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## The Beasts and the Everlasting Love

Friedrich E. Pater

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## *Friedrich E. Pater*

### THE BEASTS AND THE EVERLASTING LOVE

#### INTRODUCTION

IN THE spring of 1954, a letter reached me from Haifa, Israel, telling me that its writer had found my *Walls Are Crumbling* a source of delight. He enclosed with his letter a manuscript—a series of what he called “modest meditations on a sublime text”—asking if it could appear in *The Bridge*, asking, too, if I could give hospitality to his unpublished papers, which he had been forced to leave behind in his native country. Before I could make any decision, I learned that the author had died. Decades ago, he and I had lived in the same city but had never met. Now that the written word had brought us together for so short a time, an obligation seemed to rest on me to make at least his meditations known, as a kind of testament and as a memorial.

Friedrich Emanuel Pater was born of Jewish parents on January 7, 1891, in Olmütz, Austria, later Czechoslovakia. Having studied law and philosophy in Prague, he won his doctorate with *One and All: A Theory of the Comical*. This dissertation was dedicated to his teacher, Christian von Ehrenfels, who introduced the concept of *Gestalt* into modern thinking. Among those Pater was fortunate enough to know was Adolf Loos, a father of modern architecture, who boldly used new materials, new lines, new forms, without feeling it necessary to cut all ties with the past. Pater was also drawn to Karl Kraus, the intrepid critic of all he thought hollow and untrue in public life, literature, and journalism. Having learned from Kraus awe for the word and responsibility as response to meaning, Pater—not surprisingly—came in later years to look on Theodor Haecker, the German Catholic thinker of the late '20s and early '30s, as a spiritual guide.

In 1954, Pater published in *Der Brenner* an essay, “On Mount Carmel: Meditations on Beauty,” which revolves around the sentence: *Hässlichkeit kommt von Hassen, wie Schönheit von Lieben*, “Ugliness comes from hate, as loveliness from love,” the Love which made the world. He

asks, for instance: "Whence comes the virginal, unapproachable beauty of the lily, its white and gold, with the green of its leaves, making so kingly a triad?" Answering with the Gospel that God so clothes it, he continues that He has done so "out of love, for loveliness comes from love, from the great love of the Creator." God, who makes beautiful all He loves, his essay ends, delights not in our possessions, our "ornaments and precious stones, not in images, not even in those of artists and philosophers. They are for men, for minds richly endowed, whereas it is poverty in spirit alone we need to enter heaven. For God has revealed Himself that we may all follow Him, all, great minds and little."

As these meditations on beauty breathe an evangelical spirit, so do the present meditations on Mk 1:13. In a few instances, Pater's language here is not so exact, so severe, as it might be and as, I am sure, he would have liked it to be. Hence, being unable to ask him to elucidate his words, I have added a few notes of my own. In any case, his meditations are without doubt a profession of Christ, and, written as they were shortly before his death on June 27, 1954, they are a testament.

Friedrich Pater's meditations echo, I think, the compassion of great Catholic mystics like Blessed Henry Suso, who confessed that the wants of all the creatures on the earth went to his heart and that, when he himself could not help them, he begged the kind God to do so; or St. Gertrude the Great, of whom it is said that she felt with all dumb creatures in whatever befell them and held their miseries up to God, mindful that the dignity even of beasts has received new nobility through Christ.

There is, it seems to me, something of St. Francis' spirit in Pater's meditations, which, unknown to him, were a kind of farewell. I mean that spirit which once made Francis of Assisi, feeling that death was not too far off, take loving leave of his hermitage, of the rock that had sheltered him, and of the bird that had given him joy when it awakened him for his morning prayer: *Io mi parto, a Dio, a Dio, a Dio tutti! A Dio, monte santo, a Dio, monte Alverna, a Dio, monte d'Angeli! A Dio, carissimo fratello falcone . . . !* "I am departing. Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye all of you! Good-bye, holy mountain; good-bye, Mount Alverna; good-bye, mount of the angels! Good-bye, dearest brother falcon; I thank you for the love you have shown me! Good-bye, good-bye, lofty rock; never again shall I visit you! Good-bye, rock that took me into your bosom, making a fool of the devil; never again shall we see each other!"

