

Marble Arch

"The Lockman"

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The bargemen see
Me growing old
I see the bargemen
Aging too
We play the game
Of tom fools
Where the one
Who still is oldest
In my work
Even in summer
He must travel
With eyes closed
It's not nothing
Being a lockman
The barge men know
My bloated face
They joke with me
That's there mistake
Half sorcerer
Half drunkard
I cast a spell
On all that sings
In my work
In autumn
We gather fruit
And the drowned
It's not nothing
Being a lockman

In his basket
A baby squirms
To watch the fly
On his nose
Mama moans
And time frets
Cabbage sweats
And fires groan
In my work
In winter
We think of the father
Who drowned himself

It's not nothing
Being a lockman
Towards the spring
The barge women
Feign and gloat
From their boat
I'd like their games
But for that war
That he leaves me
Somewhat damaged
In my work
In the spring
One takes the time
To drown self

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