

# Lights and Shadows

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## The Shoemaker of Gorlitz

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The Shoemaker of Gorlitz

Cautious cobbler at my table,  
leather-lathed shimmering sheen,  
the hammer-tick,nails a-sinking,  
and running stitch of swelling shoe,  
sinking,singing,nail and stitch thread,  
boot-black bottles,bonded boxes,  
dusted shelves loaded: shoe-work shed.

My shed can range unbounded,wild,  
like a bellows-blasted flame,  
climbing with the fresh flush of air,  
sound in a boil,its breath uncoiled,  
and each ring,uncapped into spheres,  
cast out the whirls that bolted quick  
from the tapping,the spilling throbs,  
the orbs of sound,flecks of kindling,  
as rising flame in flashing reach  
hurls the spark that,in the trickle,  
spells again the red-orange blast.

I fear the spark that wrings the lock  
as that time of celestial mirth  
when light did grow star-smear'd in haze  
and each sun broke the trap of its gaze.

STEELE  
Shoemaker (cont.)

Arms of light with serpentine coils  
and fists of smoke,rolling,rolling;  
arms that dance,clear and slender shafts,  
hands born of fists,eyes of clear pitch;  
thunder with its creases of flame  
fades for birdsongs and soft fire-flies.

Those sparks rest in us,tamed as seeds,  
until we rebound from caution,  
until,like the boiling vapors,  
we become unbottled; sweet surge,  
the unwinding,where the flesh ends  
and reality begins,that  
moment when I jump through myself.

Roaming through the soft shade through night  
where the clock-wound wind waits,a hush,  
for flowing again like kind sap;  
I hear,in the wisp,the coiled breath  
that sends the shiver,the whisper,  
the growth that swells the constant voice.

When frost fades into growing green,  
a hush,until the blossoms burst,  
waits to echo into a voice,  
from sparks of sound,from a whisper.  
That voice is mine,until spoken;  
after it is spoken,it is yours.