No more than was St. Francis' was Pater's a hopeless farewell. The last line of his meditations suggests that the air of Mount Carmel made

there grow in him the faith of an Ambrose that in Christ risen the whole universe is risen, heaven and earth, for heaven and earth will be made new (PL 16:1403). So he looked for the Day to come, the Lord's day, when, an old lenten hymn says, all will bloom anew:

*Dies venit, dies tua  
In qua reflorent omnia.*

JOHN M. OESTERREICHER

AND immediately the Spirit drove Him forth into the desert," it is written in the Gospel according to St. Mark. "And He was in the desert forty days and forty nights, being tempted the while by Satan, and was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to Him" (1:12-13). In the other two Gospel accounts of Jesus' stay in the desert (Mt 4:1-2; Lk 4:1-2), the words, "and was with the wild beasts," are missing; they are St. Mark's alone.

This is the picture evoked: the desert beyond the Jordan, under the harsh southern sun, before which Jesus may have been wont to withdraw into the hollow of a rock. There, in that solitude, He was tempted by Satan, then served by angels. And there, with no other earthly creature near Him, beasts were His company. This is so significant, its implications are so many, that one does not know which to follow first.

## I

SINCE the Gospels portray Jesus throughout as truly man, lacking no human quality, we will not err if we see His life within a truly human frame. Thus regarded, His stay in the desert, along with the fasting which Matthew and Luke stress, appears like a final preparing for a hard mission, like the final gathering of mind and strength of one who knows what awaits him. He was about to go to men; they alone were to be the concern of His labors, of His striving and His patience. He would speak to them in their language, and in the language of Scripture, as man among men. May it not have been, then, that before all this Christ wished once more to see the beasts, for which He would later have no time? For His saving work was not merely for man but for all creatures, which He willed to redeem together with man their head.<sup>1</sup>

The beasts of the desert are the lion, the panther, the vulture, also the

1. "Redeem" is not used here in the strict sense of redemption from sin; however, all things are sanctified by Christ. [Editor.]



serpent, the scorpion, the hyena, and the jackal. Since there, as in the ocean depths, hardly any plants grow, the animals are almost all beasts of prey. It is by them we ought to picture Jesus surrounded, in the heat of day and in the coolness of night, under a sky alight with stars.

We dare not say as certain what can only be divined. But this much is sure. None of the beasts that are thought of as wild and dangerous hurt Him; unharmed, He returned from the desert to men—so that He might die at their hands. All else about His dwelling among the desert beasts is conjecture. Later He was to make His entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. He bid the demons of the two possessed go into a herd of swine. "Brood of vipers," He rebuked the Pharisees. He recalled the foxes that have their dens and the birds that have their nests, the birds that do not toil but are provided for. Not even the sparrows, He taught, are unknown to God. He Himself was the Lamb of God, and repeatedly He spoke of shepherd and flock. But otherwise there is little in the Gospels about the beasts and nothing about man's relationship to them. It seems, then, that His stay in the desert was like a leave-taking, as if, before setting out on His hard road, He took leave of the mute and innocent creation, of all the world other than man, of nature's beauty and grandeur.

This is perhaps the first meaning of the sentence, "Christ was with the wild beasts."

## II

THERE were with Jesus in the wilderness Satan, the angels, and no other creatures but the beasts.

At this sublime moment in Christ's earthly life, when spirits approached and conversed with Him, only the beasts were worthy to draw near and—we would fain assume—with love to surround Him. When the princes and the mighty of the earth whisper to one another of closely guarded secrets, no courtier or nobleman may be present; only the servants are admitted. Though belonging to another and lower class, they are members of the household. Likewise, no men, only beasts, witnessed the high things that took place in the desert. Because of their unmixed nature, beasts are, in their own, lower way, peers of angels and demons, peers of the creatures who are not of earth. No man may be present when such beings settle accounts.

Once man too was in the same, or rather, in a similar situation: conversing with angels and with the evil one, dwelling in the midst of nature, above all in the midst of the beasts, whose language he understood. He was in paradise. Commentaries duly underline this parallel. Take Clarke's, for instance: "The wilderness was the abode of evil spirits. This very short account perhaps suggests that the second Adam, like the first, was with animals, and met the tempter, but unlike Adam vanquished him. Like Elijah miraculously fed, angels cared for Him."

