Seeing Death really cuts the mustard
To so see one's own while still kicking
Is a mind blown beyond tricking
Back into the womb
To live and die to fill another tomb



Come, if we're playful enough
We need not be scared of the gory stuff
Take a quick look inside
That's like a silly circus ride –

Guts like an octopus, inside out
Lend eyes to the stomach
Diet trouble and doubt.
The heart plays legless squid
The safe, lesser relative
That never did
As lung bellows bellow, 'live!'
To the heavy, dozy liver
And the bladder holds gold water
As long as it possibly can
For the brain that was just a boring also-ran.

Organs with a life of their own
Never to be controlled or even clearly known
All in the skeleton cage
Still as the sage's cave
Articulate and not so sorry
To carry the gory story
For its a disposable clown
In which to roam
That in itself cannot bind
With craving's ties so blind.



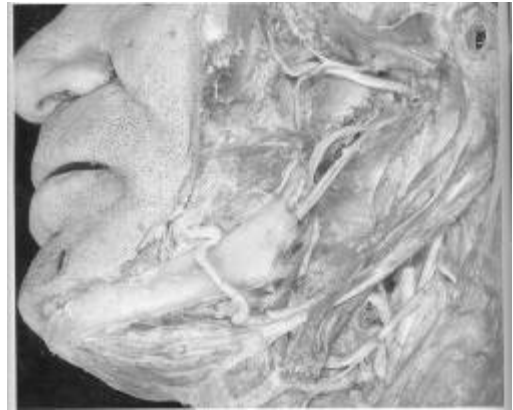
The face altogether can be to desire the most tricky
For it looks and feels like me
But to the body the face just masks
the skull
In meat doughy and dull.
Here the body can truly help us see
the light.
We may all recognize
How our real face, so bright,
That is white and firm as bone
Is not hidden by expressions that
are of desire alone
For the spirit shines on through
With its light eternal and true.
But the skull may further catch this
light



If revealed by cool wisdom's extraordinary sight
As it defeats desire
Extinguishing passion's painful fire
To free the whole and not the part
Of a truly ecstatic heart.

So we have reason to take this face apart
For horror turns into the highest art
As we find, on seeing death,
That we reveal the deathless...

So let us see our noses pose With snot not roses
In their hairy little hoses
Eyes', however inspiring it is to see,
As much as they would like to soar with glee
Topped by plastic-like wigs
They fly like pigs
For ears that flap are useless
Ugly too they are doubly fruitless.
Under the skin is the fat and tears
that wrinkles and weeps at the passing years
The muscle that seems out of place
That should be lifting weights or winning the race



Then, well it's hard to be vain
About nerves, arteries or veins
And the blood that does tend to leak
Is not what the heart would wantonly seek
Then there are the blemishes, my dears, the warts and spots...
And so on and on, needless to say, no body ever got the hots...

(That's feelings business, so fraught
That ends in a frustrating great naught. But that's another tale to tell
Of the heavens that lead to hell)

For better then and not for worse
The result is not the revolting reverse
For to cool the passions is such a relief
To our surprise we realize the dreadful stress
Of the make-up or of the new dress
For we never could trust those sharp wee teeth
They shine so sweetly but can bite with such might
Fall out over sweets or be lost in a fight
The hands too seemingly not a sure thing

One minute to be confused by string
The next, a bit pissed
To turn into a rock-like fist...

Lank hair in the air
Dirty skin for the bin
Nails beyond the pail
But shiny are the teeth
For the heart shines from beneath
My hopes are not on the ropes
They are never brighter
(but like the moon, not the sun)
For I have seen the bliss beyond desire

So let us draw the curtain
On the body so uncertain
And get into our saffron pyjamas
It's time to retire for good
From fleshly dreams and dramas
And seek the deathless within...
No, further within,
dear Roddy...

The breath can show us the way
To the emptiness inside
If we can see a stillness there
Beyond its uneven tide
There where our goodness lies
Is where our spirit never dies.

One would be correct to think that the body
Knows absolutely nothing, dear Roddy

*Yea, poor old Dick nose
Never knows nowt
Wiv' an arse for a gob
He can jus' shout
A bunch of shit
What a stinkin' job
In a hellish pit*

No, wait
Meat can't speak
We can't blame the body



For our blindness, Roddy
It is the heart's fire
That sparks the desire
Its seed
Is the delusion
Of what we really need

For the highest happiness is peace
And this material body
Can help us still the mercurial mind, dear Roddy
That would wander from life to life
Death to death
Always as uncertain as our next breath

RODDY GOES BACK TO THE BODY

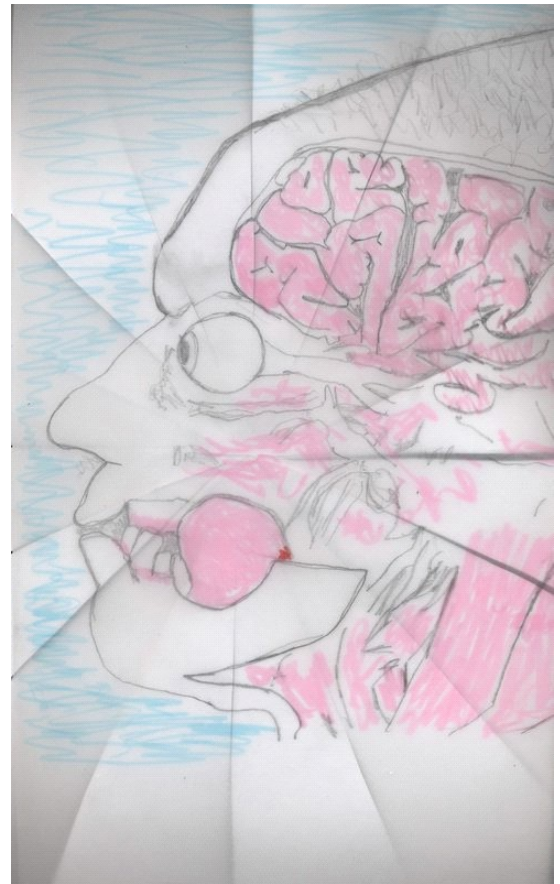
when he thought about looking inside
it all seemed so grim
his chances seemed slim



does right light reflect
from death's mirror, stark
how can it be if death is dark?

but over the years of fighting the fight
restraint gathered a yogic light
to the tip of his tongue, it seemed
where, still in secret, it gleamed
fuelled from below
where the heart
was beginning to Know

gradually the inner gore
was less and less important
as it was before
its colour faded by the inner light
that by and by came to see
the body is not me



Then as joy burst forth

The light penetrated



Until there was nothing left



RODDY'S JOURNEY



*Where is power?
Says the ghost of youth.
In generator, pylon or chic
nylon?
In bright neon or come-on?*

In volcano or say-so?

Thank the Lord, they have
already gone
The weepy widow
And the creepy shadow



Beware of putting power to the fore
It will draw the will on as before
The wise man puts power behind him.
Entering the spine like tonic wine
That can rise with faith
As we rest back
Into its track.
Here too we can gather
Our intention to us, cool and fluid
Composed and lucid
To unite with this power
And build within a mighty tower
To join earth and skies
A channel of strength
In the service of truth
Not of lies.
The lies that tempt us to run on so fast
To be first and not last
Only to get lost
And face the cost

*Then is power in wars or prison bars?
Or kept in kiddies day-glow stars?
Or perhaps in going with the flow
Crystals or psychic powers?*

None of these for all will pass so fast
On life's highways
(Never mind on the low ways)

Real power
Real might
Lies in the penetrative light
Of wisdom's sight
Only then can we escape the senses' lure
To find ourselves truly secure
Not only in an ecstatic moment of release
But because we have found wisdom's helm
To take us to the deathless realm

Dear Roddy
As the sun comes out, bright and warm
The light from afar defines form.
And casts its shadow
It is resonant with inner light
The reflective seeing of sight
And I watch as I define
A world that can never be mine
For am I not the light that shines?

Or is this my shadow?
Does not light, reflected, evade form?
Does not the light of space stand apart?
How can this resonate



With a warm, caring heart
That would be at One
Not afar like the Sun

And as the gathering clouds
Threaten my radiance, so proud
To enter the dark
Seems ever more stark.

The sign of hope
Of joy as skippy as a skipping rope
Is the light that penetrates the cloud

Freshly emerging light
So evanescent, silvery white

Caught as it passes through
(Coming from a self exposed as rudely blue
Not profane, just insane)
It is as though when the sun rises again
From the drizzle and the rain
Of suffering and pain
It is brighter for it is free of fears
Even of the fear of a cloud's tears.

In a glorious requiem
For us and for them
We are lost and found
Born again never again to be bound
Together or apart
In the perfect detachment
Of freedom's heart
That is, to our great surprise
An end to suffering and our greatest prize
Deathless light and deathless sight.

Such light is to be found within
No further within
As the spirit detaches from the body
When we calmly see
Our impending death, dear Roddy
In the safe space
Of the subtlest breath
We live on
Past the body
Dearest Roddy.

The cool lake too
Like mercurial milk
Sparkles as the light shines through
Merit may be harboured there
For me and for you
If we dare
For its dark refinement is borrowed.



One day, hopefully after it has tamed our play
It will fly gracefully away
Into the luminous sky
Drawn by the truth
Of its own innermost eye
To escape death's perfidious lies.

Their shadows will take them,
These children of craving
They are as if already dead
These reactive, dark and demanding moods
Painful and rude

Listening past it to the light
Listening past it to the silence
In the light of the breath
There until death
We can let go
Of the shadow

But most blessed, dear Roddy, is the light
That casts no shadow
It is not of the world

THE CLOUD BRAIN OF RODDY'S BIGGER BODY...

...brings his heart and mind together



cloud brain was born
high and bright
with a flying smile

RODDY'S WORRIES

it's just a matter of time
so isn't a coffin a honest cradle?



