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FLEOTENDRA FERD:
A CREATIVE PROJECT IN THREE PARTS

by

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Introduction

The three sections of the creative project are loosely connected by the theme of isolation, the theme of exile. There was no intent to correlate the three and each section should stand on its own, not as a part in a series of work.

Two of the three sections deal with events that take place in the present; all three raise ideas and issues important today. The first section, "The Penance," considers the question of organized religion versus personal religion, an issue very important today. "Industrial Park" illustrates the industrial side of American society at the present time. And the Old English elegy is as meaningful today as it was one thousand years ago when it was composed. The questions raised in the three sections are universal, human ones, not confined to a particular period in time.

"The Penance" was originally and unconsciously conceived as prose fiction. The theme of the story revolves around the mind of the main character. Readers must understand the complexities of that mind as well as the past of the main character in order to grasp the ideas presented. So, it was necessary to use the longer prose fiction form to build up to an understanding of that main character, and to a grasping and understanding of the theme.

Originally, I conceived "Industrial Park" as a way to illustrate characters in an industrial society, but then decided to illustrate the park through those characters. I chose poetry as the genre for "Industrial Park" because I wanted to use meter to set the fast pace of industry. Separate stanzas are used to show the separateness of the characters who illustrate the park.

In the Old English translations, I made a very conscious effort to

retain the Old English poetry characteristics (i.e. half-lines, alliteration, metric flow) which are all necessary in order for the reader to get a "feel" for authentic Old English poetry. If the reader could not understand and fully enjoy the poetry, he/she would simply be reading a translation.

Each section of the project contains a "critical apparatus." Matters such as plot, theme, style, point of view, tone, meter, etcetera are commented on here.

The title of the project is from "The Wanderer" (l. 54). "Fleotendra ferþ" can be translated both as the fleeting ones' heart/spirit/mind, or as the floating ones' heart/spirit/mind. The theme of isolation, the theme of exile is one that expressed often throughout the project.

THE PENANCE

Critical Apparatus

The main theme of "The Penance," that of isolation, is portrayed through a study of the story's main character, Joe Simone. There is also some comment on the "validity" of organized religion and the pressures and effects of living within the strict bounds of one particular religion. Some attention is given to the family unit, city life, and how they affect the main character and his decision.

The story is told, for the most part, from the point of view of its main character. The character is confused, mostly because of his education regarding the ideas mentioned in the first paragraph. Within him, there is much tension which must be released. The story is about that tension and the decision he makes in order to free himself from it. We follow the character through three days during which he will decide on his "penance" for what he believes to be his sin. In reality, he is simply looking for an end to his conflict.

The other characters in the story enable the reader to better understand Simone and his environment. Guiseppe (Italian for Joseph) serves as an alter-ego character for Joe and as a symbol of lost good times. Aunt Sophie represents the little family Joe has left, a family of which the main character is no longer an active member. Joe's imagined family fills this void for him. He recreates these characters. In the window scene, they provide a climax for his disorganized, confused, searching mind. All the characters serve to illustrate the fact that Simone is living out of time, out of reality.

Little Italy was chosen as the setting for many reasons. It is part of New York City, the cultural and business center of the country. There are probably more diversions in New York than in any other major U. S. city.

In this city, there is always something to do, something to keep one's mind off one's problems. But Simone takes no pleasure in any of the city's diversions. This is intended to illustrate that Simone's problem is an internal one.

The tightly-knit family unit is another general characteristic of family life in Little Italy. The family expects much from its members, particularly its younger members. The main character is out of touch with family love and support. He is thus isolated in the middle of his biological and ethnic families.

Catholicism is the dominant religion of Little Italy. Indeed, few other religions are even recognized by these Roman Catholics. So, it seemed that Catholicism would be an appropriate religion for Simone to have been brought up in. Catholicism is considered to be a strict religion. In my opinion, it overstresses the ideas of guilt (which may be elevated only through the sacraments of the Church - i.e. through penance) and fear, both of which are taught to Catholic children, thus making them dependant on the Church for a lifetime. Though he has not realized it, for most of his life the main character has been dependant on the Church. Finally, he must come to grips with his guilt, his fear. He longs for forgiveness of his sins, for absolution, In desperation, he surrenders totally to the Church.

The story is told mostly from the main character's point of view so that the reader can see the action through his eyes. If the reader could not do this, the scenes Simone imagines would be lost. But the story is not told entirely from Simone's point of view. I chose not to use a first-person narrator because I did not want the reader to rely solely on the main character for the entire story. Some readers would become wary of him and the strange things he sees and therefore, would lose trust for the narrator. Instead, omniscience is sometimes used to help the reader more fully understand

the character. This is called the control consciousness in third-person wherein the author can still control the material presented even though the story is told primarily from a certain character's point of view.

The tone of the story is fairly negative. This is done to reflect the conditions under which Simone lives and consequently thinks. The tone is intended to help establish a sense of dissatisfaction and frustration in the character which in turn invokes his seemingly rash decision and justifies his penance.

Along the same line, the style and technique are at times tedious (i.e. "documentary" coverage of the character's many motions). This is done deliberately to illustrate how the character has become mechanized, has lost any semblance of "inner peace." Conventional sentences and paragraphs were used to help create an appearance of conformity.

Various devices and techniques were employed (both consciously and unconsciously) to create Simone's isolation in the middle of what would usually be considered a fairly comfortable environment. Here are the many conventional forms of contentment: the large city with its millions of people to meet; the old neighborhood with the character's past, his family and friends; and the psychological foundation of a religion which professes to have the answers to all problems. The character, though he does not know it, is affected by all of these; they dictate for him, his penance.

Joe Simone was a staff writer for an influential business magazine in New York. He lived alone on Mulberry Street in his old neighborhood, Little Italy. He worked on commission from his second-story flat which overlooked the Feast of San Gennaro, a street festival held for a week every September.

When Joe was a kid, he used to write detective stories about the mob in the twenties. The hit-men wore pin-striped suits with large lapels and rode around in fancy cars. They would rest during the Feast. It was a holiday respected by all Italians, taking precedence over Christmas and Easter on the list of Catholic holidays in the old neighborhood.

There had been something more in Joe's writing than a fascination for the mob. His sixth-grade teacher said it was his "calling" and encouraged the boy whose imagination ran wild with ideas that cried for discipline. His parents on the other hand, discouraged him and told him that he shouldn't write about such things, that they were evil and would bring him misfortune. Despite his parents' warnings, he pursued his writing. His teacher helped him -- before school, after school, whenever he asked for her help. They once spent an entire day on the Staten Island Ferry writing and rewriting a story about pay-offs in the syndicate; the location of the pay-offs -- the snack bar on the ferry.

Joe never rode the ferry these days. His job was cut and dried: "the quota for the second quarter, having been met..." It was a boring job, writing for the business community. Joe often thought of his readers as three-piece suits with fading neckties and overstuffed seats. Business had no soul, he thought; but he respected its discipline.

Discipline was what Joe lacked most. He could write business copy all day, if it was required of him, but it wasn't fulfilling to him, not what he

wanted to do for the rest of his life. He wanted to write stories people could feel, could see, could love. He took the job as a staff writer because there was little else he could do with his bachelor's degree from NYU.

He had convinced himself it would not be so bad. It was steady income and he had his own working hours. He picked up his assignment on Monday and was usually finished with his research and writing by Thursday morning. There was immediate reinforcement for his diligence, for his business-headed discipline. He was paid on delivery of his work. Joe sometimes helped with layout, which meant an extra \$50 that week. He seemed secure.