Christ in the wilderness: here again is man's paradisaical situation. But with what a difference! Even the contrast in landscape makes clear that it is a similarity of opposites. There the paradisaical fullness of the Garden of Eden; here the emptiness of the waste. There man was placed in the center of the Garden to be joyful and glad; here the Spirit of God had brought Jesus that He might prepare for the sacrifice He had chosen. But again angels are close and the tempter draws near. There are again the beasts, the very beasts that are part of our own world, whereas we meet angels and the devil only in the shape of men—men who are, as it were, their deputies, playing their roles among us, for they are not real angels and devils, only men like ourselves.

It is rooted in the incomprehensibly double nature of Christ<sup>2</sup> that, while living here on earth, He lived also in the world of spirits, who for us are invisible but with whom He conversed. This is never so clearly stated as in this passage of Scripture. There in the desert, there was the place: there Christ, even as man, lived in a world inaccessible to us, from which He had come and to which He was going, or rather, through which He was to go into one still higher<sup>3</sup>—He lived in the world where angels and Satan themselves appear.

The events in that middle realm of spirits—to which we are linked,

2. Friedrich Pater's phrase, *die auf unbegreifliche Art doppelte Natur Christi*, "the incomprehensibly double nature of Christ," strikes me as saying the very same thing as Catholic doctrine does of Jesus. However, the Catholic uses a more precise language to express the mystery of Him who, like a mighty arch, spans the divine and the human. With the Church he says that in Jesus there is one person, the divine person of the Word; but that there are in Him two natures, one divine, one human. In other words, the Son, the eternal Word of God, took to Himself a human nature and made it so entirely His own that it is He who gives it existence; still—impossible though it is for us to fathom this union—Jesus' thinking, willing, and speaking are, in the fullest and truest sense, human. [Editor.]

3. This "still higher" realm is, of course, the infinite light in which God dwells. That Christ ascended into that realm comes here as an afterthought, as a correction of what is said immediately before. But though the correction covers explicitly only the one clause, "and to which He was going," the whole essay seems to me to imply that had Friedrich Pater looked back to the clause just preceding, he would have

as it were, by the beasts in the desert—have come down to us as recorded by Matthew and Luke; and the very words exchanged between Christ and the tempter are known. This exchange, these words, are not fantastic; they are not speeches made beautiful and impressive by the imagery of a rich imagination, as poetic speeches may be beautiful and meaningful. These words, which issue from a realm that is a middle realm between heaven and earth, are unforgettably simple and deep; above all they are true, indeed sheer truth, since He who spoke them was the Truth, in whose mouth the words of Scripture were made once more new and true. Hence they are, like all things that come from paradise, beautiful.

In His combat with the tempter, Jesus used as His one weapon words of Scripture, or, to be explicit, words from the fifth book of Moses. With this weapon alone He conquered the adversary, the prince of this world. Words in which such power dwells cannot but be lofty. In this they match the hour of their use, the dignity of Him who used them, the dignity also of him against whom they were directed, and the greatness of the stakes.

Now, here there is given us, in the margin as it were, insight into an ancient problem. What took place in the desert was, of course, a much deeper mystery than the ontological or aesthetic question of how truth and beauty are related; but when deepest mysteries are offered us, such questions, to which the Evangelist never gave a thought, are solved in passing. For they are, if at all matter for systematic treatment, sooner the object of theology illumined by faith than of ontology and aesthetics—of theology, which is richer and deeper, by a whole dimension, than those philosophical disciplines.

As the lofty, as the sublime, springs from God's majesty and omnipotence, so the beautiful from His love. And since He is at once Truth and Love, therefore "beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know," that is the whole of aesthetics and ontology, Keats had a right to assert. Wherever a man believes, faith solves such problems at a single stroke. Haecker, however, was right too when, with profound discernment, he said that beauty is partly more and partly less than truth.<sup>4</sup> What else can this mean if not that corrected it too and have said that the same infinite light was the realm from which Christ had descended. [Editor.]