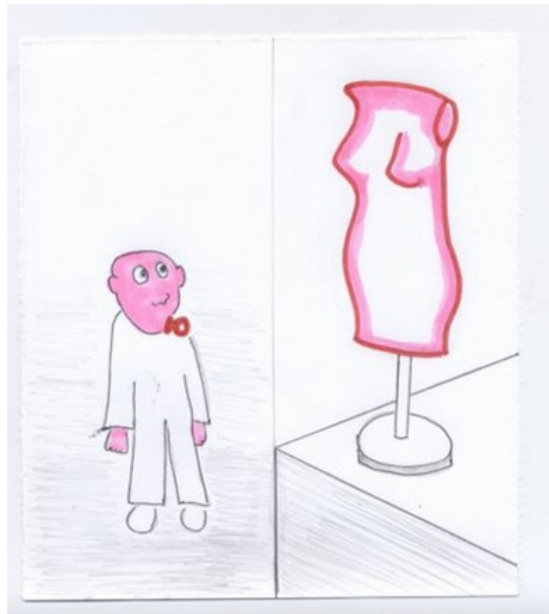
the kindest too, perhaps to give

for as the dummies of life
dumb down the strife

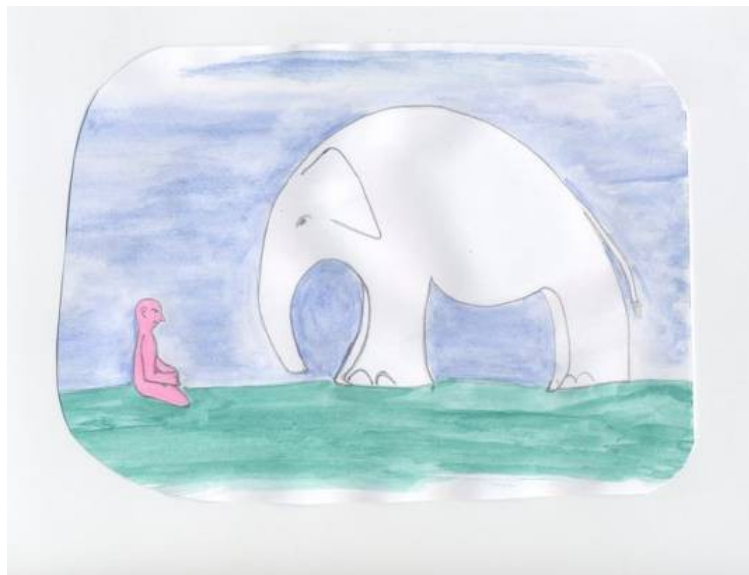
do we ever really live?
so casual is saṃsāra

and how many times have we had to die?

at the end of the day
it just wasn't funny
but it was strangely peaceful



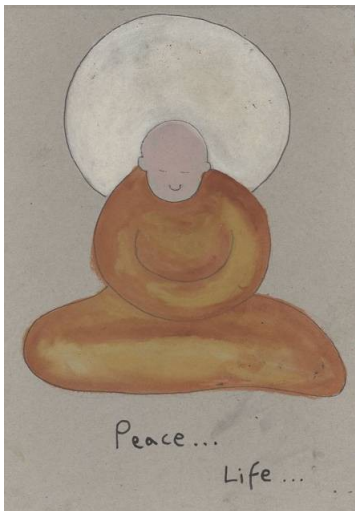
and, on the other hand,
sat there naked
he had to admit that all those things that he was so worried about
just didn't matter to his new friend the elephant





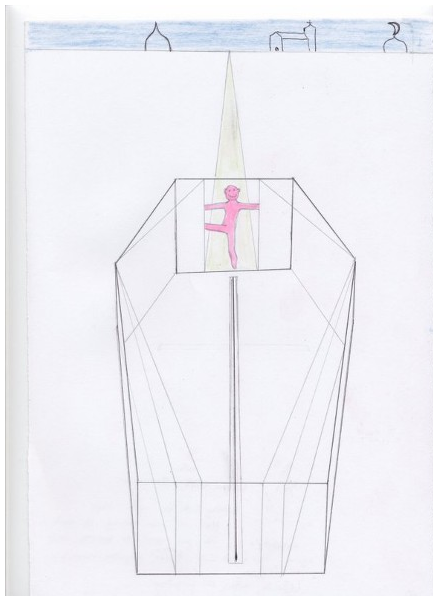
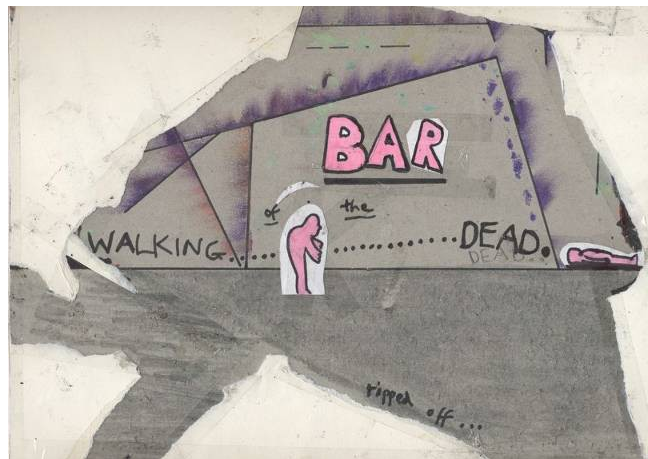
but could he hold it all together





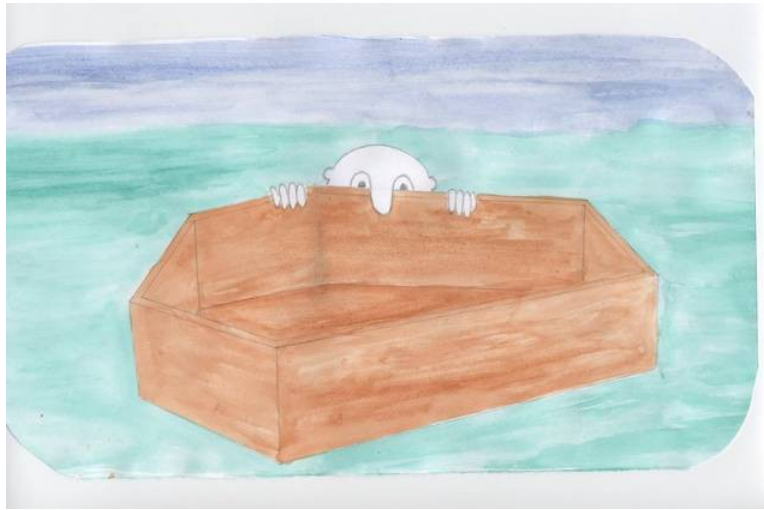
or would he blow it and lose everything

perhaps this time Roddy was ready
 he had the right ideas
 he had been training so hard
 he was going to walk
 mortality's finest line



(quick, Roddy, before the perspective closes in!)

but was anybody watching?



'No, nobody is watching
it's all empty,'
says Mr. Concrete.
there's just a few old bones...

Roddy's Diary

So, I was patiently drawing some chalky old bones, contemplating. Then, (I didn't really mean it), I just wanted to play a bit. It was a boring drawing. So I added just a few impish marks with a pen that could suggest that they live again, walk and talk. Thinking about it, there was a certain truth there. The animal that had owned the bones may be born again. But these bones would not and that was not what was seen.

Many a truth is revealed in jest. This time by the sharp contrast of scribbling life onto death, had the effect of giving death to life rather than life to death. For the bones spoke on from their stillness, unanswered by play yet lightened by its spirit.

As for the bones it was clear they never knew how to walk or talk. Resting my gaze now on their still forms, like empty shells unfolded, I can wish I had rested there before, inside. For my own bones, amidst feelings' chaos, were always there in support, a source of pleasure without temptation. They were stillness within the flow. Like the bright stillness in the breath that mysteriously glows, speaking of salvation. A stillness, having been revealed that is our greatest friend and refuge. In the same way curiously they were also a source of relief, the sign of death, but without grief.

For this is no drama where the final curtains close and smother us in darkness. The message of the bones, calm and clear, soaks into the eyes. Drawn by the breath that echoes those simple, rounded forms. Then it is as though a cave opens inside, as stone within resonates with stone without. I use these words, echo or resonate, for the act of acknowledging that which is the same is of this nature.

To recognise difference still poses a question, it has movement. In sameness there is an ending in stillness; a stillness that leaves peace as its message, resolution. Such a message may be like a bridge, allowing a truth that the heart would otherwise obstruct to pass within. This may be seen or unseen for this path may need to be well trodden before it is found at the moment of most need: The time we see the certainty of death. This will then be as a whisper, not a shout to the senses yet in the heart a fresh sense of freedom emerges, unexpected. Like life after death, yet seeming to flow opposite to the flow of life in the sense that it is from son to father rather than father to son.



Not a return either but a fresh, new path, leading inward. The experience was private and curiously reminiscent of the confessional. Like an admission of fault yet one that holds its own forgiveness, right there in the act of perceiving, in the knowingness. Yet mysterious for the one who knows remains silent. Silent, it would seem, because hope and wonder belong to the future, not this timeless present. Regret also seems to rest in the past. We have won some respite, for the dance of desire is stilled, grounded in the face of those bones. The heart rests out there now as if en wrapped by history yet in the sense that a weighty tome, once understood, is left behind. When there is both relief and gain together. An ending is a new beginning. For reflected there, in the mirror of death, is a freedom, glorious and pure.



Then dispassion transforms virtue from a fine line to a huge open field (our happy ending) – with seeing stronger than feeling, desire does not arise and the prison of wilful and fondling focus disappears and freedom opens up fresh delight within.

Well scrape me off the ceiling what an incredible feeling!

So the Lord will show the way
to a world at play, every day



in return balanced offerings
offer balance
with a scent of virtue

RODDY'S CHOCOLATE WRAPPER MIRROR

there's none left
the chocolate has all gone



quick, there is a window in time
to escape and become One

as he went through the window
the light got brighter and brighter



love appeared and as a mirror
asked of Roddy
'is the heart of love and that of the body the same?'
'of course not,' he quickly replied
but then he saw that if he made them the same
then the heart was tame



the body bathed in a wisdom cool, sublime
suspended in time
and what shone forth was a love more real
bigger than just how we feel