But Joe was lazy in his personal writing, the writing that really mattered to him. There was no reinforcement for it, material or otherwise. He was alone in his life, and so, alone in his writing. There was no one to share it with; no one to ask for an opinion; no one to love. There had been no one in Joe's life since his parents and fiance died in the fire that raged through his building on Wednesday of the Feast eight years earlier.

Joe had been lazy with his friends, enjoying a bottle of wine. His mind was working slowly when he heard the sirens on the street. He and his friends ran the three blocks to his house. With his own eyes, Joe saw the building in flames. The screams of his mother and lover were barely audible to him in his drunken state. But now they haunted him on the days when there was no work to occupy his mind. What if he had been there? Could he have helped, or would he have died too? The fire had spread quickly from the first floor to the fourth. His mother had told him to stay in. Wine was meant for church, she said. She had a subtle way of making him feel guilty. Now this subtlety had become Joe's nightmare.

Often, Joe would try to write a story about something with which he was familiar, something in his past. But every time he did, it became clear to him

that the time would come when he would have to write about the Feast. It scared him more than anything else because he knew he would be invoking in himself the feelings he dreaded.

Instead, he would amuse himself with television or his books. He watched many good British play productions on PBSC. Occasionally, he would walk to the Bleecker Street Moviehouse and take in a double feature. He enjoyed the cinematic effects and production, and the more abstract films that couldn't be presented in any other medium. He hated Shakespeare plays on film. He thought it a disgrace to mar the master with human error. He wallowed in Fellini.

It was early spring when Bleecker Street held their Fellini Festival. Joe bought an advance ticket from the woman at the box office with whom he'd become familiar. He went alone but couldn't sit alone as nearly every seat in the little theatre was taken. The last film offered was "8½." He accepted it, placing greater thought on it than on the others. It haunted him on his way home. It made him think about his own life. That night he dreamt a dream that seemed to him to last thirty years.

The dream encompassed most of his childhood. Joe felt himself slipping off into his dream. It was inviting. As he lay there in bed, his eyes half-closed, he realized something important was about to happen to him. He made a conscious choice to let his mind go. At first, all was blank to him, but then, he saw something red. It was blurred and came slowly into focus. He imaged a tricycle, his, a gift from Aunt Sophie on his fifth birthday. He heard the clang of the bell and longed for the time he could ride a two-wheeler.

Joe went blank again and slowly focused on a candle in church. Sunday mass, "Be sure to light a candle for Rosa and the new baby," his mother said. He did. It was slowly becoming unclear, and then:

"And on the third day, the third day, the third day," the old man repeated.

A loud car horn took him out of church. He was amidst a fierce game of stickball. He was at bat using Mama's old mop stick and a faded pink ten-cent rubber ball. They were the neighborhood champs. There was the victory celebration at the soda fountain -- where he met Angela.

They were both twelve at the time. Angela was new in the neighborhood and had only a few girlfriends. One of them introduced Angela to Joe, saying that he was one of the nicest boys in school. Joe pictured her long flowing black hair.

They became serious right from the start. They decided to wait until they were both thirteen to become engaged. By then, they thought, they would know for sure it it would last. Older and wiser, they decided it would.

Together they were at Coney Island, Jones Beach and once, the Bronx Zoo. Joe saw them everywhere in his dream. These were the happy memories, those that could only be conjured up without hesitation, Joe thought later. These were the times of which he had deprived himself.

The alarm clock seemed to rattle the bed. Joe turned it off and tried to draw himself back into sleep but with no success. He lay there on his back, not wanting to stir from the bed. But his appointment with the editor was at one o'clock and he had yet to complete his story.

He boiled some water for coffee and saw his mother in the kitchen cooking breakfast for his father and himself. He thought he could smell Italian sausage cooking in the pan, a smell he's never experienced in his own kitchen. He was home again. The kettle began to whistle and he poured the hot water into the cup.

There was a knock at the door. Angela entered the room. She told him

he was going to be late for work again if he didn't get moving. After a brief moment, he opened the door only to find the newspaperboy and a bill for the week's papers. He fumbled through his pants pockets in the bedroom and came up with the money and a tip for the little Italian kid. Just like Seppe, he thought.

Seppe was short for Guiseppe, the Italian name for Joseph. They had been friends for many years. They were both the same age and had been given the same name which proved bothersome for the kids in the neighborhood. They gave Joe the American name because his friend looked more Italian than he. Seppe's prominent nose was an important factor in the decision. Joe became the all-American kid steeped in the American Dream. Seppe abandoned his long-loved paper route because he found easier money running numbers for the mob.

They were both thirteen when they began to drift apart. Seppe had found himself some older, more sophisticated friends who made life look like a gamble. The calculated risk entranced him. Joe had found Angela. Joe and Seppe were going in separate directions and wound up in very separate places though they lived only a few blocks from one another.

Seppe now worked and breathed for the Family. Joe was alone, familiar only with his past and the lingo of the business world he despised. Seppe seemed happy to Joe. He still made time to see his old buddies in the neighborhood. Joe depressed himself daily. It was his daily bread, in a sense.

Joe took a cold shower and dressed for a hot day in his lightest shirt. He was alone again in the early summer heat. There he finished his story and gave it a quick proofreading. He walked to the Seventh Avenue subway station and took the 1 train to Fiftieth Street. He walked the block to the publisher's and took an elevator to the eighth floor.

"Hello Tom. Another week, another dollar. Here's the mess for the week."

The editor read through the story while Joe looked out the window.

"For someone who hates business, you sure can give them good copy."

"It's a living. Need any help with layout?"

"Sorry, Joe. Just two more stories and we'll be ready to put it to bed."

"That's alright. No problem."

"But you can get a jump on next week's stuff." Tom fumbled through the papers on his desk. "Here it is. More exciting than this week's. The man wants you to do business resorts around town. A bonus if it's first rate," he said. "You'll get a few free drinks out of it. And who knows what else?"

"Yeah, I can imagine the winner they'd set me up with." Joe closed his eyes and saw Angela cooking in the old kitchen with his mother. He smelled her perfume.

"Joe, you alright?" Joe opened his eyes. "Seemed like you were really gone there for a minute," Tom said. "Else's got the paychecks downstairs at the front desk today. Well, I got to get back to work. Enjoy the new assignment. Here's the names and numbers of people for you to contact. Take it easy, pal."

"Yeah, good-bye Tom. See you next week."

Thinking about Angela, Joe almost forgot to pick up his paycheck; then he heard Else laughing on the phone with an advertiser. She gave him a big smile and mouthed him a kiss as she handed him his check. Joe gave her a half-hearted wink and was out the door.

He decided to walk for a while. He headed down Seventh Avenue into the Times Square district. Fun City, he thought. When he was young, his mother had warned him about the area. Joe was thinking about the newcomers to the district. Not all of them walked around with their mouths opened and with

eyes gaping, but it wasn't hard to pick them out all the same.

It was warm and there were many businessmen around looking for a hot deal. He loathed them. There they were with their paunches hanging out over their belts. He thought they all deserved an appropriate type of venereal disease but then decided their wives would be the worse for it.

In the middle of the block stood an old woman wearing a sandwich board with "Jesus Saves" written on both front and back. She held out a tin can in which she collected Christian charity. She was both masculine and frail, Joe thought. He watched her for a minute as she took a dollar from the can and headed into Nathan's restaurant to order a knish. He wondered if she might be Catholic.