4. Theodor Haecker's exact words are: "The beautiful seems to be at once more and less than the true and the good." His explanation is this: The beautiful is what is pleasing to the eye, the eye of the body, the eye of the soul. Now, it seems

truth and beauty are like two equal leaves which have shifted; the upper edge of the one projects as does the lower edge of the other, while in their main parts the two leaves are identical, *sola ratione differentes*. This is said, of course, only of that beauty which truth, like a seer, sees and experiences in reality, not of that beauty which is merely dreamt of.

Thus it becomes clear why the artist—maker of the beautiful, who, when he creates from things given, in his own way imitates creation from nothing—must reach into a higher world from which he brings down the beautiful. To that realm man is not admitted, for it is the realm of innocence; the child, however, *is* admitted, and the artist, the everlasting child, and also the beasts, but Satan too, at God's express bidding and for the single purpose of temptation.

Obviously, ever since man was expelled from that world, which is the world of paradise, he cannot enter there. With innocence gone, the oneness of love and thought is no more. The adult man is divided: there is in him appetite and thought, and this twainness is ever tempted, in freedom wavering between truth and error. Only in love and in faith—for truth has been announced to man—can he find his way back from this uncertain duality to the original oneness and surety. The beasts have never lost their oneness; in their strength and charm they are as they were created and as they were in paradise. Therefore *they* were with Jesus in the desert, but no man.

This is a second meditation on these six words.

### III

FROM philosophical speculation our thoughts return to the picture of Christ in the desert. The Spirit drove Him there that He might prepare Himself: to this the fasting points, for always, before grave decisions, fasting serves to cleanse the body and the soul and to bring the faculties

to be *more* than the true and the good because it is grasped, enjoyed, with immediacy and without effort. It seems more because it is a free gift, given without regard to merit, and in this is like grace. Truly, the graceful is an image of the grace-full. Yet the beautiful seems to be *less* than the true and the good because it speaks exclusively of the Creator's giving love, the torrential overflow of His being, and because it sovereignly bars—or at least appears to ignore—the merit of the creature, indeed of all creation. It seems less because it ignores the use of freedom. For no matter how much toil, indispensable toil, goes into a work of beauty, beauty is not the reward of toil. Toil is the mark of man the pilgrim, but beauty is the anticipation of that heavenly life which is love. See Haecker, *Schönheit: Ein Versuch* (Leipzig: Verlag Jakob Hegner, 1936), pp. 39–59. [Editor.]



to their keenest. And He was led there also to be tempted; this too was planned—as were all things in His life. Hence it cannot have been accidental, nor can it have been incidental, when Mark wrote that “He was with the beasts,” and not that “the beasts were with Him.” He was with them, as if He had sought them out, as if such was His purpose.

What Jesus meditated on and how He spent His solitude we cannot even surmise unless it is told us. But this we may assume: that there were hours of rest from inward effort, since His was a human nature too, with all its needs. We may picture, then, how He relaxed mind and heart in the company of the beasts and found joy in their trusting love, how they must have pressed around Him, how they may have warmed Him at night.

After all, this would not be without precedent. Of Elijah it is written that ravens fed him while he was hiding near the torrent Cherith (3 Kg 17:3–6). Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and then vomited out on dry land (Jon 2).<sup>5</sup> And no harm came to Daniel from the lions when he was thrown into their pit (Dan 6:16–23). But with Christ there begins a beautiful line of animals close to the saints and, as it were, part of them: the fish that listened to the sermon of St. Anthony of Padua, the unicorn of St. Justina, and, above all, St. Francis’ brother ass, brother ox, and brother dog, to which he was tender with a tenderness embracing the entire world of beasts and plants, the whole of creation. It is a new language that is spoken here, and it has its start with the words: “And He was with the beasts.”

The Old Testament contains a number of precepts for the protection of animals, and later interpretation has underlined them. Still, there is no doubt that the orthodox Jew, today as in the past, keeps animals at a distance, like something unclean, and that he feels them utterly alien to himself. The Christian mind here is quite different from the Jewish,