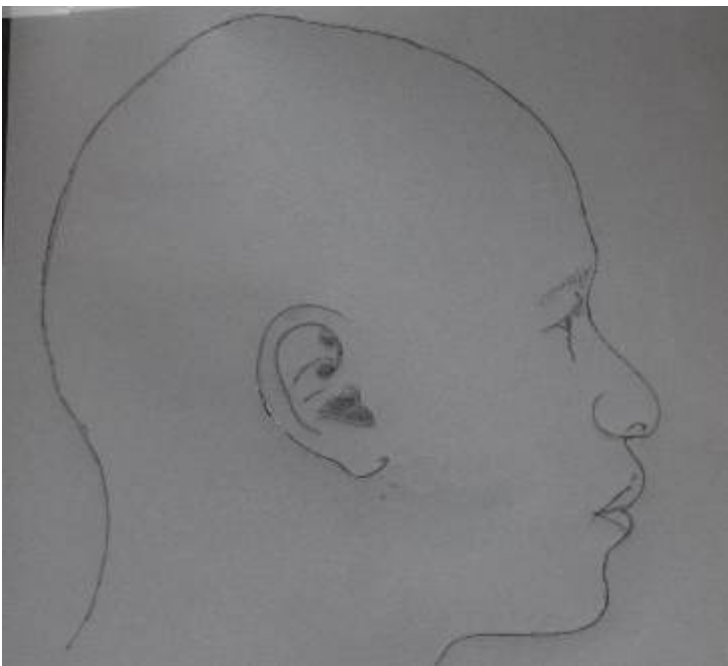
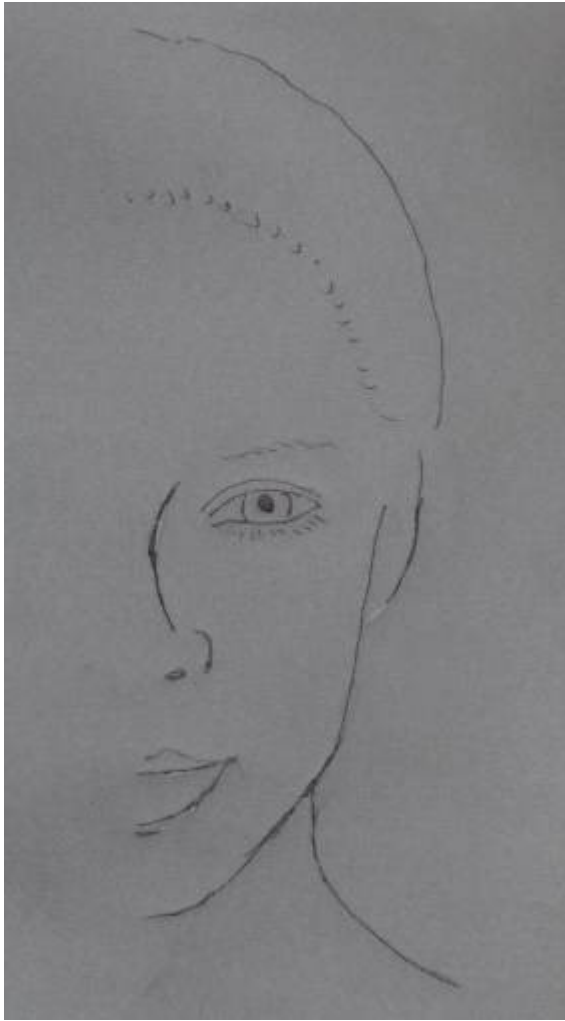
yet allowing feelings to change through a vaster space and range

never strange in fact transparent
as the veil of each solid element
fell away sublimely sublimated

oh, isn't materiality over-rated
said the fleeting feelings of Gods
ever evading the ownership of the chasing will
never to be part of the One
that was just the end of wanting
before all the celebration begun
yet after the party
there reigned
a higher peace..

RODDY'S HISTORY REVEALED

loss, day after day, turned the world grey





what was lost seemed clear, the cost
at first it seemed my task
was to morn and cry
but it was also to dare to ask
what and why
the open wound, the open question
were, together, an open heart
and a chink of light
for truth shone bright

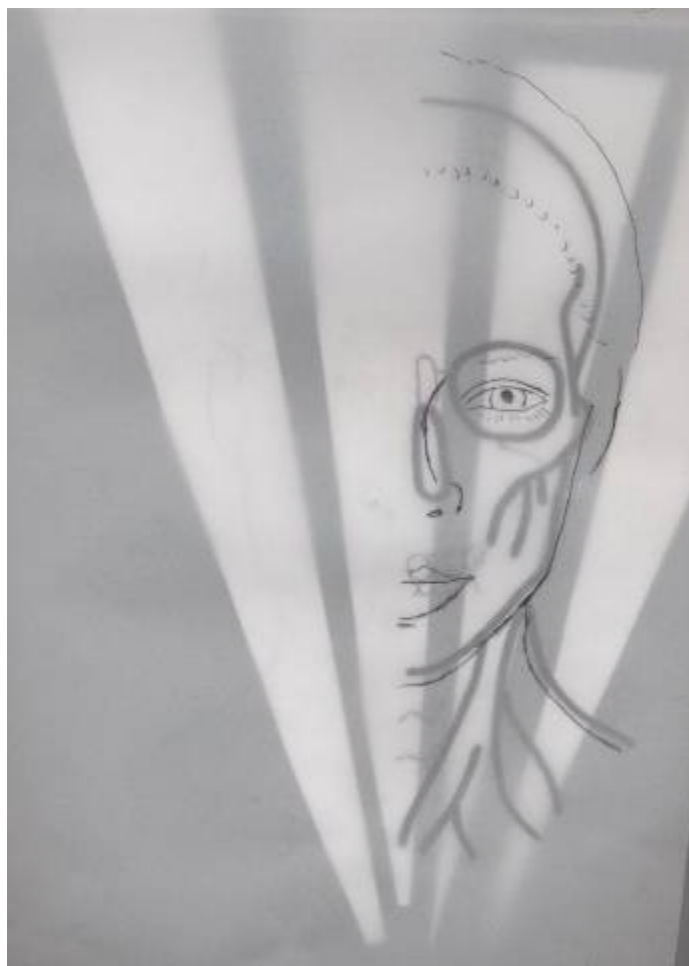




taken by thought to the eye

or by feeling back to the heart

gathered within
no further within
out of sight



there the body was revealed
and my own fate seen
by a heart pure and clean

the future for the body, signed and sealed was death
on the cessation of life's uncertain breath
but never mind for the light of the mind
was detached, clear and kind
neither together with the body or apart
shone the wise and compassionate heart

whether we face death eye to eye
or we look together, positive, fully grown
and our profiles are shown
proudly to each other, sister and brother

or we turn our heads away
either by disgust or rapture thrown
or we are doubly moved in both ways together,
positively disenchanted
whether we understand that the ego lives or dies
in all these ways the light may be granted
by heart or eye
until we sever our final tie
and find with calm or with glee
that the spirit is lastingly free

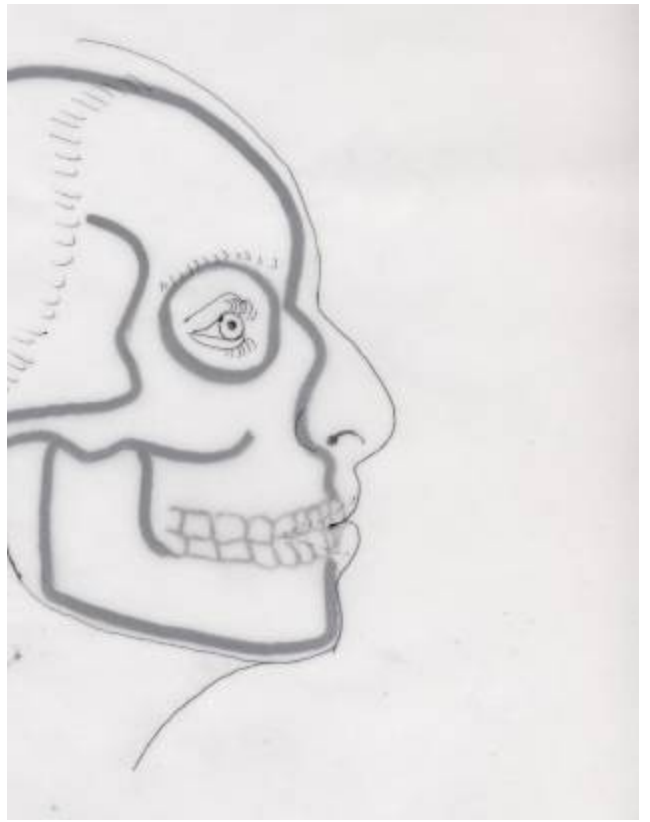
then with a face, simple and light we can shine
back at a body and at a world that's not me or mine
with the love that comes from feeling safe
in our refuge sublime
free from time



the profiles...

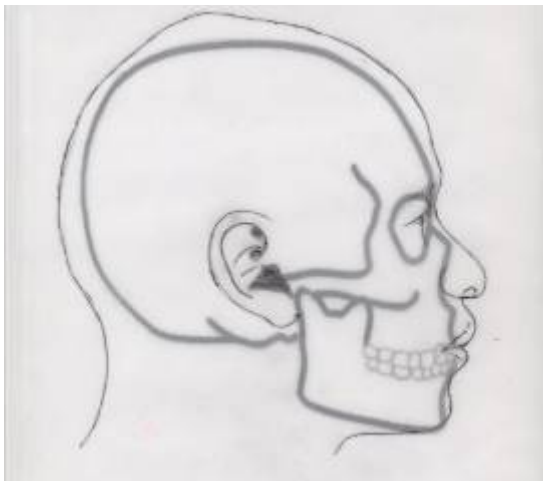
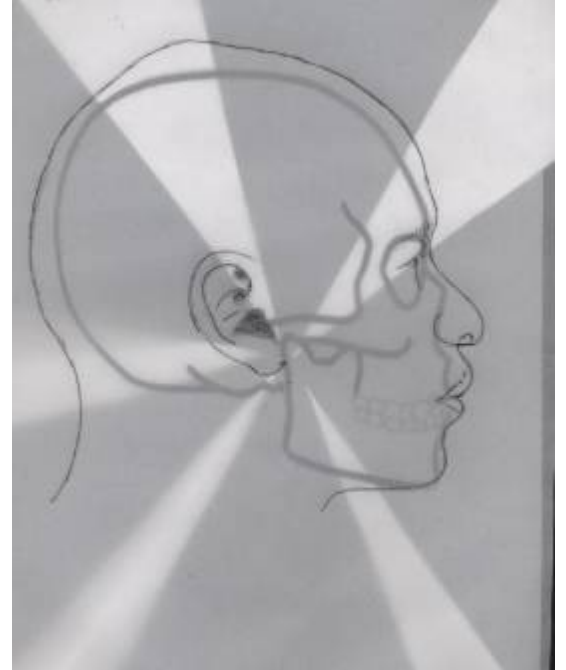
the profile of youth is innocence
the first bright, open space
with experiments to play at every day
nothing is real enough to dampen our zeal
and we are not worried whether or not we have appeal
because the love that comes lacks adult strings
unconditioned it can still give us wings
we learn about the body from bumps then biology

still finding out how it works
and where the pain and pleasure lurks
we don't make a fuss
because it still doesn't deep down
feel like us
our hearts shine
with the delight of first light