Joe walked somberly through the crowd. Policemen on every corner. They blended in well with the idea of Broadway, he thought. He glanced at them periodically to see exactly what they were getting paid for. The younger ones were eyeing the hookers with smiles on their faces indicating that their work was their pleasure.

The movies were all the same. Kids with false identification were still getting in to see them. Some were three-dimensional; others had a floor show which cost an extra five bucks. Joe remembered the days when he and his friends used to go to the shows. The prices had changed drastically but the bodies were basically the same. Young men handed out fliers advertising local massage parlors.

"Check it out, man. Check it out," they exclaimed. "Only a block away."

Many male tourists left their wives in their hotels while they combed the area for a new experience. Joe felt pity for these women and contempt for the men. Others were pampered as their husbands sent them on shopping sprees to the East Side. It was a rather expensive treat for these men, he

thought, but it was an experience most of them couldn't have in, say, Jeffersonville, Indiana. And so, everyone did have a function, even the whore on Seventh Avenue.

Joe crossed Forty-Second Street and felt a surge of heat rising from the subway. He decided to walk the rest of the way home. The buildings shaded the passers-by from most of the sun but the city heat was still there. The temperature sign on the bank read 87°, and humid too, he thought. Joe decided to cash his check and buy himself a few summer shirts at the men's shop at Macy's. He passed the huge sign which read, "Welcome to the World's Largest Department Store." It seemed to him that half the world was shopping there that day. He made his purchase and had to almost push his way out to the hot street.

He crossed Thirty-Fourth Street and continued down to Madison Square Garden where he decided to check out the upcoming concert schedule. He had no one to go with but it didn't seem of particular importance to him. There was a classical guitarist scheduled for a performance at the end of the month in the Felt Forum. Joe bought himself a ticket and continued his long walk home.

Finally, reaching Fourteenth Street, Joe headed through the Village into the old neighborhood. At Minelli's, where he stopped for a bottle of lambrusco, he met Seppe and Dominick, another old friend from school.

"I was thinking about you just this morning, Seppe," Joe said, giving him a friendly hug.

"I think about you just about every day," Seppe replied. "Rose and I are still waiting for you to come over for pasta. You say that you're coming but you never arrive. Hey, Rose wants to know when you're going to settle down. It's about time, you know."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. I've heard all that before," Joe said. "Married

people are so upset at having lost their freedom that they want to see everybody locked up. They always try to get their friends first so they won't be lonely." He turned to Dominick. "And how are you, Dom? At least you've been eating well," he remarked, patting his friend's stomach.

"I wish I could say the same for you," Dom said. "How about a beer? You look like you could use one."

"Sorry, poisons. I've got to be going. You drink one for me, alright?" he said and ordered his wine.

Outside, Joe realized that now, more than ever, he was alone. He felt an undeniable knot in the pit of his stomach. It was as if his thoughts were beginning to poison him. He felt as though he didn't even know his best friends anymore. He wondered if he had outgrown them or if there was just no common bond there anymore. Finally, he decided that they had simply grown apart.

It was late afternoon when Joe returned to his flat. He lay there a long while thinking about the past, the way it was, but only the good things. He decided that he would have to make his imagination work for him if he was ever to make something out of himself that he could respect. He decided he would begin that night. Mental exercises would do the trick, he thought. He knew something about transcendental meditation and decided he would try it to help his cause.

He tried to put himself in a trance, more self-hypnosis than actual t.m. He thought of intense blackness until he felt nothing of his present surroundings. Actually, he only succeeded in putting himself to sleep.

But it was a pleasant sleep, one that he would remember for many days. He dreamt of Angela and the night they first made love, a quiet October night down on the beach at Coney Island.

There had been no one around -- too cold for people to be on the beaches.

They lay there, below the boardwalk, watching the incoming tide. It was suggestive, at least to Joe.

"Oh, come on, give it a try. You never know. You might like it," he said.

"Yeah, look at you -- the big expert. A man of experience," she replied.

Joe couldn't remember if he was really hurt by the remark or if he just acted that way to play on her sympathy. It had somehow become confused. Perhaps he had just used it as a trick. Perhaps, over the years, he had been trying to convince himself that he couldn't have been so deceitful. "The mind becomes one with the night as it blackens out that which it does not want to remember," he remembered from his catechism.

They were gentle with each other, more out of insecurity than anything else. They were totally alone together for a moment, knowing only each other.

The phone rang louder than Joe ever remembered it having rung before. He jumped from the bed, still half-dressed. Slowly, he gained his composure, not wanting to realize that he was out of his dream and alone again. After the eighth ring, he decided that it would be to his advantage to answer it rather than let it waken him totally.

"Hello?" he answered groggily.

"Joseph, my sweet boy, you sound awful. Are you sick? I can come right over."

"No, Aunt Sophie. I was just sleeping. You woke me up. I'm alright... or at least I will be when I get back to sleep," he added.

"I'm sorry, Joe. I didn't mean to wake you. I know you keep odd hours but it's only seven-thirty. I didn't think you'd be asleep yet. I just called to invite you to Uncle Vinny's birthday party Saturday. He's going to be seventy, you know."

"No, I didn't know. What kind of present can I bring?"

"Just bring yourself. That will be present enough for him. You know you were always his favorite. Come over about eight o'clock, okay?"

"I'll be there. Take care now."

"You too, Joseph. Are you sure you're alright? You're not keeping anything from family, are you?"

"No, I'm just tired. That's all. I've had a very tiring day."

"Alright, but you remember, if you need anything, you know who you can call."

"Thanks, Aunt Sophie. Good night."

"Good night, Joseph. You be a good boy."

Joe tried to fall asleep again, but it was a vain task. The initial weariness that had helped him the first time had itself been exhausted. Aunt Sophie should be enough to put anybody to sleep, he thought.

He lay there, a long while, staring into the void of the dark ceiling. Just before ten o'clock he decided to go to the store for a pack of cigarettes. He rarely smoked, only when he was nervous, when something was bothering him. He pulled on his pants and put on his shoes and jacket. He locked the door behind him and made his way down the dingy stairway to the street.

The neighborhood was very much alive for the time, he thought. Then he remembered the nights when he would sit outside with his friends past midnight talking about the prospects of marrying rich and beautiful Italian women. They decided that there weren't enough to go around the neighborhood. He could hear his mother calling him.

They were in church again. Joe was talking to Seppe who was three pews behind them. Joe's mother often reprimanded him, though he thought it unfair as Seppe was the one who regularly started the conversations. Seppe

had little interest in the Church -- even when they were younger. But Joe respected the Word of the Church though he subtly rejected its formalities on occasion. His mother often prayed for him.

Joe decided that his mother had loved him very much. She did more for him than did most mothers for their sons in the old neighborhood. They were very close, so close in fact that some of the neighborhood kids called Joe a "mama's boy." He learned to use his fists at an early age but this upset his mother more than anything else he would do. "It's not God's way," she used to tell him.

The streetlight on the corner by the store was broken. Must have been done recently, he thought, as he could see glass in the street below the pole. He entered the store and asked the rotund woman behind the counter for a pack of menthols. He paid her and they matter-of-factly thanked each other. Outside, Joe lit himself a cigarette and was about to throw the match into the street by the corner when he realized that there was no glass in the street. He looked up to see the light burning with a faded glare, all its glass in place. Joe walked back uncertainly to Mulberry Street with his unsmoked but half-finished cigarette hanging from his mouth.