5. The story of Jonah and the great fish makes the modern reader either smile condescendingly or squirm in embarrassment. There is no need for either attitude. Without pausing to discuss the arguments of those commentators who consider the story “inspired fiction,” much like Christ’s parables, it should be noted first of all that many writers on whaling are loath to discard it as an impossibility. A sperm whale, such as is to be found in the Mediterranean, can swallow whole a shark far larger than a man, they claim, and give instances in point. Moreover, a case has been recorded of a sailor lost overboard and found alive the next day in the stomach of a captured sperm whale. Still it remains wondrous how Jonah, a prophet fleeing the burden of his mission, was heard in his affliction and preserved for his prophetic destiny: first to preach God’s justice to the Ninevites and then, reluctant again, to learn the “evangelical” lesson of His mercy. [Editor.]



that is, from the orthodox Jewish. In every creature, the Christian sees not only a special idea embodied but a God-made fellow creature entrusted to him to guard.<sup>6</sup>

True, the Egyptians worshipped gods in animal form, or later, gods with human bodies and animal heads. But these were terrifying gods, in no way close: they embodied the alien in the beast. The Greeks had their gods, Zeus above all, assume various animal shapes, and gave each god and goddess an animal companion. But these animals were mythical, not real. Man's simple, matter-of-fact relationship to the beast, not as to a fabulous being but as to a co-creature, a member of that creation which he lovingly embraces in its entirety, has appeared only in the Christian world. It was this Christian world—was it not?—that abolished slavery. And just as every kind of slavery is growing more and more intolerable to our feelings, so this open relationship to creation conforms to them ever more nearly as time passes: one is closely linked to the other.

It is not too much to say that Western man's feeling for nature has its pattern in St. Mark's account: Jesus, while making decisions of greatest import, is with spirits, beings of the higher order of creation, and yet, at the same time, dwells with its lower realm, embodied in the beasts. Here is only a hint. Christ's teaching is more explicit and more easily understood when we hear His own words, particularly when He says: "Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more

6. Though a certain remoteness from animals may be part of the *Weltgefühl* of orthodox Jewry, Friedrich Pater's statement seems too sweeping when one remembers, for instance, that Jewish legend has the animals eat from the hands of Adam and Eve. As they were tame before the fall of man, so, tradition holds, they will be tame again in messianic times. Further, since it is Jewish belief that the universe was created for the glory of God, legend endows the beasts with the power to sing His praise. The cock, for example, is made to crow seven times, each time reciting a verse such as these: "Lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in," or: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord," or: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?" and finally: "It is time to work for the Lord, for they have made void thy law." The lion is said to roar: "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man," and the fox to cry woe to those that build their house on injustice. Even the mute fish proclaims that the voice of the Lord is upon the waters. While the mouse sees itself as the image of the wicked and praises the justice of God's punishment, the cat sings: "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord." (See Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. H. Szold, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942, I, 44-46.) To be sure, this does not prove that orthodox Jews look on animals as loved and loving companions; the fact, however, that sacred words are put into their mouths shows that they are not considered irrelevant to God's plan for man. [Editor.]

value than they?" (Mt 6:26). And again: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's leave. But as for you, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt 10:29-31).

What clearly marks off the Western way of looking at the world from the Eastern, above all from Hinduism—so often proposed to us as a tutor—is measure and order. It is they that distinguish the West from the East with its exuberance and its lack of limits. The sparrows are, as we are, creatures of God; they are borne up, as we are, by His love, and kept from falling. But there is a hierarchical order of being, and man is the head of earthly creation, of more value than the beasts. There can be no doubt about it: as his fellow creatures, they are not unclean to him; but in rank they are beneath him and, like the whole earth, given into his charge.

The Western spirit is thus equally removed from the two attitudes of which we have spoken: the estrangement from nature of orthodox Judaism, and the exuberance of the East, which sees all creatures as peers among peers and would like to see them vanish in the allness of nature. Distinction and order are the marks of that spirit which, in love, embraces nature but which knows man to be separate from it and superior to it by reason of the mind that dwells in him. While for the East man must dissolve and become one with the All, for the West man must find himself; and it is just by giving himself to his neighbor, to concrete concerns, that he becomes himself, the irreplaceable personality, the one who is truly the image of his one and only Creator.

From the difference between these two frames of mind there can be derived and explained, I think, the difference between Western architecture and sculpture and its Eastern counterpart, unrestrained and overladen. The Western cathedral, too, had affixed to its façade fabulous beasts and chimeras as waterspouts or ornaments. But they fit into a meaningful order as subordinate details, and, undistracted, the statues of angels and saints gazed beyond them.

