My House[[1]](#endnote--1)

An ancient bridge, and a more ancient tower,[[2]](#endnote-0)

A farmhouse that is sheltered by its wall,

An acre of stony ground,

Where the symbolic rose can break in flower,

Old ragged elms, old thorns innumerable,

The sound of the rain or sound

Of every wind that blows;

The stilted water-hen

Crossing stream again

Scared by the splashing of a dozen cows;

A winding stair, a chamber arched with stone,

A grey stone fireplace with an open hearth,

A candle and written page.

Il Penseroso's Platonist toiled on[[3]](#endnote-1)

In some like chamber, shadowing forth

How the daemonic rage

Imagined everything.

Benighted travellers

From markets and from fairs

Have seen his midnight candle glimmering.

Two men have founded here. A man-at-arms

Gathered a score of horse and spent his days

In this tumultuous spot,

Where through long wars and sudden night alarms

His dwindling score and he seemed castaways

Forgetting and forgot;

And I, that after me

My bodily heirs may find,

To exalt a lonely mind,

Befitting emblems of adversity.

1. Part of a longer sequence entitled “Meditations in a Time of Civil War.” [↑](#endnote-ref--1)
2. E.g. Thor Ballylee [↑](#endnote-ref-0)
3. Cf. Milton, “Il Penseroso” [↑](#endnote-ref-1)