Joe sat on the front steps for a while surveying the neighborhood. The pizza parlor on the next block had its nightly quota of teenaged kids hanging around outside. Some of them drank wine from paper-bagged bottles which could easily be ditched if a police car rode by. Joe was hungry and decided on a piece of pizza.

Walking down the street, Joe nearly tripped over a cat that had just finished its supper in a neighbor's garbage can. It gave Joe an annoyed hiss as it hurried across the street. Joe continued up the street, thinking that he and the cat had something in common. They were both hungry and somewhat irritable.

The kids outside the pizza parlor stood blocking the door.

"I don't know you," quipped the apparent leader, a tough-looking fellow. "You're not one of us. For all I know, you may be a goddamned Jew," he said with a sneery smile.

Joe felt an urge to throw the adolescent on the ground. He grabbed him by the collar and was about to do so when, methodically, his mother's commandment rang clear in his head. He shoved the kid aside and the others cleared a way to the door.

"They sure don't make friends in this neighborhood the way they used to," he said, eyeing the group. "They don't make leaders the same way, either," he added in a self-righteous manner so strong there was no opposition from the group.

There was only one customer in the place. The pizzaman was new and Joe noted a few changes in decor since the last time he's visited the parlor.

"I'll have a slice and a Coke," he said.

"Sure," the stranger behind the counter replied. "You have a beef with one of those kids out there?" he asked.

"You could call it that," Joe replied. "The kids are getting worse around here."

"Well, I don't know. I'm new in the neighborhood. I just bought this place a couple of weeks ago," he said. "Do you live around here?"

"Yeah," Joe said, picking up his pizza, "down the next block."

"Really? My wife and me are looking for a place around here but haven't been able to find anything. You know about any apartment vacancies in your building, or around?"

"No, nothing. Not many people are willing to move out of the old neighborhood."

Not even the young ones?" the stranger asked. "I'd think that they'd

want to move out when they'd reached an age when they wanted to try something new. You know, pull up roots."

Joe took another bite of his pizza and managed a smile. "No, this is like a holyland to them. It is their holyland."

"This is all kind of hard to believe. You mean even the educated ones don't mave away to start a family somewhere else? I came here because I figured business would be good. Don't kids around here get the same kinds of ideas?"

When I saw this place advertised in the paper, I couldn't resist. It was a terrific location. And around Festival time, business should be tremendous." He paused for a moment and continued, even though Joe had finished his pizza. "What about you?" he asked. You lived here all your life? You look like you have more brains than most of the guys our age who come in here. Why are you still here? You got family here or something?"

Joe felt a chill come over him as the stranger asked the question. "No, I have no family here."

"Then, why are you still here? You got a girlfriend in the neighborhood?"

Joe began to feel his emotions. "No, and if you don't mind, I'd rather not talk about it."

"I'm sorry, man. I didn't mean to hit a sour note or anything. I'm just looking for a place for my wife and me."

Joe looked outside. The gang had gotten larger. They were looking in at Joe, the leader pointing him out to a few newcomers.

"I didn't mean to be rude," Joe said. "As a matter of fact, I've been thinking about moving myself. I really don't have any ties here."

The kids outside were getting loud, leaning against the window. A few of them were making obscene gestures at Joe.

"You really made some friends out there didn't you?" the pizzaman asked.

"Have you had trouble with them before?" Joe asked.

"Well, they're usually out there a few nights a week but they don't seem to bother anyone. I never saw them actually stop anyone from coming in here."

Joe couldn't believe what he was hearing. "Are you kidding? Didn't you see them with me?"

"All I saw was you picking up that one kid and roughing him up a bit. I figured he was your kid brother or something."

"Well, it's about time I was getting home," Joe said.

"Let me know is you hear about an apartment opening, will you?" ✓

"I'll try," Joe replied.

Joe opened the door and gave the kids a stern look until they cleared a path to the sidewalk. He tried to force a smile but couldn't. They're probably more mad at me than I am at them, he thought. He had hurt their pride. He tried to understand and make retribution. He looked the leader in the eye and said, "I'm sorry, man."

It was a mistake. The group interpreted his apology as a sign of weakness.

"Go back to where you came from, you stupid Jew," the leader snarled. "You don't belong around here," he shouted.

On the short walk home, Joe began to believe his accuser.

Joe had a restless night, getting only about an hour of sleep. He was deeply troubled. When the first morning light began to break through his bedroom window, he decided that he would get up and fry himself an egg. He got some butter from the refrigerator and put it in the pan on the

stove. Then he broke his last egg into the pan and went to the door to get the morning paper. It was not there.

Things sure have changed in the neighborhood since I was a kid, he thought. If Seppe was delivering his paper, it would have been here before sunrise. But then, Seppe has changed too.

He went back to his egg and turned it. It began to puff up, almost sizzle. Maybe too much butter, He poured a little lambrusco into the pan and it did indeed begin to sizzle. Joe thought it would be a nice change, somewhat gourmet. It tasted awful. He ate half of it because there was nothing else to eat and put the rest of it on the back fire escape for the birds.

It was Friday, the day on which working people rejoiced, the day they looked forward to all week. He wondered why he didn't feel a little uplifted. He concluded that it was his dreams. Although they had been enjoyable, he thought he had yet to experience them. He decided that this would be the work that he would complete on this last working day of the week. He showered and dressed.

It was early when he returned to the old building. The char marks on the upper floors were still clearly visible to him, even from the street. He wondered why they had never been removed but then remembered the old landlord and his cheap ways. He sat himself on the bus stop bench across from the building and lit himself a cigarette.

Joe sat there, a long while, in anticipation. The new tenants in the fourth floor apartment were up; he saw someone pass by the kitchen window, probably cooking breakfast, he thought. The breakfast table was directly above the newly-installed fire escape. Joe studied the family. They were faceless from where he sat, nameless as they began their last work day of the week. The woman appeared then. Her light blue housecoat made her look

still thinner, even bony. Mama would never have approved of such a sickly-looking woman in her kitchen.

The man sat down at the table with his paunch hanging out over his boxer shorts. He was dark. Even from the distance, Joe could see his heavy morning beard and the thick growth of hair on his chest and stomach. Joe figured him to be a blue-collar worker, possibly down on the docks.

Slowly the neighborhood began to stir -- a taxi here, a passer-by there. But Joe kept his eyes on the window. These morning diversions were only a clouded interruption to his vigil.

A young boy joined them at the table. He drank from his father's coffee cup. Joe felt a sudden uneasiness well up inside him. He too had drunk from his father's coffee cup at about that age. He thought back to his religious teachings:

"as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be..."

He looked down at the ground for a second. His brief meditation was disturbed by a car horn. It was an old model he saw when he looked up. An old man seemed to be waving at him from the car, but he couldn't be sure. He focused his eyes back on the window again. The boy looked older, a few inches taller.

He sat there with his parents, drinking milk now instead of coffee. The man in the window was looking out at the street. Joe thought he might be looking at him but was uncertain from where he sat. Joe looked down at the street, away from the window. The paperboy was at the corner, about to turn.

"Seppe!" Joe called. The boy glanced around quickly but then turned the corner too fast for Joe to see his face.

Joe resumed his vigil of staring. At the open window, the woman sat, alone in her blue morning gown, drinking coffee. Her husband and son approached

her and kissed her good-bye, before leaving for work and school, Joe presumed. He waited patiently for them to come out the front door, the only exit in the building. They did not come.

