

NLB Online Repository of Artistic Works

MEDITATIONS (working drafts)
Felix Cheong

For permission to print, download, produce or otherwise use this work, click here:
felixc@singnet.com.sg

Note: Content layout and formatting are as received from author.

cut throat
zero sum game
cut losses

(9)

to NAC competition

MEDITATIONS

I.

Father, my words ~~kneel~~^{bow} before you, ~~having~~
they ~~have~~ nowhere to go.

They have gone nowhere
~~but taking defiance~~

~~as far as your eyes must have seen,~~
~~turning things over~~

As far as your eyes must have seen,
they have gone nowhere
but turned things over

as though meanings could be gleaned ~~light?~~
from things,

mocking your writings ~~Scriptures~~

as though you could be summoned ~~challenged~~

to change, ~~or appear~~

at their will. ~~by a snap order~~ ~~with~~ ~~of~~ ~~will~~

II.

I open the palms of my poems
and I do not ~~recognise~~^{cannot see beyond} them. ~~change.~~

They do not have ~~your~~^{leave} marks
cutting roads for ~~direction~~.

They have neither ~~the~~ grace / nor light ~~of~~^{if your} psalms
~~from a run in the sun.~~

They do not know ~~how~~ to be lost ~~is~~
to be saved.

III.

Master, what do you make
of your own poetry?

Do you own it
after you made it?

~~Or does it own you?~~

Or does it make you/its own?

IV.

Lord, I have failed as a poet.

② I have found what I wanted,
but am now found wanting.

⑥ I must have got it all wrong -
though at what point,
I cannot ~~imagine~~. *remember*.

⑦ Perhaps it was when the writer
became more urgent than the writing,
the tool more needed than the task?

8.

⑧ Father, I am bereft
and coming undone.
Nothing left on my tongue.

(a)

I need to unlearn,
I need to be dumb.

(b)

~~For~~ I have nothing left
on my tongue.

MEDITATIONS

I.

1

Father, my words kneel ^{before you} ~~before you~~, having nowhere to go.

[

As far as your eyes must have seen,
they have gone nowhere
but turned things over
as though meanings could be gleaned
beneath things,
mocked your writings
as though you could be challenged
to change, or appear
by a crack of will.]

~~sketch~~

II.

2

^{when} ~~open~~

I ~~open~~ the palms of my poems
and I do not recognise them.

4

They do not leave marks
cutting roads for direction.

5

They have neither ^{the} grace
nor light of your psalms.

update -> 2/4/2001
update -> 3/4/2001
update -> 10/5/2001
update -> 13/7/2001
update -> 31/8/2001

They do not know
to be lost is to be saved.

III.

Master
Teacher,

~~You are a poet too.~~
What do you make of your own poetry?

Do you own it
after you ~~have~~ made it?

Or does it own you?

copy right
over
book and

IV.

~~I am a failed poet~~
Lord, I have failed as a poet.

I have undone your gift, ^①unable to tame my language
I found what I wanted, ^②growing tales and heads!

but am now found wanting.

~~I must have got it all wrong, in
though at what point.~~

~~I cannot pinpoint it. maybe.~~

Perhaps it was when the writer
became more ^{urgent} important than the writing,

the tool more needed than the job?

~~You did not leave instructions
how to tame the language
when it grows tales and heads
and demands to be made
famous every few years.~~

~~I have taken your gift,~~
I ^{unwrapped} ~~took~~ your gift,

I ~~could~~ ^{can} not tame the language

My language grows tales and heads
and demands to be remade

Keep original.
25/3/2001

instructions

Task?

re

V.

Father, I am ~~now~~ bereft
and coming undone.

I need to unlearn,
I need to be dumb.

For I have nothing left
on my tongue.

updated 23/3/2007
updated 27/3/2001
updated 30/3/2001
update 2/4/2001