# ‘Now, Departed’

Thus departed Auden, Heaney, or Eliot,

now resting in hard soil.

we stand over them, sandalled,.

on spent words and Word:

Now, Christ, my God, hangs on a cross

in an implacable horizon

His lips are baked and black.

I trace the labyrinth

on my common palm,

“the sign is… burning…”

before exhaling,

to move away from what was, and is,

still, a recognizable face.

~ ~ ~

A real moon over this imaginary garden.

Gardeners trim the umbilical cords of rugged brown

with their sleeves un-rolled.

Standing some distance away from them,

the twigs still shine an unoffending glow.

Blood-plastered garden, foreshadowed bodies of decay,

but we stand sandalled on solid earth.

We begin to walk easily,

bow, pray for this wilderness to be

a promised land.

**Note:**

*God Speaks*

1. Line 1: Cf. “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” by Walt Whitman
2. Line 4: “God walks dully along”; Cf. “walking dully along” in “Musée des Beaux Art” by W. H. Auden
3. Line 7: “with a sword”, Cf. “Miss Avery/Comes out into the garden with the sword” in “In Time of War’ by W. H. Auden
4. Line 9: Cf. “Sealed mystery” in *The Gospel of the Sons of God* (1891), by Ven. J. M. WILSON, Vicar of Rochdale, and Archdeacon of Manchester.
5. Line 10: “redundant prophecies”; Cf. “these redundant locks” in *Samson Agonistes* (1671) by John Milton
6. Line 12: “orotund”; Cf. “My own voice, orotund sweeping and final” in *Song of Myself* by W. H. Auden.

*Departed, Now*

1. Line 1: Cf. “Thus departed Hiawatha” in “The Song of Hiawatha” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
2. Line 3: Cf. “sandalled” in “General William Booth Enters into Heaven” by Vachel Lindsay’s
3. Line 4: Cf. “spent word” in “Ash Wednesday” by Thomas Stearns Eliot
4. Line 6: Cf. Cf. “~~the untouchable~~ implacable horizon”, manuscript draft, Marianne Moore edited by Marsden Hartley, as qtd in Emily Setina’s ““Mountains Being a Language with Me” Marianne Moore,
5. Line 7: Cf. “with black lips baked” in “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
6. Line 12: Cf. “That was, and still is” in “Letter to Lord Byron (1936) by Wystan Hugh Auden
7. Line 13: Cf. “still knowable face” in “Casualty” by Seamus Heaney  
   Line 14: Cf. “Poetry” by Marianne Moore
8. Line 15: Cf. Clement Greenberg’s “Umbilical Cord of Gold”, *Lapham’s Quarterly*, 1931, <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/arts-letters/umbilical-cord-gold>
9. Line 16: Cf. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by Thomas Stearns Eliot
10. Line 19: Cf. “blood-plastered” in “Mycenae Lookout” by Seamus Heaney; Cf. “It was omen and return, an illumined limen/We’d crossed ahead of time, foreshadowed bodies” in *The makings of a music* by Seamus Heaney, as quoted in “Boustrophedon between Hellas and Home” by Oliver Taplin in *Chapter 2:* *Seamus Heaney and the Classics: Bann Valley Muses*, 1931, Oxford University Press.
11. Line 23: Cf. “That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness” in *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* by Matthew Arnold