He stared at the door and darted glances back to the woman in the window to see if she responded to anybody in the room. She seemed alone. She drank her coffee as she gazed out into the street. She didn't seem to be anticipating seeing her son and husband down in the street as she looked away from the charred building. Joe thought she glanced at him a few times. The first time she looked at him, he looked away as if in shame for his intrusion. The second time she looked at him, she was smiling. It mesmerized him. It was a warm smile, a familiar smile, a smile he longed for. He accepted it and managed a slight smile himself.

It was then that he saw the beautiful black-haired girl join the woman at the table. They seemed to discuss something. The young woman refused to look out the window despite the older woman's hand gesture. Finally, she did look down at the bench where Joe sat. She gave him no smile but a look of contentment, a look of understanding, of acceptance. Joe felt complete.

A blood-red sun began to peer over the houses of the old neighborhood and rested on his forehead. He felt its warmth spread throughout his entire body. He was contented. He knew what he must do. He did not look back at the building again. There was nothing there he needed. He walked back to Mulberry Street.

As he turned the corner, he noticed a small section of an old streamer left over from the Festival eight months earlier. It was perfect, he thought. It was the beginning of his penance. He would be forgiven.

He spent most of the day in church, praying. The old priest was pleased to see him. They talked for three hours about Joe's situation although Joe had already decided what he would do. Then he sat there, gazing in child-like

curiosity at the ornaments of the Church. The priest heard his confession and he received communion at the evening mass.

Joe walked home, fulfilled. He went to bed early, tired from many restless nights. It was the deepest sleep of his life. It was peaceful, light in its content, a most perfect sleep.

He did not awaken until three o'clock Saturday afternoon. He dressed and went uptown to buy Vinny a birthday present: a Saint Christopher medal in gold-plate. Christopher had always been one of his favorites, the saint of wayfarers, the saint of travelers. He ate supper in a crepe shop on the East Side and took the subway home. He dressed for the party.

Joe arrived early, much to Sophie's delight. She kissed and hugged him: "You haven't been here in months. I'm so happy you've come."

Joe was smiling.

"I haven't seen you so happy in years -- since you were a little boy," Sophie exclaimed.

"There's good reason for it," he told her.

She was excited. "Well, tell me. Don't keep me in suspense. You find yourself a girl?"

"No, even more exciting than that," he replied.

"What could be more exciting than finding a girl?" she asked smiling.

"I've decided to join the priesthood," he said with a grin.

She looked perplexed and then joined him in his joy. "You know what's best for you. My, we've never had a priest in the family. Will we all go to heaven?" she asked with a mischievous smile.

"Well, if I pray for you, I suppose. Now let's get on with the party. I bought Vinny this Saint Chris medal. I hope he likes it."

"Oh, I'm sure he will," she answered, somewhat perplexed again. "Didn't

you know that the Vatican de-sainted him or whatever you call it a few years ago?"

"Why'd they do that?" he asked. "People have been praying to him for centuries," he added somewhat shyly.

"I don't know. I guess they had their reasons," Sophie replied.

"Yes, I'm sure they did," Joe said resignedly. He put the box back in his pocket and stared out the half-closed window. The bell in the steeple on the Church was striking the eighth and final note of the hour.

INDUSTRIAL PARK

Critical Apparatus

The purpose of the "Industrial Park" is to illustrate life in an industrial society, and more specifically, to illustrate life in an industrial town. I had originally entitled the series "Industrial Waste" but scrapped that title because of its obvious pessimism. Having been raised in such an area and having taught in a public school there for a year after college, I thought myself capable of illustrating life in this type of community.

I decided I could best illustrate the park through its characters and character-types. So, the first and last poems in the series are what I loosely refer to as "character poems" in which I work to establish the theme of isolation through the characters described, hopefully by showing how each character is alone in the center of this industrial conglomerate. The two other poems in the series are intended to further illustrate the characters, and therefore, the main theme.

The tone of the series is dark and murky, this tone intended to illustrate the quality of life individual characters live, and to present a picture-at-large of the industrial park. The future holds little opportunity for these characters and no false hopes are implied. There are, however, a few characters who provide some light. Others are, perhaps, humorous; some perhaps even unlikable. I have interspersed them throughout the poems to keep the reader from a serious depression. I have made a conscious effort to portray the workman in both a fair and positive fashion.

The stanzas of the poems are, for the most part, staccato. My intention is to enable the reader to feel the tension of the park. There are deliberate jumps from one idea to the next, from one character to another as there are few smooth progressions in the industrial park. The stanzas are short. Much

stress is placed on harsh-sounding words, hopefully illustrating the hardness, coldness of industry; hopefully illustrating life in the industrial park.

"A Day in the Park" is meant to serve as an introduction to the industrial park. The worker is at the center of this character poem as he is at the center of life in the park. The characters are presented in chronological order.

The children are park-benched, crippled even at this young age, unable to leave the park. They are physically crippled, benched, and because they are unable to play the ballgame, they lament its loss. The girls are blooming, are at the age where they are discovering the idea of love - physical here; they learn its mechanics. The worker is here, as he must be. He appears easily pleased, contented in his role. The loud-mouthed mothers are not. They resort to alcohol to "cheer" themselves. The old men, no longer useful as workers, are left to fall with their soiled newspapers and games of checkers.

This introduction is intended as a cycle of sorts, a chronology of characters, as a glance at the industrial park. The tone is fairly negative. It lends itself to the first stanza of "School Days."

The second poem in the series is intended to present a realistic portrait of education in the park which programs the children and their learning habits so that they will fit neatly into their parents' roles and lifestyle. The stanzas are arranged so that there is a sequence to the lessons that are learned.

The education begins in elementary school where recess is done away with, and moves through thoughts of materialism to physical punishment, to role development, to a glimpse of idealism, and then back to the reality of

steel and finally, to an end of day-dreaming and a surrendering to the park.

In America, the park exists mainly for the material gain of city-dwellers. Without the park, city-dwellers could not enjoy their high standard of living. City folks could not survive without parks.

"A Visit to the City" was designed to express a calculable coldness which is, for the most part, unique to the city. The form of the poem may be considered "experimental" but is actually a very simple one. Capitalization is used to tell the reader to pay particular attention to the words they emphasize. There is no "grand plan" behind them. They are sometimes used for "looks," particularly in the stanza before the last refrain. The poem was consciously constructed to appear somewhat building-like.

The first stanza is meant to serve as a musical introduction to the city. (4/4) is there to present the idea of oneness. It is at the end of the stanza as opposed to the beginning (as it would be in a "regular" time signature) because the elements of the stanza build towards the idea of oneness, not away from it. It is also at the end to clue the reader to the idea that there is something amiss in this oneness.

The city is presented in black and white, as light and dark, hot and cold, and as soft and loud. The Old English quotation is used to contrast the newness and coldness of this modern city with the tradition and heritage of antiquity represented by this ancient poem, one of the first poems composed in English. It acts as a refrain here as it does in "Deor." The harsh sound of the Old English verse fits the harshness of the city. The alliteration in the poem is used to support the use of the quotation as alliteration is a common characteristic of Old English poetry.

The last poem in the series is intended to sum up the idea of life in the park by illustrating twelve characters of the park and their social

obligations. Once again there is a chronological order to the poem. The twelve characters can represent the twelve months of the year divided into its four seasons. Half of the characters are male and half are female. Once again, the tone is grim, but hopefully ends positively (or at least neutrally) in the portrayal of the worker.