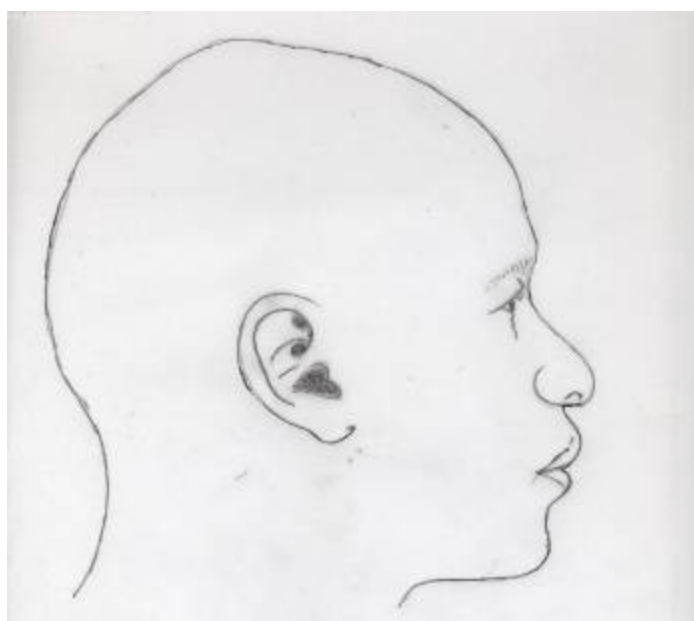
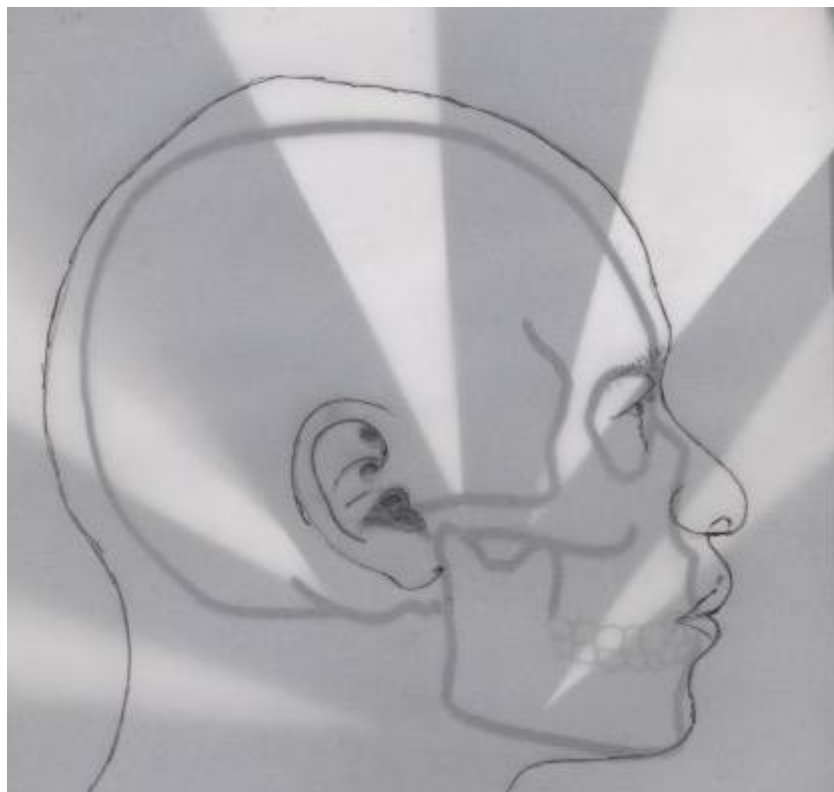
that trap now that may befall the unwary
that seems delicious, not scary
is to become these feelings of delight
only to gradually unite with the body
where pleasure quickly turns to fright
where pain is the other side of all those coins
the fool's gold of guts or loins
what is gained is lost
tossed away at no small cost
by time

the profile of a heart maturing
is that it may listen to truth as it glistens
gathering inner perspective to things alluring
glowing and growing piece by piece
and peace by peace
showing what's inside
in a way calm and humble
from which the spirit's rise not tumble
free of desire's loss and haste
we savour the most delicious taste
of a happiness that's free
free even of you and me
at One, yet not tied together or apart
in a truly unified heart



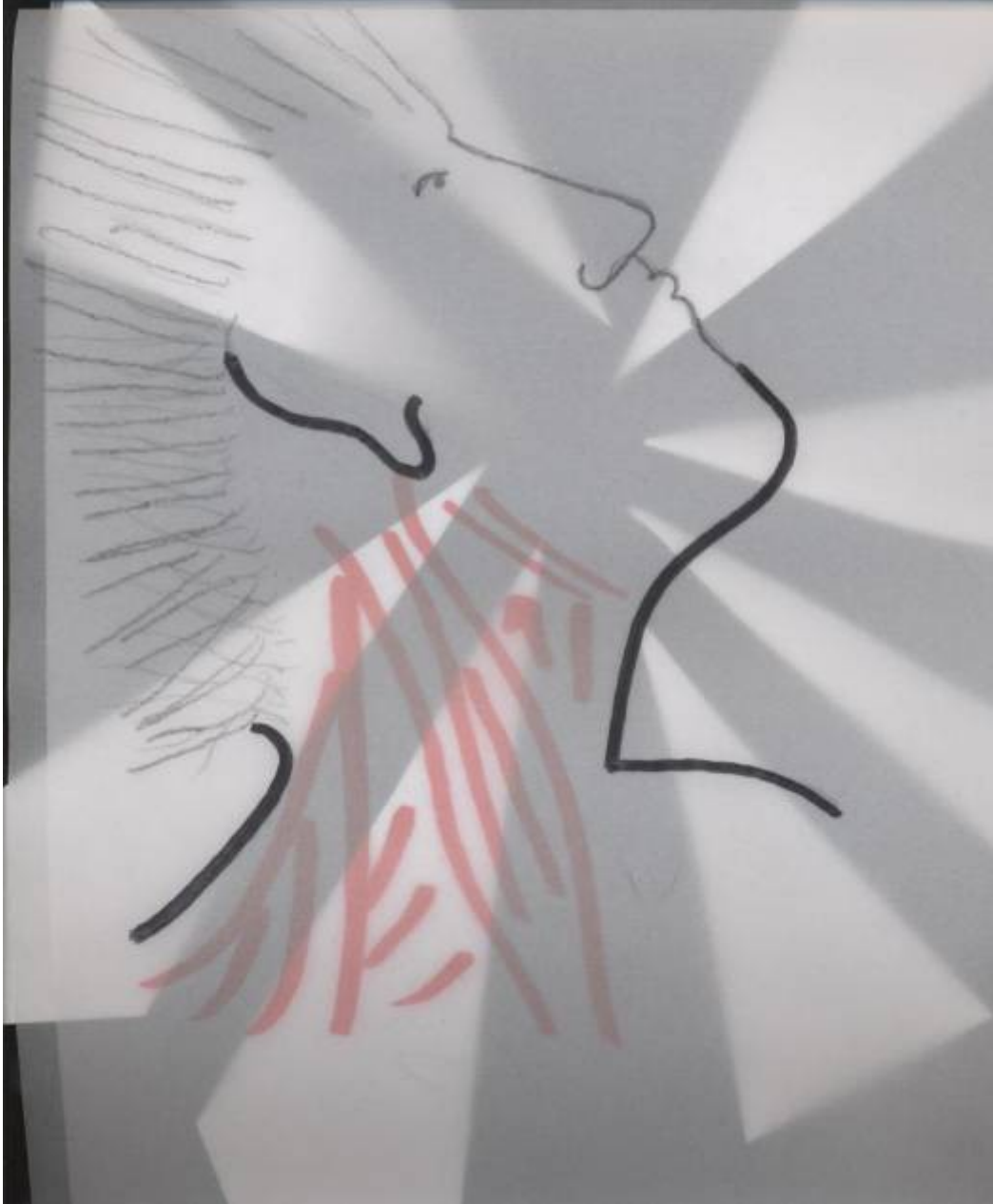
then together we may face death
face to face, light to the right
heart to heart
eye to eye
and we laugh, we don't cry
for we see that what is lost
is only flesh and bone
if the spirit is fully ripe
and heading for home
as nature lets form fall away...

then the heart may shine from below
and the calm mind like the moon can reflect
and resonate in tune



or,
turning the face away
from blood and gore
the heart bounces as never before
high as a kite might fly
yet anchored to the body
by compassion's mighty rope
that may give everything hope







this mighty vine
is like the umbilical chord
of our Venerable Lord
that in His dreams proclaimed
how the world may be tamed
led by the flag of truth
flown over heaven's roof
so high yet still grounded
in the body, firmly founded
in the stillness of the mountains
yet as joyous and playful as the highest fountains
falling in cool rivers of light
stillness that moves, defeating time
a stillness free, doesn't cost a dime
yet demanding we relinquish all we never owned
until the spirit is so perfectly light it is honed
beyond the realms of death
rising in the subtlest breath
mild as a child
yet grown up and up

too big for just this world

with a brain beyond pain ever proud, like an empty cloud

above the mountain that is the pillow

weeping only like the weeping willow that cries only in its name

the names of desire are never tame

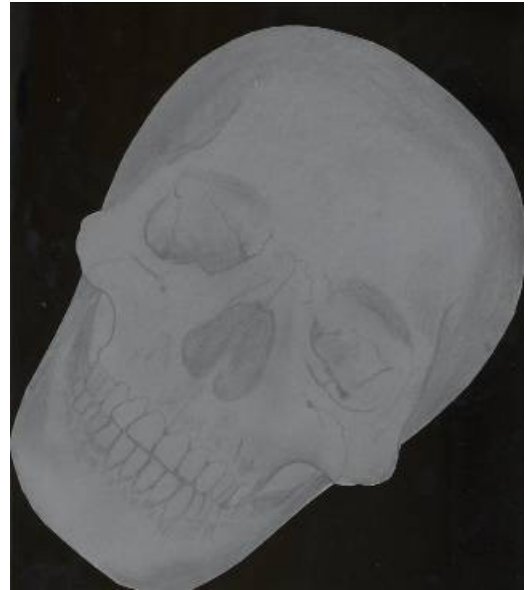
oh, the body is hard to bear
like the sticky underpants I must wear
now I am old and cold
but it can go un-named
in a heart peaceful and tamed
if un-named too is the cool light that bathes
away the suffering
even as the pain, as a source of compassion,
may remain

after the happy Sun must come the rain
so once it has all begun
it's no fun
there's nowhere to run
there is no end in sight
to passion's pain
don't that fill you with fright?
I hope not, now
I hope you see
it need not start
a calm, liberated heart
can have wings
if it don't bother things
they don't bother us or tie us down
through passion's smile and frown
within this body

lies life before the passion's leap, dear Roddy
life everlasting, before the thief
of covetousness and grief
but we've been addicts for so long
we have let passion dictate right and wrong
we have to learn all over again
and bear with the confusion and pain

