

Free verse, so called, is really cherished prose,  
Prose made of, given an air by church intoning.  
It has its beauty, only I don't write it.  
And possibly my not writing it should stop me  
From holding forth on Freedom like a Whitman—  
A Sandburg. But permit me in conclusion:  
Tell Tissaphernes not to mind the Greeks.  
The freedom they seek is by politics,  
Forever voting and haranguing for it.  
The reason artists show so little interest  
In public freedom is because the freedom  
They've some to feel the need of is a kind  
No one can give them - they can scarce attain -  
The freedom of their own material.  
So, never at a loss in simile,  
They can command the exact affinity  
Of anything they are confronted with.  
This perfect moment of un bafflement,  
When no man's name and no noun's adjective  
But summons out of nowhere like a jinni.  
We know not what we owe this moment to.  
It may be wine, but much more likely love -  
Possibly just well-being in the body,  
Or respite from the thought of rivalry.  
It's what my father must mean by departure,  
Freedom to flash off into wild connections.  
Once to have known it, nothing else will do.  
Our days all pass awaiting its return.  
You must have read the famous valentine  
Pericles sent Auspice in absentia:

For God himself the height of feeling free  
Must have been His success in simile  
When at sight of you He thought of me.

Let's see, where are we? Oh, we're in transition,  
Changing an old King for another old one.