In the spring, the small town girls become interested in modeling "sophisticated" females, new politicians see themselves as God's chosen ones, and the image of overweight women walking pampered animals in spring is intentionally grotesque. In the summer, we have bloody street scenes and experiments of first-time lovers. In autumn, wealthy women in their pretension perform their "community service," and middle-aged men and women try to regain youth. In the winter, the coldness of street-life contrasts the sometime warmth of sometime lovers, and the hands of the worker find no rest in his industrial park.

A Day in the Park

Park-benched children
cry crippled laughter,
drowning pain
of lost ballgames.

Blooming young girls
try to keep white dresses clean
while learning
the mechanics of love.

Lunchtime in the park---
The scent of spring mixes
with the idea
of a hot dog with chili and onions.
The worker is content.

Loud-mouthed mothers
cheer veterans of bedroomed wars
---themselves-
with half-filled beer cans.

Senior-citizenized men
read soiled words,
play checkers
in the fall.

School Days

I

Remember the year they took Recess
 Away?
 They told us we were getting older.

II

Another day, another dollar;
 A million days, a million dollars.

III

Learning that rights and wrongs
 are not always god-given
 was often a painful experience.

IV

High school girls prepare
 bacon and eggs, deadpan careers
 in cast iron cages.

V

Few birds in winter stay
 The cold, north suburban way.

VI

Blue ice steel churns out
 machine shop melodies
 --syncopated dissonance.
 They learn of futurepast.

VII

Three evening blackbirds
 sing a Sun lullaby
 to fast-fading daydreams.

A Visit to the City

Perpetual passers-by are intertwining
movements composed of
makeshift melodies,
floating monotony (4/4).

Men are cold in
Black & White,
Waiting, Whining, Wanting.

Nights are hot on
new York Streets,
Sweating, Cracking, Melting.

Paes ofereode; pisses swa maeg.*

Cars cry soft-loud
in big Cities,
Laughing, Sighing, Heckling.

Subways DARKEN
atHighNoon,
Sinking, Seeping, Soothing.

Paes ofereode; pisses swa maeg.

*from the Old English, "Deor" (dated 700-750 A.D.); translated, "That (evil) ended; so also may this."

Social Obligations

spring

Small town girls pass through
 small-talk turnstyles
 -----secretly sophisticated
 talking emotions.

Elected officials are
 placing priorities,
 converting wheat and wine
 in well-camouflaged sanctuaries.

Overweight women
 walk pampered white poodles
 in red evening sun.

summer

Bloodied young men voice
 violent opposition
 on streets named for dead.

Freshly cut flowers dance
 in contrapuntal innocence,
 sweet laughter below
 newly-spreading ivies.

Midnight tapestry on
 Twelfth Street. Human
 detachments bear
 love dyed scarlet.

autumn

Charity's children head
 Leagues of women voters;
 Teaching poise and promise,
 The politics of city life.

Middle-aged men share
 business-acquainted lovers
 on now-late afternoons.

Newly hairdressed women
 are living laughter;
 guised and gilded
 for the working dead.

winter

Teenaged alcoholics cry
 bloody murder
 on pain-drenched streets.

Sometime lovers risk
 social security,
 headached disillusion.

Saturday morning---
 calloused hands are working,
 buttering bread.

OLD ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Critical Apparatus

In the Old English elegy, the speaker has a tale to tell, a song in need of singing. The story-teller is usually a man who mourns a loss -- the loss of woman, the loss of lord, in general -- the loss of brighter days. The narrator often describes himself as covered in winter-care, alone and desolate.

Ice-cold imagery, often associated with the sea, sets the basic path of exile in most of these poems. The exile must, at one time or another, wander the vast whale-way, and thus separate from past happy times and the ones he/she loves. We clearly see these traits in "The Wife's Lament," "The Husband's Message," "The Seafarer," and "The Wanderer."

The narrator of "The Wife's Lament" is a rare exception in that it is a female. She expresses displeasure at having been forced to live apart from her husband because of a feud. "The Husband's Message" is often called a companion poem to "The Wife's Lament" though there is not much conclusive evidence to support the assumption that the two poems were written with this in mind. In "The Husband's Message," the branch of a tree onto which a message is inscribed, is sent over the sea by an exiled husband to his wife. Both poems lament the loss of a loved one, a spouse.

"The Seafarer" is a much more detailed portrait of the exile in his plight. The imagery is much more vivid than that of the "companion poems." More attention is paid here to sensory effects wherein we hear and feel "the sea-roar of the ice-cold wave." In general, this poem is more sophisticated than "The Wife's Lament" and "The Husband's Message." It develops its idea more explicitly, and at the end turns into a Christian allegory. The poem expresses the idea of penance. The narrator exiles himself from

all earth-pleasures and sees more clearly, the love of God.

In "The Wanderer," considered by many to be the best poem in the Old English elegaic tradition, the narrator laments the loss of his lord and all that he represents -- the mead hall, the giving of gifts, honor, and all earthly glory. The wanderer is exiled in an earth-kingdom which is full of hardship. He describes the raging snowstorm and the treacherous hail which terrorizes men in the darkness of night. There is a Christian tone to this poem as well. The wanderer tells us, through the literary homiletic device, *ubi sunt* (ll. 92-6), that we should not put our trust and faith in things of this world as all that exists here is transcient. Instead, we are told, we should elevate ourselves from our exiled condition, end our wandering and put our faith in the Father in heaven, where for us, all security lies.

In these translations, I have attempted to keep the Old English characteristics and yet make the poems comprehensible to the Modern English ear. I have tried to remain faithful to the original alliterative verse but, at times, the Modern English equivalent of a particular word defied alliteration. If the original alliterative sound was impossible to obtain, I tried to use another consonant upon which to build alliteration, providing of course, the new pattern coincided with the onomatopoeiac structure of the original verse as well as the rhythm of the line.

Much attention was paid to sound in the translation in order for the reader to get a "feel" for the verse. Half-lines were employed in the translations as they were in the originals. Each half-line, for the most part, is metrically independent from the other half-lines and the establishment of the original half-line was imperative for the retainment of the Old English metric flow.

If a particular word or clause did not seem to fit well in a particular

line or half-line, I transplanted it from one half-line to the next. This was done only if it made more "sense" for the translation and did not interfere with or alter, the established rhythm.

The Wife's Lament

This tale I will tell from my own experience,
about my deep sadness. I can say that
since I grew up, I have not endured more hardships
in recent years or long ago than I do now.
Always I suffer the sentence of my exile.

First, my lord-husband went hence from his land and people,
over the rolling waves; I had sorrow at dawn
about where in the land my lord might be.
Then I, myself, set out to go, I, a friendless wanderer
set out to seek help because of my great need.
Then the man's kinsmen began to think in secret thought,
began to plot how they would part us two
so that the distance between us two in this world would be forever long,
so that we might live most wretchedly, and a longing came upon me.
My lord bade me make my living here;
I had few beloved ones in this land-place,
few dear friends. And so, my mind is sad
since I found the man most suitable to me
unhappy, heart-troubled,
mind concealing, murder intending;
Blithe bearing, full often we two vowed
we would not be divided except through death
and nothing else; again--all that is changed
now, our friendship is as if
it never was. I must, far or near
endure the feud for my much beloved one.

They bade me dwell in this forest-grove
under the oak-tree in this earth-cave.
Old is this earth-hall; I am full of longing;
low and dim are the valleys; lofty are the hills,
bitter hedges brimming with briars,
a dwelling without joy. Full often am I here cruelly seized
by my lord's departure. There are loving friends
alive on earth, occupying beds
while I, alone at dawn must go
under the oak-tree throughout this earth-cave,
where I must sit a long summer's day;
where I cry over my exiled condition,
lament my many hardships. For never
can I calm my mind-care
nor all this longing which has hold of me in this life.