first to deny the grim reaper
is the ordinary sleeper

but he can't leap away either
for fast asleep he ain't got no driver



and we can't really roll over in our grave
we must let our dreams of escape

stir us ourselves to save and search beyond this body of an ape

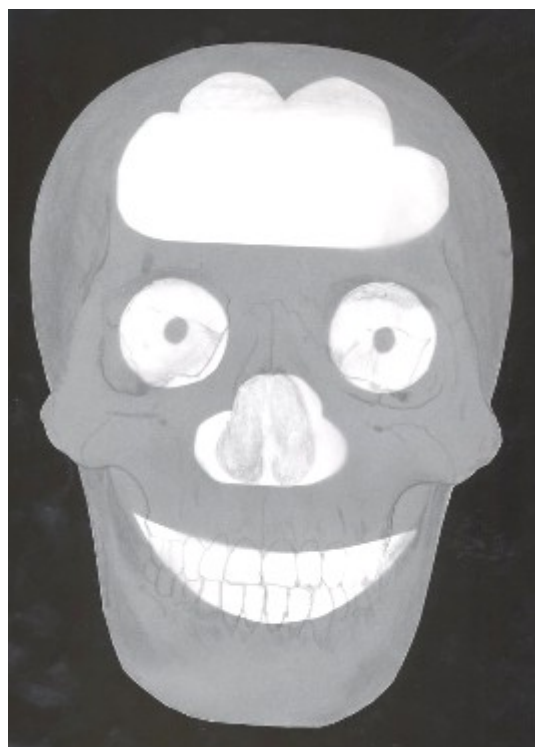
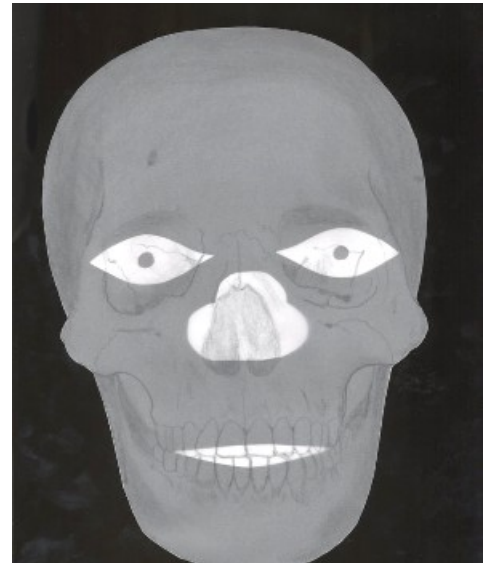
not to move with death's tide of the breath
that I come to see
as bigger than me
in fact as wide as the sea

if we can face death, face to face
the heart may withdraw into this space
to another dream, further inside
that can take our spirit for a ride
but to the body must return
unless we can fly away with good for good

but it's so easy to forget
we'd better take along our body's form
to keep our aspirations warm

and our passions cool
sober enough to follow the rule
of one gone forth
on the final quest for Nibbāna

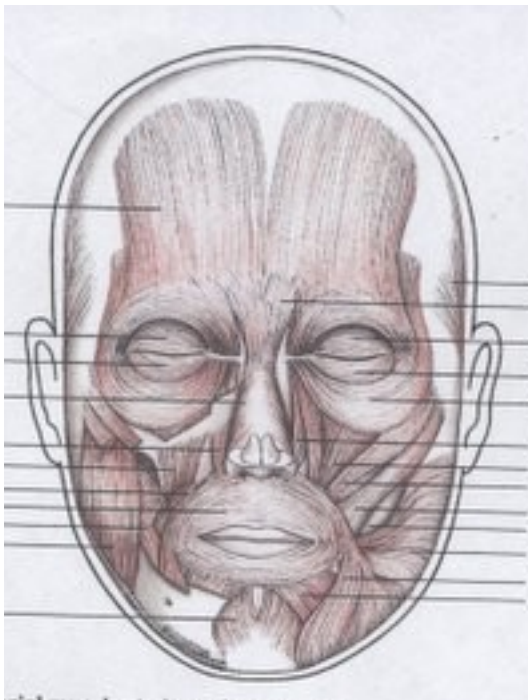
sure escape from this body of an ape
with its never ending search
for the perfect banana



TO DIE SO THAT WE DO NOT DIE

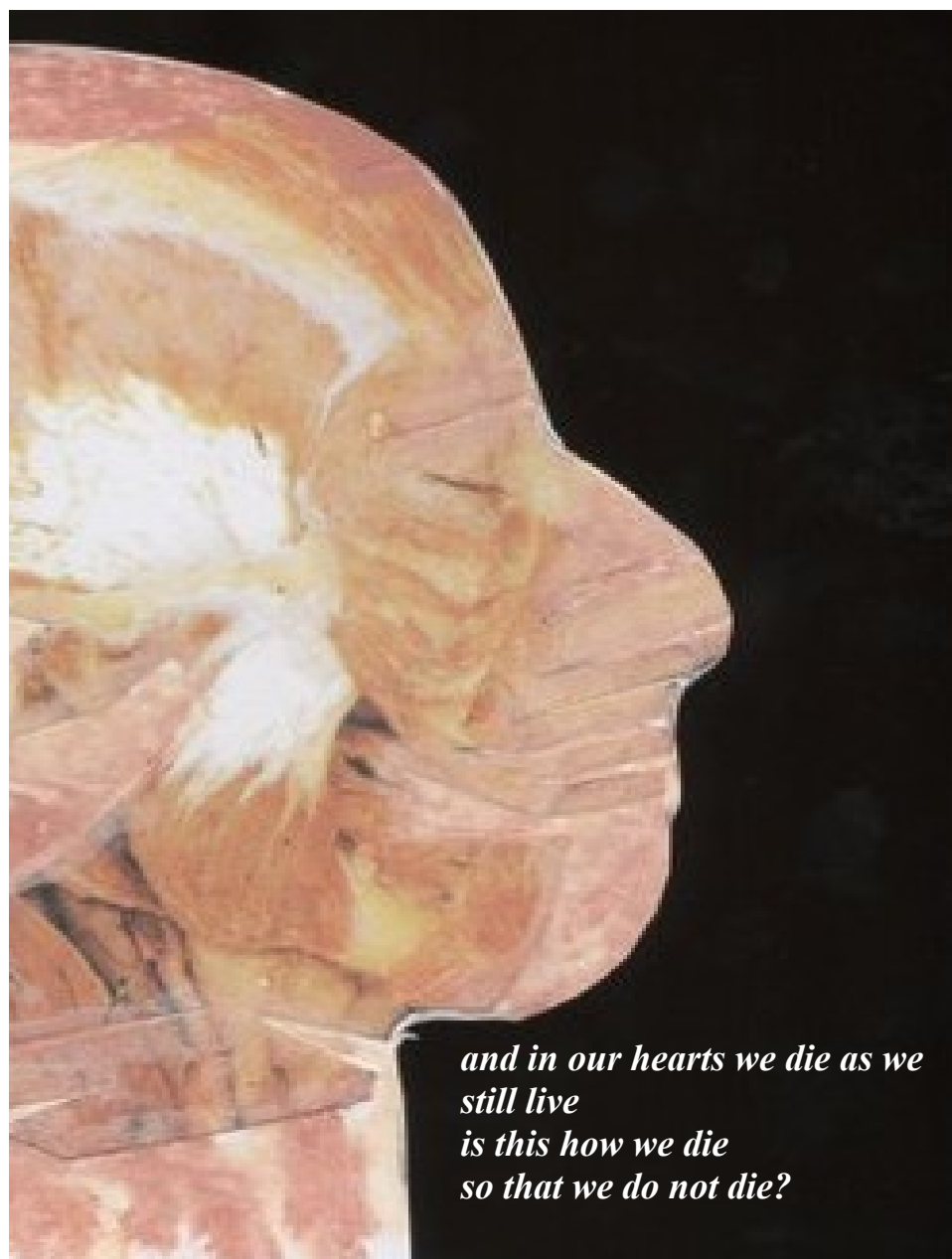
how may we portray the face of death?

in the labelled diagrams of science?



or with some new-fangled appliance?

no, lets get real
don't we need to feel to realise
(and avoid the horrible surprise?)
let's take the labels out
then make the picture somehow look real, with heart



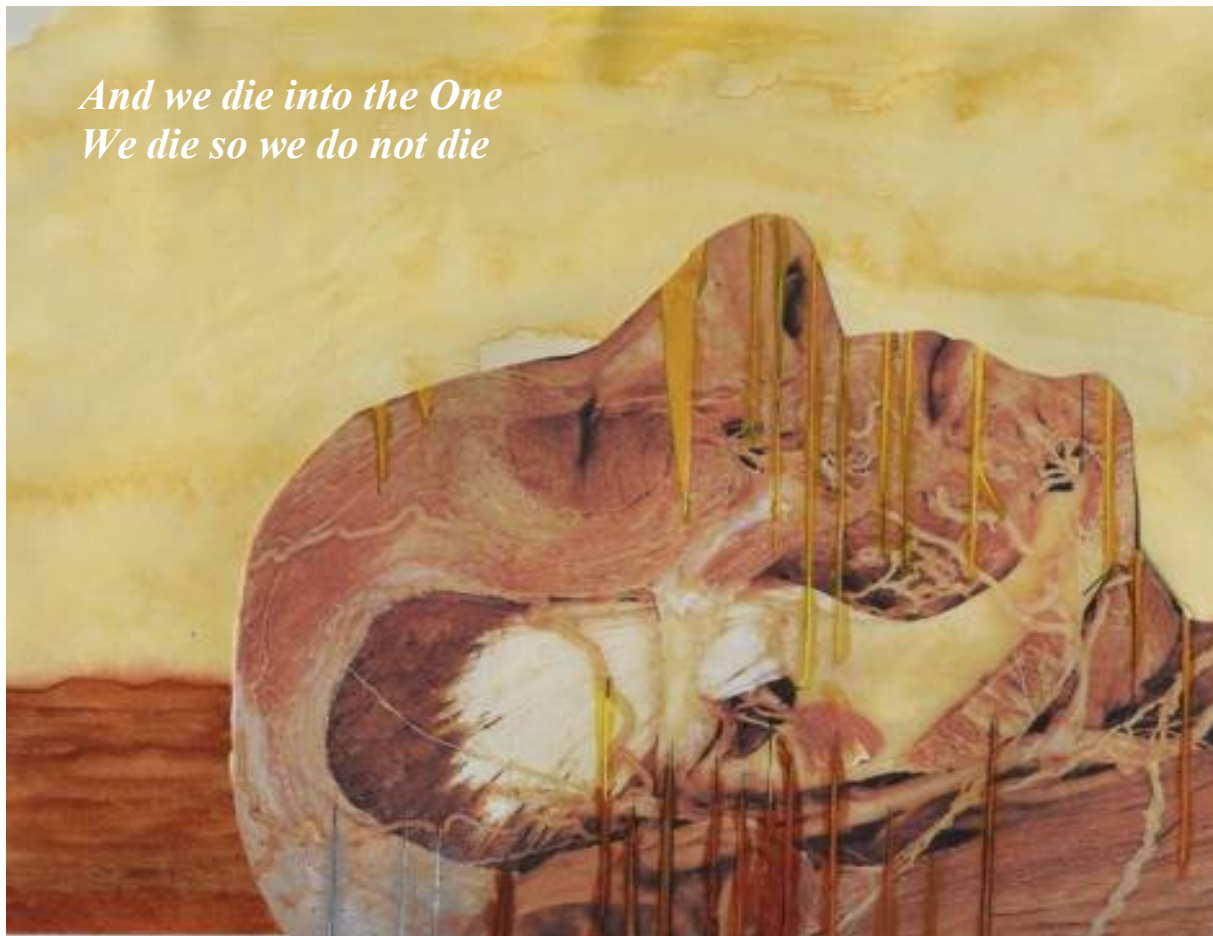
*and in our hearts we die as we
still live
is this how we die
so that we do not die?*

or pasting white war paint on the shaving mirror
to remind him of the security of purity
as he imagined bravely shaving off his skin
to see inside

is this how we die so that we do not die?



