

(1957) THE BLACK AND WHITE MINSTREL SHOW (1978)

HIM:

And then I slept
And, waking in the wasted air,
Saw and heard thus –
He whom I saw seemed like a cavalier,
And I heard this:
“Watching my people die
Does not satisfy
even if they broke their word,
Even if they *deserve*
to be governed by King Turd.
Roosevelt, Churchill and Eden
bastards to a man,
Liar, Jew and glutton
have squeezed the people dry
like sheep!
At Sarzana I lay still,
waiting for the call
from sleep
I am Guido, whom you loved
as a spirit from above
And for the burning-glass of my mind's reason.
I knew the cleansing fire
Of Venus's third sphere
already as I rode
Cavalcanti, the cavalier
(*Not* a mere follower)
through the squabbling streets
Of our *città dolente*
(*Firenze*)
which breeds
Not men, but a vain and touchy
race of slaves!

Passing through Arimino
I met a gallant soul
Singing as though her heart would break
with joy!
A young *contadinella*
– Big-boned girl, but *bella* –
with a German on each arm;
And she sang,
she sang of love
without thought of
heaven above.
She had led some Canadians
into a field of mines
Where the *Tempio* of Ixotta

JIM:

And
Waking where
A man saw to hear,
We see what seems will hear,
a lack of *genius*:
The whereto of Matthew,
The hard won Johnson,
broken, unheard,
master of nothing but what was deserved.
To be, a threefold argument.
[Raising Cain:
Adam
had him: two sons
one for murder
one for mutton.]
Lapping, lake-faithful,
trussed and stalled
in sleep.

Sing, sing, Zip, sing –

ZIP:

And
I knew the historical truth:
“Ann Lewis was here.”
Sounded as syllables
“*So*”
“There is,” I told her, “this
particular pity called insolence
called cruelty, *called*
frenzy.
Which feeds
cruelty, casting the watery
not ‘of’ slaves.”

The sun, for one, persists
its unmet arguments,
its uniform bestung with tidy
mortality.
Community be god-
damned, in German on each arm:
[Ich dich][nicht] [As I say I am]
Unsung, more here
by being more *there*
more there by being.
[oddly numbered]
Sweetly we did this thing of
fucking up, where hangs
the familiar.

Mechanized
used to stand.
They were coming in fours and fives
– I felt a wave of passion
steal over me again
as if I were still alive
That's the way girls are
in the Romagna.
sing –
The Canadians had come
to 'mop up' German scum,
To pull down the remains
of Rimini;
They stopped to ask the way
to the Via Emilia
of a girl,
a poor young girl
Raped by the first of that *canaille*.
– Be! Bene! soldiers,
follow me.
Let's all go together
to *Via Emilia!* –
She showed them – where to go.
Her brother had dug the holes
For that mine-field,
there beside the sea-side.
Towards the sea-side, she
(big-boned, but a beauty)
Led the boys.
Brave kid! A real cutie!
She played that prank
for love:
acing 'em all for poise!
Death-threats arrived too late,
Defying Fate
she died –
That big-boned girl –
with pride,
hitting the target straight!
To hell with the enemy!
Twenty of them lay dead
The girl dead, too
in the midst of that *canaille*.
Everyone *except* the prisoners.
A real hard-case
that kid
Singing, singing
with joy
Along the road that leads
beside the sea.
Gloria della patria!

Nothing doing
by our self self-esteem-
ing. Murderous 5
—branded on my thumb.
This is our country for old men
and
I could be eternalized.
Sing, sing, Mr. Tambo,

TAMBO:

Did you say *via*?
Did you say *girl*?

We three.

Via is a—*so*
Alto or soprano?

Suffering, really,
would be
relief.

Caught in containment
without conscience:
without content:
The rest is noise.

Sing, sing, Mr. Bones, sing –
BONES: *is the mike on?*

I died,
thinking about the brawn of statistics.
That insistent jealousy.
Vainly thinking
about poor girls about whom
about poor men about whom
speaking *about* is not
thought thinking but thought ill-wrought.
Crabbed
being, being
less ex-
cellent, more ambitious,
Pricked glory—
belled with idle syllables

Gloria! the glory
Of dying for one's land
in the Romagna!
The dead are not all dead,
Myself I have returned
from the third sphere
to see Romagna,
To see the North reborn
among the mountains,
In this 'morte saison'
to see the home-land,
And yet – that girl ...
what girls,
what boys
wear black!”

no thoughts thought but thought.
Le résultat est stupéfiant et séduit.
All hope is derivative

“That’s what she said!”

Sung –
IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

*I don’t have anything to say, I’m just
sorry about what I did*

I got more pussy than you can
squeeze from a cat