



Back  
to Earth

**ANNEMARIE ESTOR** [BELGIUM]

**TRANSLATION: ROSALIND BUCK**

## **CANTO EXCREMENTIS**

Oh Man,  
Oh Man,  
Illustrious silk-pyjamaed occupier  
of lofts, conference rooms,  
palazzos and penthouses!

'Tis I who awaken thee!

Arise and shower,  
bring forth from thy closet  
the immaculate jacket, the well-shined shoes.

Spotless this day thou shalt begin –  
Hast thou already forgotten who I am?

I have already slipped away, transported.  
My disappearance successfully entrusted  
to drain diggers – sewer builders – urban architects  
in the Order of the Dungeons of Piranesi.

Oh Man,  
I am! I am!

I am thy excrement!

A symbol thou hast made of me,  
a badge of all thy badness and phrenic  
filthiness.

For thou sayest that I smell of thee!  
Of what thou hast to hide,  
there,  
in thine odious entrails:  
thy character!

Verily I say unto thee,  
this is thy profoundest fear:  
that thy true countenance lurks  
in thine intestines!

I, thy greatest friend,  
who deliver thee from crippling constipation,  
I have an odour.

But thou thinkest  
– so thou hast construed –  
that I stink  
of thine unhealthy avarice  
thy wheeling and dealing  
thine insatiable need  
and thy greed.

For what was served yesterday  
fresh on your plate  
lies ponging today in your privy:

Amuse-bouches,  
canapés and hors-d'oeuvres  
with Peruvian black mint  
garnished green with parsley  
and a light drizzle of  
unpretentious balsamic vinaigrette  
a simple, yet exquisite,  
dish of tangy, minty  
herby delicacy!

Thine haute cuisine  
of yesterday evening  
lies ponging today in thy privy.

Thus, I say aye,  
It is I who lie  
ponging today in thy privy.

Art thou awake?

And, now,  
all thou thinkest of is  
the dodgy reputation of thy derrière.

Of concealing thy greedy-guts guzzling,  
the sluggish decline of thy green-grass primeval bog.  
The damp cavity of the half-witted cave-dweller, the revulsion  
at thine own brewing with the puss of death.  
Of the oozing, pestilent, stinking piles of rotten meat.  
The sclerotic escargot of thy gluttony.

Oh... how can you...  
How can you judge this sophisticated, energetic mechanism  
in such a way?

No, I do not smell  
of Thai Orchid, Bali Sunset or Himalaya Refill.

But I say unto thee:  
The first man who shitteth not  
hath yet to be born!

Oh, Man,  
Oh, Man  
If thou askest of me  
as thou dost each morning:

'Deliver me'  
'Deliver me'  
'Libera me, Domine',

then let me relieve thee  
now and forever,  
then come, Mankind, finally face me  
and face yourself!

I am not the End - I am the Beginning.

I am all that endures  
and of all things am I  
the Single Origin!

I am Alpha and Omega.  
From me springs the Garden of Eden.

The most splendid palms and the most majestic lilies..  
Fresher and greener by far than those in the sunniest paradise..  
The most exalting bees shall come, and only by mine agency..  
Hummingbirds shall dance before my nose, in green brassieres!

I am thy vineyard, I am thy papyrus,  
I am thy poppy, I am thy pomegranate,  
I am thy lotus, I am thy rose,  
I am thy tulips, carnations.

I am the Resurrection and the Life!

And, damn it, I am the Geminids!

And, damn it,

Dies irae, dies illa

Solvat saeculum in favilla

The meteorite showers!

All ammonia into the atmosphere!

Touch me, inhale me and accept me.

Touch me, inhale me and accept me.

I am thy friend, thy excrement.

I am thy dearest sediment.

I am Thy son, Who Liveth.

I am thy Excellence

I am thy Most Exquisite Testament.

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