or we imagine the kind bounteous earth,
full of joy and mirth
and the light of the setting sun
may suffuse the spirit
making earth, sky and body One



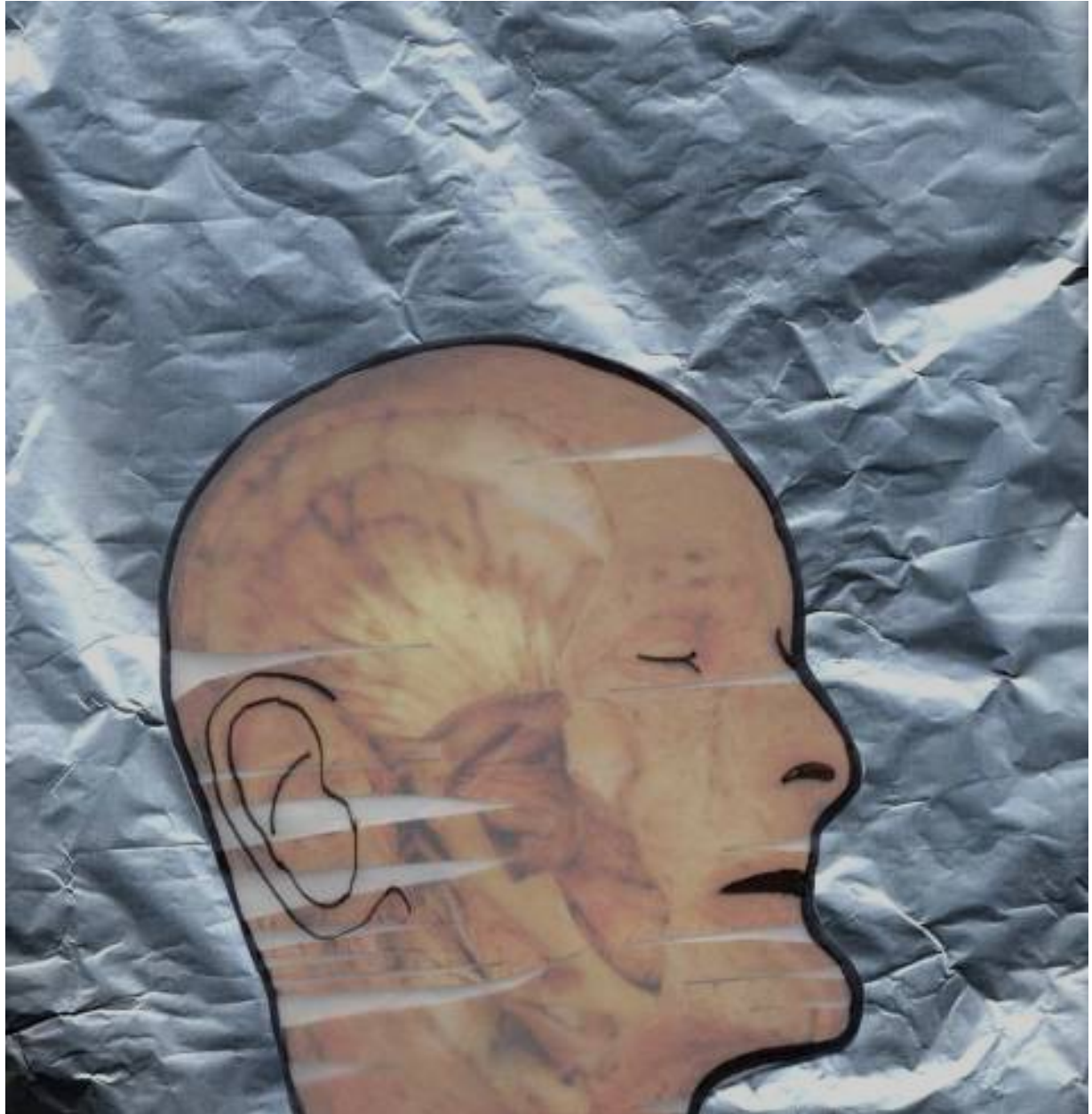
or is death really a mask?

is our contemplative task
to see what lies beneath the façade
here lies some truth
but isn't it rather hard
to take off the body, this lump of lard?

let's perhaps begin by turning the mind around
when it is strong and sound
looking with faith, lest not with pride
at what lies inside

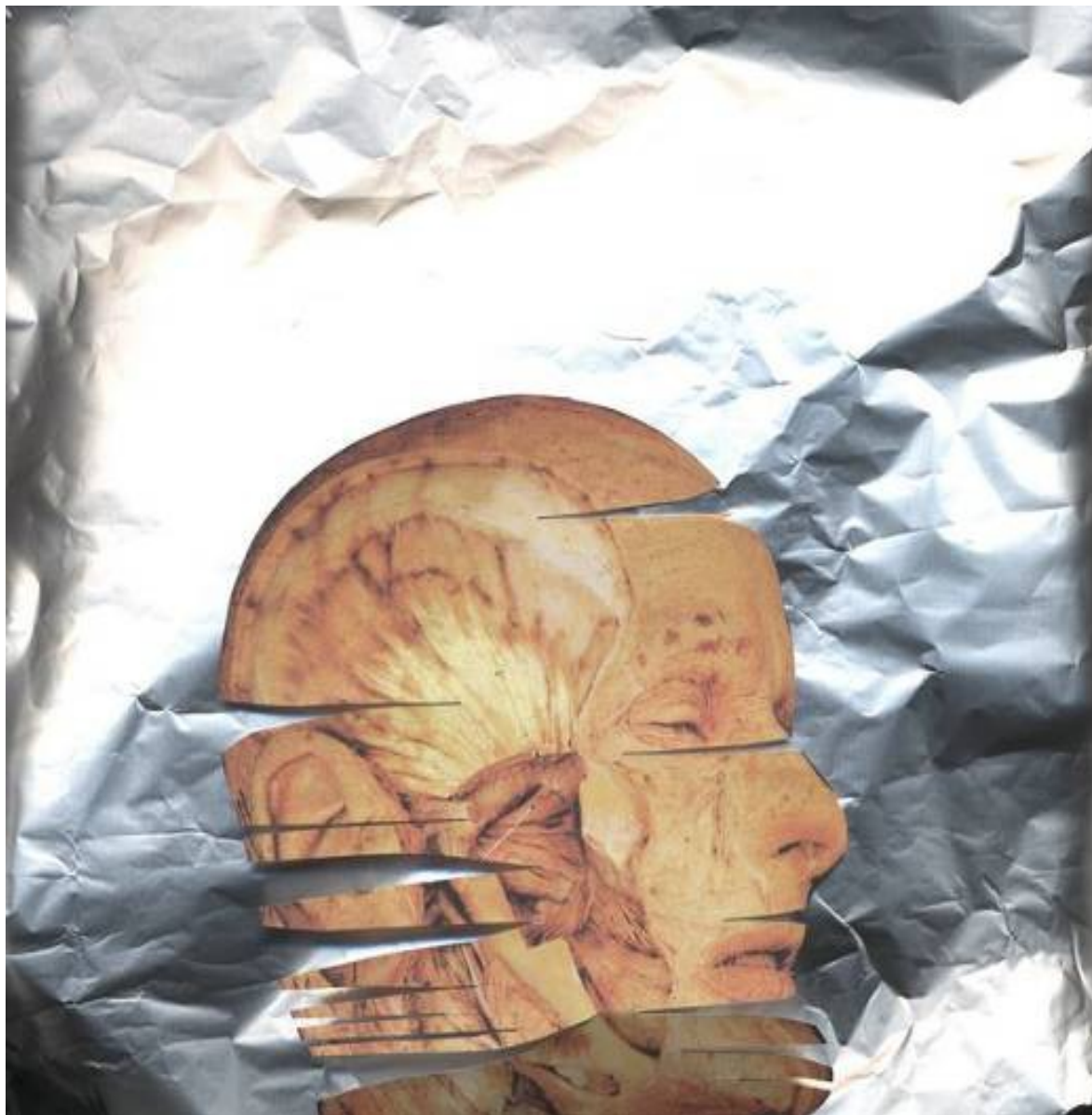
not yet
it's enough just to be
with the reality
and patiently let this charge our battery
for wisdom and compassion will naturally arise
in their own time with no horrible surprise

protected by a veil of gentle light
in itself a subtle, peaceful delight



this is the light that knows
and the knowing of light

one day a veil that will naturally dispel
as the growing spirit becomes strong and well
strong enough to both see death and to see
that this body that dies is not me



then detachment has been won
and ounce by ounce and then ton by ton
the weight of ownership is shed
for the spirit to rest in its celestial bed



his head lifts like a balloon
with the softest breath
shedding skin, seeing death
high, misty bedding is drifting in
gently reeling the spirit is lifting
on a spiral stair of softest air
to a resting place in a heavenly space
who knows where



this is a heaven
that he could bring down to earth
as a source of great joy and mirth

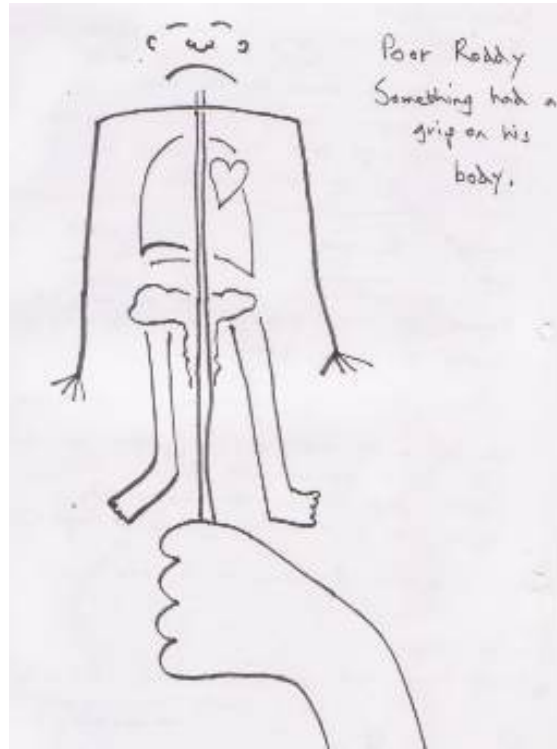
he surrendered the body
to the cool streaming silver bright
that reveals death in deathless light

at first it would seem to take this body apart
to reveal the light of the heart
then at times the light could almost be lost
(oh, at such high cost)
but a little chink here and there
can keep the link in the palpable air

turning again to the breath it can be found
so that now he seemed duty bound
to sit and meditate
however early or however late
to keep the light alive
for us all to truly, fully survive.

