

Early Requiem for the Children of God

"In cases where union with the Son is pursued too exclusively —where attention is centered upon the humanity of the historical mediator—religion tends to become an affair, outwardly of 'works' and inwardly of imaginings, visions, and self-induced emotions."

Aldous Huxley
The Devils of Loudun

*Excuse me,
are you happy?*
This greeting I've heard
from London to Kathmandu.
Now hear me,
Children of God!
Vivekananda
was speaking to you
when he said, 'Stay out
of India.'

But listening
is not your trip,
except to detect
a note of discontent
in the voice of some hapless
victim
you hope to snare in the Devil's
grip.

I am not disarmed
by your nauseating charms;
unfortunately, others are.

You invoke the Son,
and when an answer
comes instead
from Satan
sheepishly
you let yourselves be led
to slaughter;
to baptism neither of fire
nor water,
but of dread.

You talk peace and
love
but you make war:
in your hands
the sword of Jesus
loses power daily;
in your mouths
Christ's truth
grows smaller
than a mustard seed
in the mind of Buddha.

'A miracle,'
said Bernard Shaw,
'is whatever creates faith.'
Your transparent hate
has only spawned
belief:
useful perhaps
as a lame man's crutch,
but hardly valuable
as a guiding light
to Heaven.

Dogma is not God,
only his faded shadow;
just as the pointing
finger
of a Zen monk
is not the moon:
your tragic song and dance
routine
plays like the Great Way
in reverse.

It hurt less
watching my sentimental
daddy,
tears streaming down his
face
 singing "Mammy,"
than hearing you
distort Christ's teachings.

You are only reaching
emotional cripples,
the blind leading the
blind
through Christianity's double
bind:

 now you see God,
now you don't.

A dear friend
(Jesuit priest in Ceylon)
blamed this on St. Paul;
while I reckon
it was folks like you,
misreading the erstwhile Saul,
who turned so many religious pursuits
into a shell game.

Sorry, my friends,
but the last thing
this world needs
is another cult of magic.

Okay, your late leader,
Mo David, was no magician
(as likewise he wasn't a prophet);
but somewhere among you
there must be one:
collectively
you are a first-class
vampire coven.

I do not fear magic,
whether black or white:
how else could I accept
the wisdom of Buddhism
and still worship Maha Kali,
or get spiritually stoned
on Rangda's eyes
in Bali?

But black magicians
who think they are white
can give my sense of

history
a most peculiar fright;
even though I know
there's nothing wrong:
somehow, beyond my ken,
you belong.

We have journeyed far:
lived more lifetimes
than we ever need recall;
suffered defeat/enjoyed victory
in more battles than we need recite;
lived in more nations than need be told.
Somewhere
you sold your mind
to Jesus;
 somewhere
he gave my heart to Man.

God's plan
is the dream of angels,
your waking slumber
is a fiendish nightmare.

I care very much
that you might heed me,
knowing full well you will not.

Jesus wept for our sins,
then died for his own:
you still roam
in Jerusalem's gardens
seeking the bones
of his final temptation.

Our home
is in the world,
the footpath to the
Father;
yet you search abroad
for the Other Shore.

Denying that God
abides in animals,

you slay them;
not beholding Christ
in all your brothers,
you insult their hearts;
failing to find love
on your sisters' lips,
you refuse to kiss them:
their whoring for converts
notwithstanding.

But the mother
is the child's daughter,
the father
the infant's son:
people thirst
and you offer them salt,
pouring the nectar of salvation
into a stagnant lake of hopelessness.

Even Jesus
cannot save fools:
you play in his carpentry
shop,
breaking good boards
with tools
you cannot handle.

*Except ye be born again
ye shall not enter,*
saith the Christ;
speaking in tongues
you do not understand.

In the cemetery
of your hearts
not even the living
can bury sorrow;
like Kali's demons
they grow fresh
heads
from each drop of fallen
blood:
gorging bread
you forgot the wine.

In your sad superior way
you say I am not ready
for what you offer.
I'm not ready
because I've already gone
beyond it.

I went beyond it
the day I stopped selling
encyclopedias,
since which time
I've kept right on trucking.

If we are martyred,
you and I,
it will be
for much the same
reason;
nor will our passing
bring us closer together.

Hearing you,
gazing long into your
crazed eyes,
something very deep
is awakened;
and I wonder:
how differs this
compassion
from whatever it is
you feel for me?

T.S. Eliot spoke for himself,
and for me, in his *Four Quartets*:
you, however, have long since
ceased from exploration,
mistaking the desert
for the steps of the
Kingdom.

Some, like the Master Jesus,
have pierced the maya
of sleepy mirages:
for you

the Dark Night is yet to come.

You are not mad
because you are happy,
you act happy
because you are mad.
And all I do is smile
and say: too bad.

As in D.H. Lawrence's
The Man Who Died,
I am learning
how the Buddha nature
also resides in sleeping dogs.

But still I talk,
a dialogue with myself
in your clothing;
exploring for all of us,
alone.

Let us not
discuss our miracles,
let us rather live them.

EDDIE WOODS