Thus may that young man be sad in mood,
possess hard heart-thoughts; likewise, may he have
a supply of constant sorrows. May all his joy
in this world depend on himself and may he be banished
far from his folk-land, where my friend sits
under a stony slope chilled by the storm;
There my friend is mood-weary, where there is water flowing
in the dreary hall. My friend suffers
much grief, remembers too often

a happier home. Woe be it to the one
who waits in longing for his loved one.

The Husband's Message

I was in the sand near the sea-wall,
 beside the sea-wave where I lived secure
 in my birthplace. Few men were there
 who could look upon
 my home, that solitude.
 But at each dawn, the brown wave of the flood's embrace
 surrounds me. Little I knew
 that one day I might journey
 over the mead-bench to speak without mouth,
 to exchange words. That is what wonder deals
 to the ingenuous mind, not such that he knows
 the point of the knife and the right hand;
 the earl's thought and knife join together
 purposely to craft me so that I should journey
 from him to announce boldly
 in broken speech, his message: your pledges,
 the love of you two none wider to declare.

Now I, apart from him will tell you;
 I am the offspring grown from tree-kind.
 Into me, men are bound to set
 to other lands on the salt streams.
 Very often I, in boats
 set sail then to seek out
 where my liege-lord, my retainer had sent me
 over the high seas. I am now come
 in the ship and now must know
 how you fare concerning heart-love for my lord,
 how in your mind you think. I dare swear
 that you were glorious there in finding fidelity.

Lo! the lord (by this inscribed tree-part) does beseech
 and command you, richly adorned one, that you might remember
 in your mind the promise
 which you two often pledged in former days
 while you were allowed to be in the mead-city,
 living in your home, dwelling in the same land
 where you two displayed love. Feud drove him
 out of that powerful nation. Now he himself commands me
 to joyfully persuade you to stir the sea
 when, on the hillside's edge you can hear
 the sad song of the cuckoo, in the grove.
 He also bade me not let any hinder your course,
 prevent your journey, prevent your living with your man.

After you have heard the song, begin to seek the sea, the gull's domain.
 Board the ship and go southwards from here
 on that ocean-track where you will find the man,
 your lord where he awaits you in expectation.
 In his mind he has no more hope
 than of your re-joining, no other desire in the world
 because Almighty God has granted you two
 a lease so that together hereafter
 you two shall be giving to warriors and companions

the studded bracelets, the burnished gold.
 He has enough jeweled treasure
 though over foreigners he holds his domain
 in a fair land. But it is nothing
 unless here, men have their friend-lover
 with whom to share.

I am now compelled
 out of necessity to push forward on ship;
 onto the young wild wave I must go
 to voyage the sea-- in eager departure
 stir up the ocean current. Now that the man
 has overcome his woe, he lacks no pleasure,
 not mare nor treasure; lacks not festive living
 nor of this earth any noble treasure.
 Prince's daughter, he is entitled to have you
 because of the ancient promise you two made.
 And if here together I brought S and R,
 EA, W and D, they would declare
 that as long as he touched life your lord did
 carry out that pledge to you,
 that pledge of fidelity upon which you two agreed in former days.

The Seafarer

I can sing a true song of myself,
 tell of my experiences, how in toilsome days
 I often suffered; how I experienced
 a time of hardship, explored bitter breast-care
 in my ship, an abode of sorrow.
 On terrible tossing waves-- there I often kept
 close night-watch near the ship's prow
 when it tossed by the cliffs. Cold and constrained
 were my feet, frost-gripped,
 cold-cloistered whereas care-lament
 kept my heart hot; hunger was torn from within
 one sea-weary spirit. The man who fares prosperously
 on earth does not know
 how I, wretched and sorrowful have weathered winter
 on the ice-cold sea in the paths of exile,
 deprived of dear kinsmen.
 There are hung the icicles, the flying hail-storm;
 there I heard nothing but the sea-roar,
 the ice-cold wave. At times, I took the swan-song
 for my game. There was the gannet's cry
 and the sound of curlew in place of man-laughter;
 the screaming gull instead of mead.
 There storms beat against rocky cliffs where the tern
 (in icy feathers) answered them; full often that frozen-winged eagle
 screamed about; no protecting kinsmen
 might comfort the desolate heart.

And so, he who owns and loves life's pleasures,
 who, proud and flushed with wine, who suffers few hardships in the city--
 he believes hardly, how often I was weary,
 had to dwell the sea-way.
 The shadow of night grew dark, snow came from the north,
 frost gripped the ground, hail fell onto earth,
 the coldest grain.

And so, now stirred
 is my heart-thought that I myself venture upon
 deep and towering seas to the tumult of the salt sea-waves.
 The heart's longing each time
 urges me to journey, to go far away
 from my homeland to where I will be an alien.
 This I do because there is no man on earth so proud in his heart,
 so generous in his gift-giving, so bold in his youth,
 so brave in his deeds, nor lord so gracious
 that he has never had anxiety about his sea-faring--
 concerning what his Lord will assign him.
 His thoughts are not on hearing the harp-- nor on receiving rings--
 nor on woman-pleasure-- nor world-joy--
 nor on anything else save the rolling waves;
 but he who sets eagerly to sea will always have longing.
 Groves are blest with blossom, adorned are the cities,
 meadows brighten, the world hastens on.
 All this reminds the spirit's eagerness--
 the heart, to journey; he who is so minded

will go far away onto the flood-way.

Likewise, the cuckoo urged, in melancholy voice moaned--
the summer guardian sang-- foreboding sorrow,
bitter there in heart-feelings. That man does not know
(he who is blessed with comfort) what some endure--
those who direct their steps to the very distant regions.

And so, my spirit now journeys beyond the heart-hood--
my mind is one with the sea-tide.

Over the home of the whale it fares far and wide--
to the edges of the earth; and it will come again to me
eager, full of longing. The lone flier screams--
overwhelms and incites the heart onto the whale-way,
across the ocean's reach.

I fare the sea because I am more living, warmer
in my Lord's bliss than in this dead, transitory
life on land. I believe not
that he who is earth-wealthy will be wealthy forever.
Each of three things before his tide-day
without fail, before his final hour proves a matter of uncertainty--
Sickness, old age and violence will take away
life from a man doomed and dying.
And so, the praise of the living
must be earned before each earl goes on his way;
those who can speak provide the best reputation left behind.
After he is gone they shall sing of his good deeds on this earth:
of brave deeds against the enemy's malice which he dealt to the devil.
Thus his warriors will praise him after his death--
and his glory afterwards lives with the angels
where he will always, forever partake of eternal life's glory,
have joy with the Host.

The days have departed
in which dwelt all the splendor of this earth-realm:
none of the kings, nor emperors,
nor gold-givers are as those of old
when they themselves accomplished glorious deeds,
lived in lordly reknown.
Wasted are all the noble warriors, bliss is withdrawn;
inferiors live on, possess this world and enjoy it
by their toil. Glory is humbled:
the earth's nobility grows old and withers
as does every man now throughout this middle-yard.
Old age overtakes him-- the face grows pale--
hoary-haired, he laments-- he knows that his former friends,
the sons of princes have been given up to the ground.
When that body is lost, that flesh-home,
then he can no longer taste sweetness nor feel pain
nor stir a hand nor think with his mind.
Though his brother will strew the grave
with gold, will bury beside the dead
divine treasure, it will not go with him,
will be of no help to his soul if that soul be full of sin.
That gold cannot help that which it hoards
as it did while he here lived, cannot help him before God's awful power.