#### IV

IT PROVES little against the truth of Christian principles that precisely the Western world has sinned grievously against animals and harmless primitive peoples, and that it has spread havoc among them that cannot

be undone. On the contrary, are not the ever more bitter sufferings which have come as a judgment upon the white race like an avenging for these devastations, inevitably brought about by the disregard of those very principles? I found this thought well put in the greeting a cobbler in my dear home town sent to his friends one Christmas. Its Czech words are still in my memory; translated they might be something like this: "Not till men rank all living creatures, down to the last worm, among their relatives, will we be on the sure road to peace."

Indeed, what could bring men—above all, what could bring children—closer to all creation, and what could teach them more effectively to be considerate and peaceful, than companionship with defenseless beasts? For the abyss between us and the rest of creation is bridged over by our feeling for domestic animals, which are constantly around us and which, time and again, astonish us by their good nature and their helpfulness to one another. How impoverished we should be if these companions of our workaday life and of our leisure did not speak to our hearts except through that usefulness without which no member can fill its place in a community!

I should like to bring this meditation to a close with a very personal memory. Though it is something that is not uncommon and may seem hardly worth telling, it meant much to me, for it disclosed to me the meaning of those six words of St. Mark which, before, I had simply passed over, as do so many others. It all started when the big gray cat which had made our house and garden in Haifa her hunting ground searched on our balcony for a place for her kitting. In a little while, six kittens were looking timidly up out of a cardboard carton from behind the shelter of their mother. Bravely and devotedly she brought them up, though a little white one got lost, and another, a blue-gray, turned out to be stunted in its growth. Otherwise it seemed normal, and we soon made it our pet, feeding it the best bits from our table. It became very friendly and delighted us with its graceful ways, so that we took it to our hearts.

But every day, the symptoms of an inner disorder became more visible, and it was clear that the little animal would not live long. It began to refuse even the tastiest bits of food, and grew apathetic, while its belly swelled more and more. But its head, with its great yellow eyes, still looked grave and precocious, as the faces of dwarfs often do. Indeed, we called it "Dwarf" or "Bat," for it was no bigger than a bat.

Once, when it had grown very weak, our little kitten tried to jump as

usual onto a kitchen chair. It failed, fell to the floor, and stayed there for a long time, trembling. This must have been a critical point in its brief life. A little later—it was our first clear day after a long siege of rain—I took it out into the sunshine, where it liked to warm itself. It looked at me searchingly, as if to ask whether I was going to catch it and take it into the house, as I usually did. But I felt it had something in mind, and so waited to see where it would turn. Sure enough, it picked itself up and walked with quick unswerving steps to a low wall of earth and rocks, crudely built by Arabs a long time ago. This garden wall was full of holes, and the kitten, going straight to one of them, tried to squeeze inside. However, the opening was not quite big enough for the swollen body to follow the head and shoulders. So with its frail legs braced against the ground, the kitten forced its way into the wall—the hole must have been larger inside than it appeared. I watched in silence. I knew this was the last time I should see the kitten alive; and the other little cats seemed to feel the same, for they looked on as motionless as I. Respecting the kitten's decision, I let it do as it wanted. We never saw it again.

Now, I had heard that animals about to die seek out inaccessible places in which to hide and perish, and that therefore one sees so few animal bodies in the open. This may explain, but it in no way degrades, the incident—no, the action—of the little animal, which went to its death with firmness and dignity.

How great must be the glory of God if even the gentle gleam it sheds on a poor cat is so majestic! How great His dignity if even its faintest reflection in a little beast keeps us at a distance and in awe! How great His goodness if it gives us such joy through an animal so ordinary, so lavishly prolific!

No king entering his mausoleum has ever gathered his mantle about himself with better bearing. Not even the Hasmonean Berenice, daughter and granddaughter of queens, whose walk was the enchantment of the world—when she descended the staircase of the palace, the people burst into jubilant cries, as if applauding an artist—not even Berenice was more beautiful than this wretched beast. Straining its feeble limbs, it withdrew into a stony wall that it might die in solitude, return its little body—hide, hair, and dimmed eyes—to the bosom of the earth, and enter the great darkness of the night.

From there may God's voice one day call us all, all, back into His presence. Amen.