*in our hearts the body dies
so that we do not die*

LOOKING AFTER RODDY'S BODY



Positively disenchanted
The blessings were still granted
And the more smeg was mopped from the dregs
The more the humbled clown of his spirit tumbled
Only to fly, fun and free. in the safe space, since the body
Less and less seemed to belong to Roddy
This was at first a blessing and a curse
The heart's escape yet needing a nurse
As it kept on slumpin' about
Pumpin' in and pumpin' out



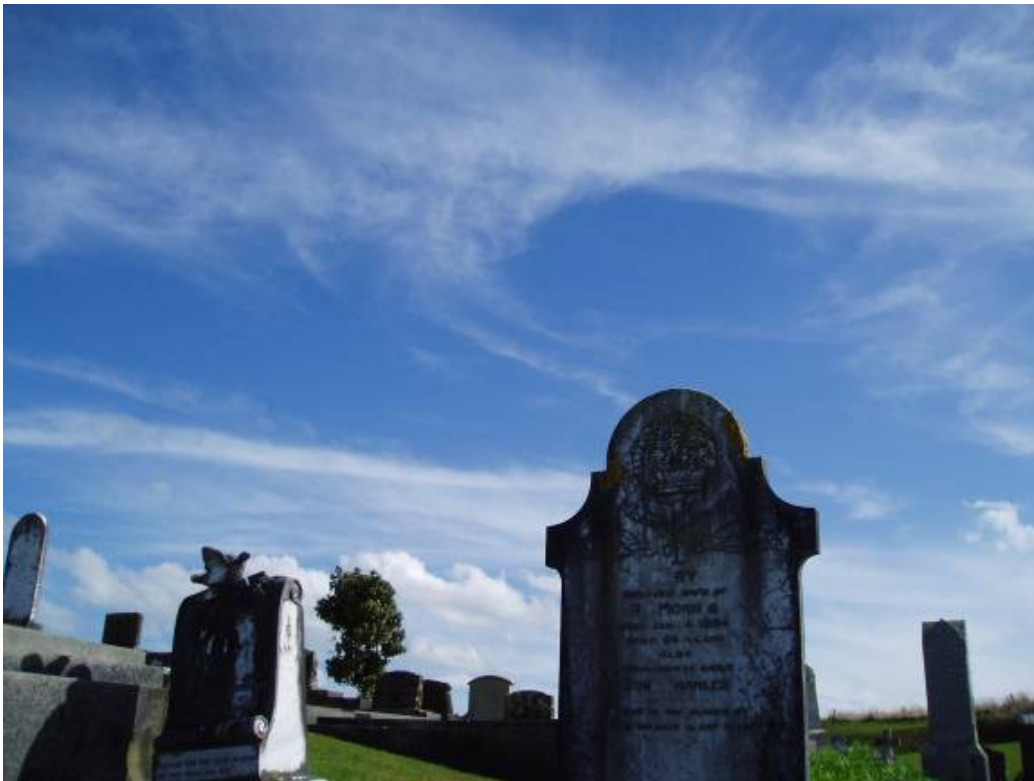
But love raised up the whole thing
From the toil grew the angel's second wing
That added to wisdom's first
Took patient and patience soaring
Beyond worldly stress or thirst

And we both looked after, before, during, and after
We was savin' trouble but still burstin' the bubble

Let's make nuffin' of it
Until the spirits in orbit
'Cos less an' less is livin' lighter..
Jus' get into shinin' brighter
Never mind the fancy dress eiver
'Cos however high it's driven
It still ain't got no driver

RODDY'S BODY DIES

Despite the extract of malt
Roddy's body finally ground to a halt
What a relief, he was sick of the pain
Though it came and went like the wind and the rain
It had never been funny..
And so he left behind the pink fluffy bunny
He had cuddled so hard
As his body became like a lump of lard
It was good he had regressed so far
And died, peacefully gazing at the stars...



RODDY'S ASTRAL BODY

*'I don't Laud it
Here in orbit
It's just wild
As freedom's child*



*Looking on at humanity
It may seem we are made of meat
But its only for the sake of humility
That we wear flesh and bone
This animal body
Is not our lasting home*

*Now I see that with the body
All my desire has been left behind
What a relief, thought Roddy
Now the body doesn't enter the mind
I can see that it never did really
With a heart that is truly kind*

NO NEED

*Bones need no prayer
As stones need no saviour
For the sea has no throat*

*If we would bind the mind
To tongues of flame
To speak of passion
We bless the stones and the mud
That need it not
And die with them with a thud
To leave an illegible stone
For next time in the slime.*



*This is no redemption from time
Bound not to a single body, it is true
We are chained to many of every hue
And what is well will be sick
All manner of thing shall be sick
Yet they need us not
To put plasters on disasters*

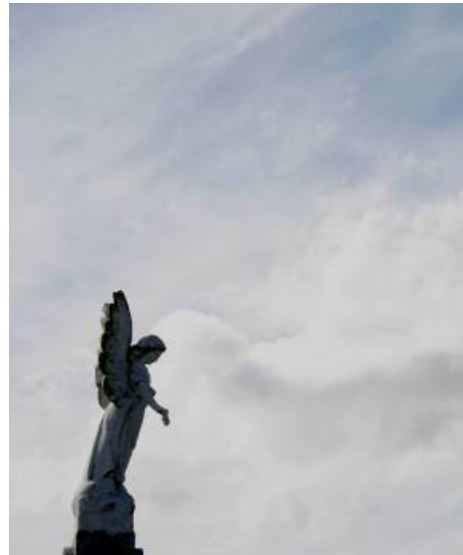
*What's needed is just brains
That know how to mop up their own bodies' stains
What's needed is just the heart
That may gladden us with art
But what need we portray
That leaves us free to play?*

*Perhaps desire can be forever at one with the rose
We can thus prance and pose
With our most beautiful words
But can it also be at one with turds?
Only dispassion can so unite
With the body, no desire or fright
For only it can see
The body is not me
Then from craving we are free
Perhaps only compassion seeks such height
To stay with the rose as it fades
Or the sun fails to rise over the glades.*



*Trying to hold onto the rose
Does craving not weave
What might have been
To what has been
Memory and loss together
Right there at the end of our tether
Into a tangled knot of fire
Hot thinking wire?
This only dispassion can cool
In its clear forest pool
All we lose is the fragile flesh
Our spirit never needed
The seeds of the deathless are seeded
With our eyes calm and kind
Gradually we find
That grief is a pack of lies
For nothing ever dies*

*Our loved ones never depart
They remain in the heart
The deathless heart
The eternal light
Before the beginning
After the end
That speaks of love
True love
Tells us
We are not needed
We can let go
And go with the flow
Of a love as peaceful
As a dove
Going nowhere
Heaven is here
It is only the other side
To desire and to pride.
The living and dead
Are never divided,'
He said.*



RODDY'S RETURN

We need you, they said
Come back Roddy
To the trash
Don't worry your new body
Will disappear in a flash

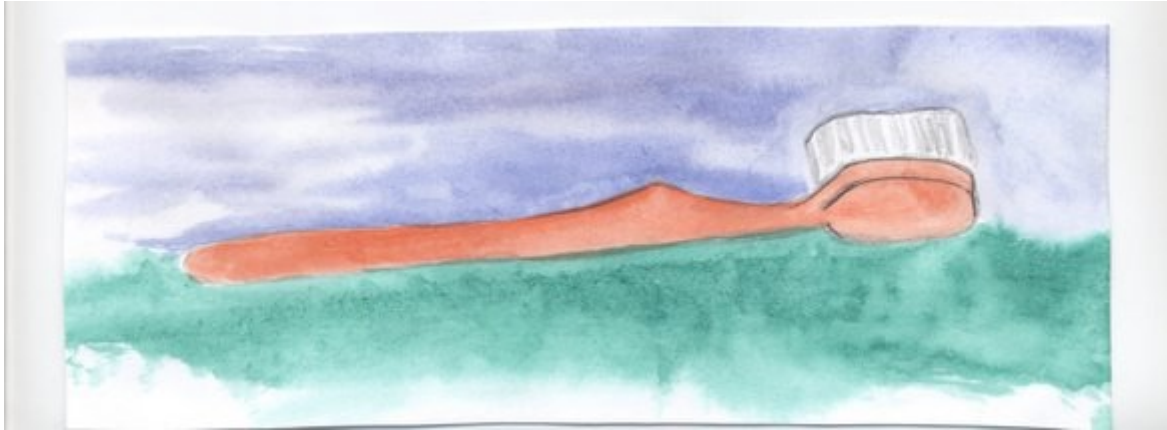
Roddy returned
The day his body was burned
He wanted to see it reduced to dust
To leave behind for good his lust

He was not otherwise needed
For others freedom was better seeded
From 'the other side.'

RODDY'S LEGACY



the abandoned socks



the deserted toothbrush

don't be sad
he doesn't need them anymore

RODDY'S INNER LIFE STORY



innocence...

cared for...





caring...