Mighty is the Maker's power which turns the earth he molds;
 He stabilized the firm ground,
 established the expanse of the earth and the heavens above.
 Foolish is he who fears not his Lord-- for he comes unprepared for death.
 Blessed is he who lives humbly-- grace comes to him from heaven.
 God made steadfast that heart in him and so He trusts in its strength.
 Man must steer a strong temper, keep it in control,
 and be true to his word, and also keep a clean way of living.
 Each man, in moderation should hold love
 with a friend, and enmity with a foe-- his own right duty.
 He who will not love the friend he has made
 will be consumed by the fire's fullness
 in conflagration. Doom is mighty--
 God is mighty-- beyond man's imagination.
 Let us consider then where we will have our home
 and then reflect how we may come thither.
 And also, then, let us labor so that we may be allowed
 into that beatitude to live forever
 where the source of life springs from the Lord's love
 so that there is joy in heaven.

So, thanks be to Holy God
 because He is the Lord, the eternal Prince of Glory
 who honors us for all time.

Amen.

The Wanderer

Often he, the solitary one seeks out grace,
 the Lord's mercy. Though he has heart-care
 he must long stir (with his hands)
 the frost-cold sea. Throughout the sea
 he must tread a track of exile. Fate is full inexorably.
 --Accordingly the wanderer spoke, mindful of trouble,
 of cruel deadly slaughters-- the fall of his beloved kinsmen:

"Often, before each daybreak I must alone
 lament my care; now there is none living
 to whom I dare disclose my inmost thoughts,
 to whom I may clearly call out. I know for truth
 that it is a lordly custom for a man
 to bind fast the thoughts of his breast,
 hold them in that treasure-coffin-- let him think as he will.
 Nor can the weary heart withstand fate--
 the troubled mind cannot bring about help.
 And so, those who are eager for praise often firmly bind
 (in their breast-coffins) a sad thought.

So I, separated from my homeland, wretched and sorrowful,
 far away from kinsmen had to fetter my mind,
 had to bind fast my inmost thoughts.
 After years gone by, my gold-patron
 was held deep in the dark earth-house; I went thence lowly,
 proceeded in winter-sad over the wave's embrace--
 gloomily sought out the dreary hall of the bright treasure-giver
 wherever I might find him, far or near
 who might know me in the mead hall,
 or might comfort me, left without friends,
 might entertain me with enrichments. He knows
 how cruel a companion is sorrow,
 how sad is he who has few beloved protectors--
 his charge is the path of exile, not at all the twisted gold.
 The frozen spirit enclosed reflects not this earth's glory.
 He remembers the receiving of treasure, the hall retainer,
 how, in his youth his friendly patron
 was ever feasting with him. All joy fails.

And so he knows that he must long forgo
 his lord and friend, his beloved counsel
 when sorrow and sleep-- together in joint action
 often hold captive the wretched man.
 In his mind it seems to him that he embraces
 and kisses his lord, and on his knee
 lays hands and head, as he had in times before,
 in the days of yore when in the ceremony of gift-giving he partook.
 Then the lordless man wakes up again,
 sees before him the rolling waves,
 the sea-birds bathing, spreading their feathers--
 frost and snow falling rimed with hail.
 Then is the sad heart heavier-- sore
 after the beloved one. Sorrow is renewed
 when the kinsman's spirit passes through his mind.

He sings joyful salutations, surveys them eagerly,
 the retainer's companions. They swim away again,
 the floating ones' spirits-- bring there not many
 familiar songs. Care was renewed in him
 who must needs very often send
 his weary mind over the wave's workhouse.

Therefore, I cannot think why in this world
 my inmost thoughts are not gloomy
 when I consider thoroughly the nobleman's life--
 how he must suddenly surrender the hall-floor
 and his bold kinsmen-thanes. So, in this world
 each day droops and falls.

No man may become wise before he possesses
 his deal of winters in this earth-kingdom. The wise man must be patient--
 he must never be held by a hot heart-- nor be hasty in speech--
 nor weak in war; he must never be reckless
 much less fearful or cheerful-- nor greedy for wealth;
 and he should never be eager for boast until he clearly commands it.
 The young man must wait when he boasts, belts out his vow
 until he knows full well in his stout heart
 whither the thoughts in his mind will take that course.

The wise man must realize how ghostly it will be
 when the wealth of all this world lays at waste--
 as in various places throughout the world
 walls stand and are now blown against by winds,
 are hung with frost as a snow-covered dwelling.
 They wander next to the wine-hall: lords lay dead,
 deprived of dream-- the advantage of all who perish
 is to lie dead-proud by the wall of that mead-hall
 that must fall apart. War carried off some--
 took them on far paths; one, the bird bore off
 over the high sea; another, the grey wolf shared,
 dealt death to; one sad-faced earl
 was buried in an earth-pit.

Thus did the Old Creator lay to waste this dwelling place
 until the work of giants stood idle,
 free from the clamor of the strong-hold's keepers.
 Then, he who has thought wisely of this wall-stead,
 who deeply contemplates this dark life,
 who is wise in heart, who is often mindful of many slaughters
 of the past, speaks these words:

'Where has gone the horse? Where has gone the warrior, the giver-of-treasure?
 Where are all the banquet seats? Where can be found the joys of the hall?

Alas, bright cup! Lo! mailed warrior.

Alas, the glory of the prince! How all in time departs,
 becomes dark under the night-helmet as it was not before!

Now on the wall, the last sign
 of our dear host stands wondrously high--a stained serpent in decoration.
 The might of spears has made off with the earls,
 weapons greedy for slaughter-- a glorious fate.
 Storms beat against this rocky slope--
 the falling snowstorm binds the earth
 in winter's uproar. Then the dark one comes,

the shadow of night casts gloom, sends forth from the north
treacherous hailstorms to the terror of men.
All is full of hardship in this earth-kingdom:
the decree of fate changes the world under the heavens.
Here, possessions are transcient; here, friends are transcient;
here, man is transcient; here, woman is transcient.
All this earth-foundation becomes empty."

So spoke the wise man in his heart and sat alone in thought.
Good is he who holds his faith, he shall not too quickly show
the sorrow of his breast-- unless he knows already the remedy,
which a leader with courage may bring about, and cure.
It is well for him who seeks mercy and comfort
from the Father in heaven where for us, all security lies.

FLEOTENDRA FERØ:
A CREATIVE PROJECT IN THREE PARTS

by

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Abstract

There are three sections to the creative project. "The Penance," a short story, deals with a character's struggle with a self-imposed isolation and too, his struggle with his strictly-bound religion. "Industrial Park" is a series of poems which depict the character of an industrial society by illustrating the individual characters which comprise that society. The third section of the project is a collection of four poems, elegies translated from the Old English.

The three parts are connected loosely by the theme of isolation, the theme of exile. In the first section, the main character finds himself alone in the midst of a large metropolis. In the second part, the characters are each alone, as is the standard-of-living in a highly competitive society. The narrator of the Old English elegy laments time gone by as he sings a song of lament.

Each section of the project contains a separate "critical apparatus." Matters such as theme, style, plot, point of view, tone, meter, etcetera are commented on here. No deliberate attempt was made to tie the three sections together and each part should be judged as an individual unit.