

Galas Diamanda

"Heauton Timoroumenos (self Tormentor)"

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by Charles Baudelaire

No rage, no rancor: I shall beat you

as butchers fell an ox,

as Moses smote the rock in Horeb-

I shall make you weep,

and by the waters of affliction

my desert will be slaked.

My desire, that hope has made monstrous,

will frolic in your tears

as a ship tosses on the ocean-

in my besotted heart

your adorable sobs will echo

like an ecstatic drum.

For I - am I not a dissonance

in the divine accord,

because of the greedy irony

which infiltrates my soul?

I hear it in my voice - that shrillness,

that poison in my blood!

I am the sinister glass in which

the Fury sees herself!

I am the knife and the wound it deals,

I am the slap and the cheek,

I am the wheel and the broken limbs,

hangman and victim both!

I am the vampire at my own veins,

one of the great lost horde

doomed for the rest of my time, and beyond,

'to laugh - and smile no more'

(Taken from *Les Fleurs du Mal*, translated by Richard

Howard)

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