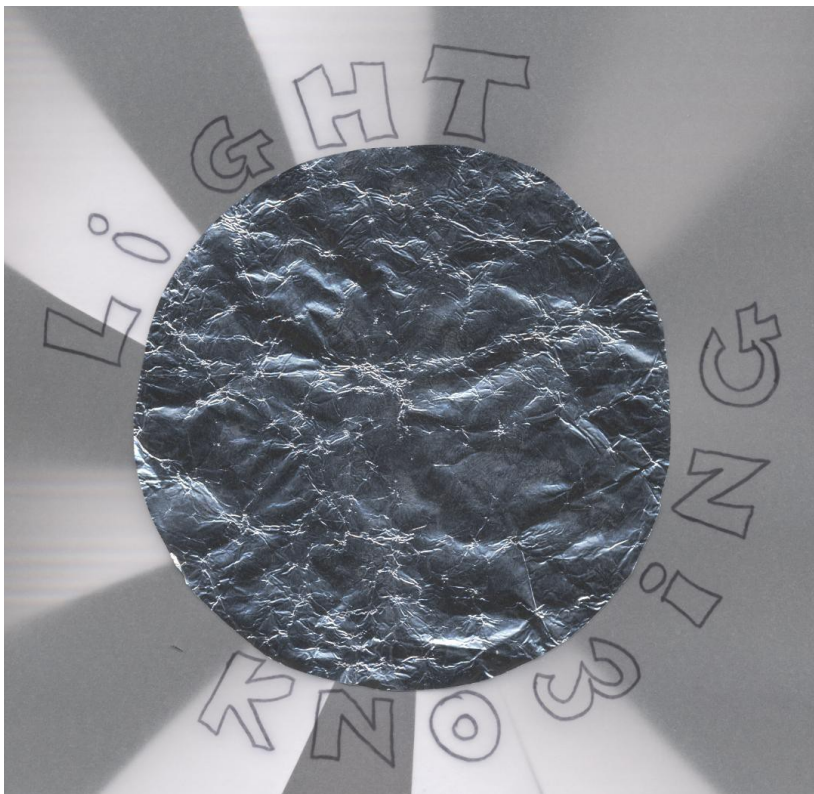
conscience...



conscience is inner light...



concentration...



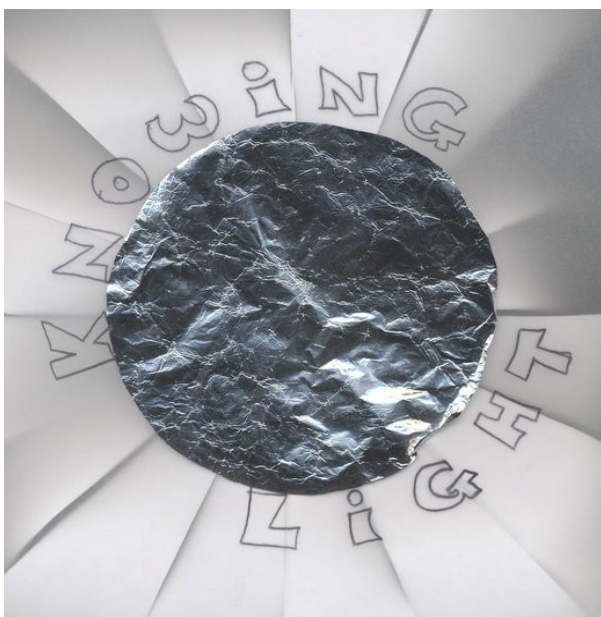
waking up...



forgiveness...

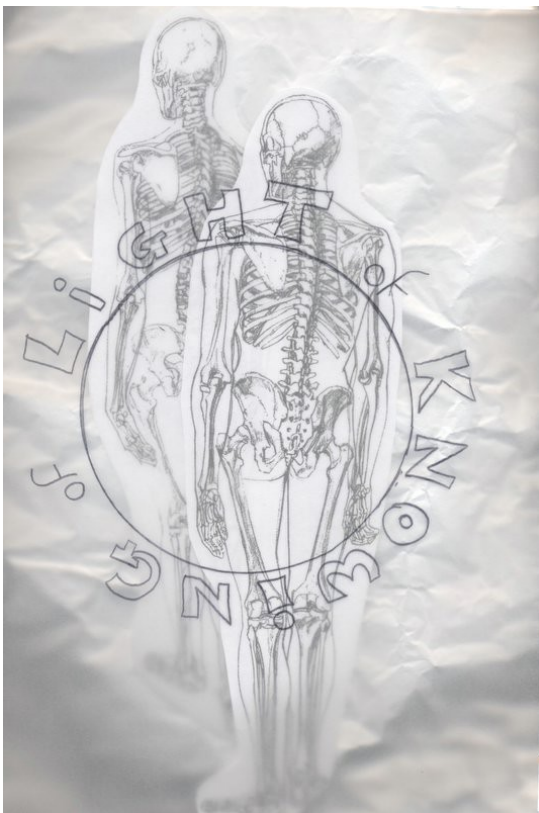
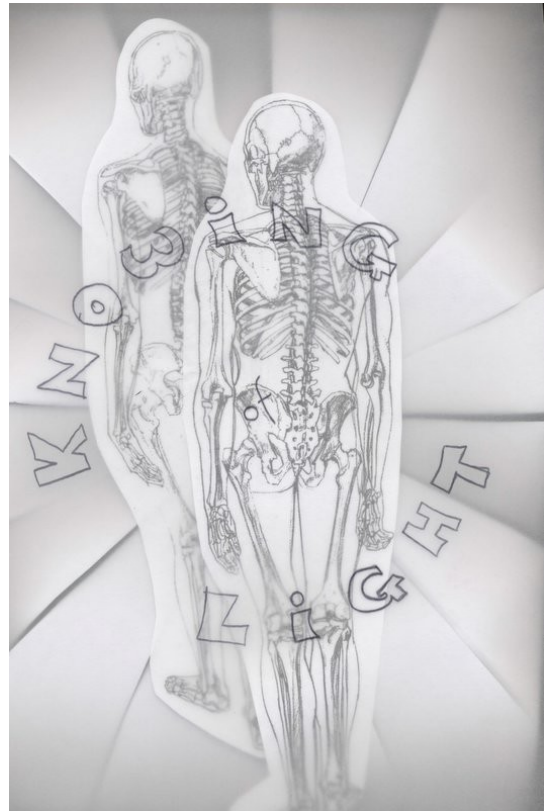


kindness...



presence...

seeing...



reflecting...

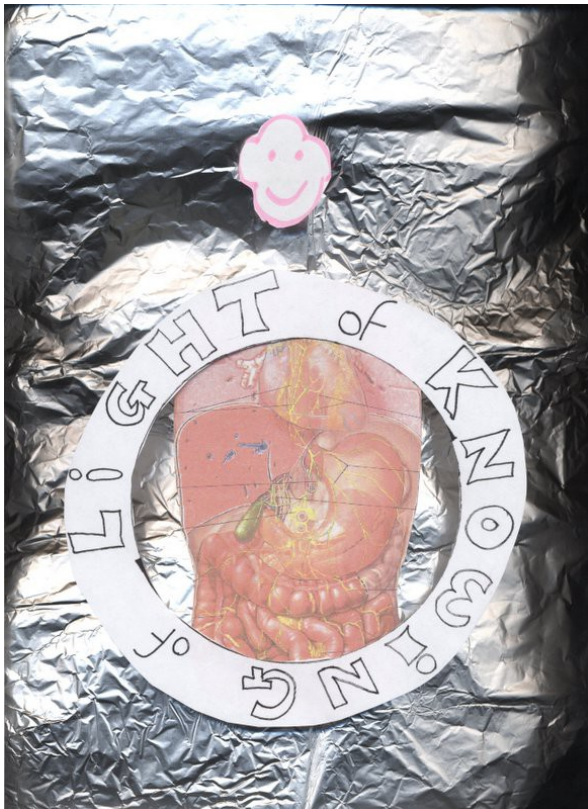


contemplation...

release...

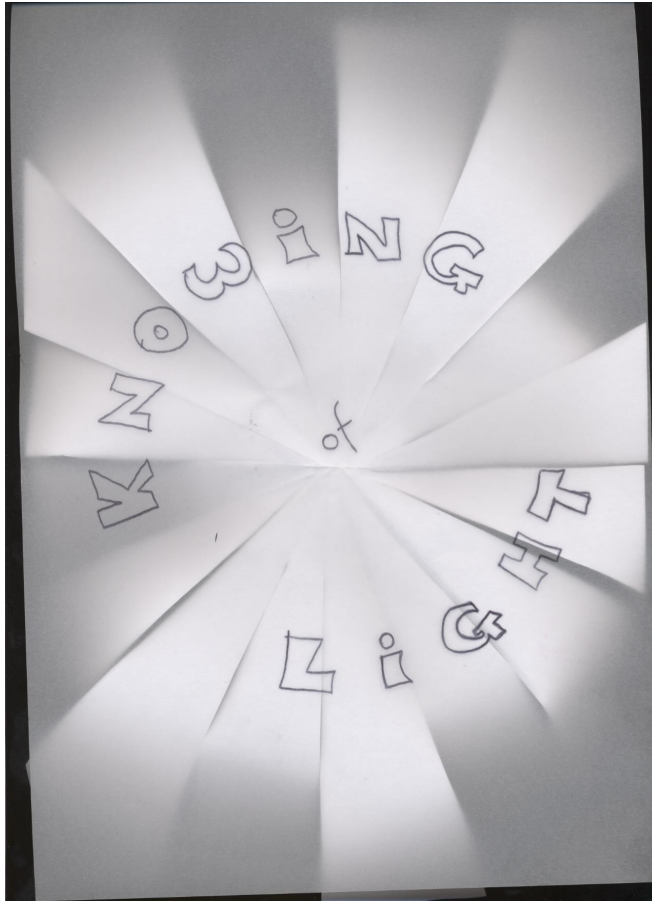


detachment...



renunciation...





samādhī...



wisdom...



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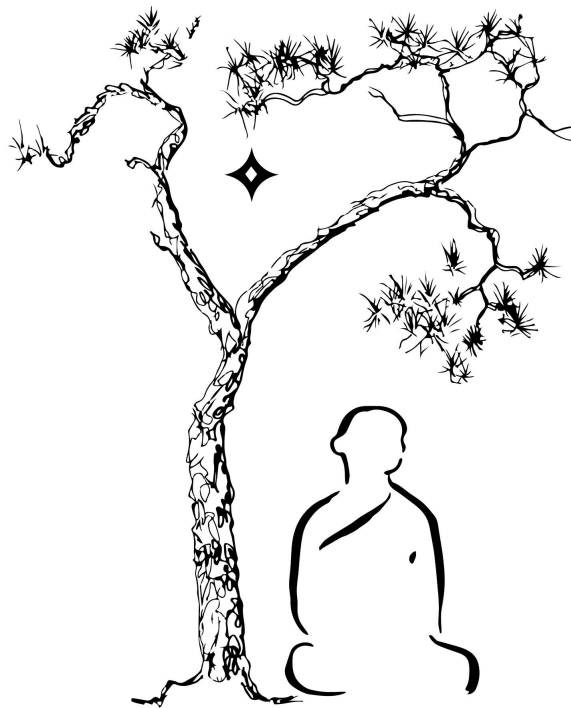
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