

MUSELLI.

A Dramatic Poem for Radio  
BY  
O. D. Erickson.

ANNOUNCER            OPEN

MUSIC                THEME TO RIVER SOUND B.G.

MUSELLI 1            Wish we had bread.

DAVIDSON            Bread! Huh! Lucky t'have beans.

SOUND                MUSELLI HUMMING

MUS 1                The river seems higher.

DAV                  Yeh.

MUS 1                But for the river there would be no sound  
Except the wind in the trees, but no, no trees,  
These are the skeletons of trees.

DAV                  Lucky t'have trees at all.  
I've been where there was no trees. North of here.

MUS 1                It would be like death.

DAV                  The sun never shone all winter. Coffee?  
Lucky t'have trees ~~at all.~~

MUS 1                Yes.

DAV                  Only myself that trup.  
Only ~~living~~ thing I saw was a snow owl.

MUS 1                Did you find any gold?

DAV                  Might have might have.

SOUND                MUSELLI HUMMING

DAV                  Got to get down to the Mikhean valley tomorrow. The  
river looks bad. Got to get into the Yrcluit in a couple  
days. Too much swell from the thaw.

MUS 1

I could rather bear the silence than this river sound.

Rather no life than such ~~unhappy~~ life~~Which carries all life with it~~~~Drowning in its voice.~~

DAV

~~Getting tired of you Muselli.~~ You talk too much. You're not  
my kind.

MUS 1

Jealous of the gold you mean.

DAV

You mean wrong. I'm not used to people, not your kind.

MUS 1

You hate me, don't you?

DAV

Why did you leave Italy anyway? This aint your life. You  
don't belong here. Why.....

MUS 1

Please! ... I .... I'm going to take a walk by the river (KABE)

DAV

He won't last long.

Can't say I'm sorry.

SOUND

RIVER TO TUNE OF MUSELLI'S HUMMING

MUS 1

O Muselli why did you come here ?

Where is the end ? Is this the end ?

Your dreams and visions crumble away

Like the sand castles you used to build near the ocean

And then desperately ran along the beach

Flinging yourself at the screaming seagulls . . .

And ankle deep in the sand watched

The masts dropping behind

Night and the rim of gold on your islands.

Warm and gentle, the sea-wind

Troubled your cheeks when the world went ~~red~~~~#####~~

Its eyes filling with shadow,  
 And the white fingers of light withdraw.  
 And the smell of daylight in  
 The seaweed, the warm shells you  
 Listened in to hear the wind,  
 The white feathers of the wrecked bird  
 Hiding in an archway of ribs,  
 Slipped between the doors of darkness  
 To the sun's enclosure,  
 And you were left  
 On a waste, vast plain  
 Where nothing existed but your shivering.

O once I knew the living,  
 Not these frozen aspects of existence,  
 But the living instant!  
 The throb of the heart in woven hands,  
 The wild silent speech of touching mouths;  
<sup>where</sup>  
~~And~~ everything around us, the streets and the  
 Buildings and the trees pointed to it,  
 To the present, ~~to~~ the exalting moment!  
~~Which afterwards we try for a lifetime to capture;~~  
 Even the paintings on the wall  
 Blazed with it:  
 There, a stream came down Eden over hushed rocks;  
 There, Abraham bowing low at Beth-el,  
 And there, in the Basilica, the crowd of virgins  
 With lighted eyes and the cherubs of God  
 Blowing horns, their cheeks puffed out.  
 All things reverent, all things alive,  
 The buildings twisting with it,

Those figures carved nakedly, like life,  
 Those breasts burning in the moonlight;  
 All things responding, receiving and giving back,  
 Like the breathing of the body,  
 The impulse of the living.

But what can I do with it now?

My life, my time is tragedy;  
 Destined to die  
 Because unable or unwilling to live.

My governess! <sup>How</sup> can I not remember her!

When we went to the Umbrian hills

For a holiday.

I remember, we had been

Walking out over the fresh fields

Between the gayety of trees holding every color,

And we stopped and sat down

On the bank of a stream.

~~She said:~~

SOUND

STREAM B.G. SUSTAIN

GOVERNESS

Someday you will have to go out into the world.

It will not be the world you have known, I am afraid,

The world of gardens ~~and~~ music. It is a harsh world

and growing harsher. Ugly things are happening, and you

will be involved in them. You cannot help it. I am

afraid for you, that is why I tell you. You must develop

strength and know your direction so that you can deal with

the world.

SOUND

STREAM OUT

MUSKILLI 1

And then we got up, saddened, returning home as the birds

wove unearthly music through the sky. I was frightened  
and chilled as if the hand of someone had been put on my  
shoulder and turning, I did not know who it was.

But her words faded with time

Like the old pages of a manuscript.

I grew up in the sunlight

Blind to the monstrous world

that lay, like the mythical dragon

just beyond the walls of our estate.

~~Until~~  
~~and then~~ one day mother called me into the sitting room.

**MOTHER**

You are too young to hear what I have to tell you. I am  
afraid I have tried to shelter you from disaster. And now  
that it has happened.....Well, you must be told.

Do you know why your father has been away so long?

**MUSELLI 3**

No Mother, I don't.

**MOTHER**

Not for the reasons you have been told, when I had hoped....  
He has been defeated by his enemies, the Fascisti, and is  
held by them, probably in prison, if not worse. They have  
taken him away from us, Francesco, and we may never see  
him again. (PAUSE)

But that is not all.

They have taken his lands and his property, leaving this  
house and a stipend to keep us.

These Fascisti are not men Francesco. They have no honour  
among them. But savages. Worse than the Goths who ravaged  
old Rome because they are our own people.

**MUSELLI 3**

But Mother, I don't understand, what has father done?

**MOTHER**

He has been an honest and honourable man and that the  
Fascisti cannot bear. Such a man sees through the facade of

their boasting and reveals it. So, they must destroy him.

MUS 3

But what are we going to do?

MOTHER

There is nothing we can do. He may be anywhere or ... But now, we must live.

You will have to leave us soon. You go into a hostile world, Francesco. Be careful. Live in it as best you can, remembering that all this, that the time of the Fascisti, will come to an end. But do not oppose them openly for they will only destroy you. Save yourself for the time when they are no more.

... It is an evil time, Death stirs in the land.

MUSIC

BRIDGE

MUSELLI 1

It was scarcely a year later, that I left her at the gate waving from the distance.

Then I could no longer see her,

When the road bent towards Capua,

The city of the Frozen Angels.

And I saw the fountains spilling

Down the stairs of Rome, couples in the street in dreams,

And my loneliness welled up in me like the fountains,

Often I sat alone, hear the avenue of birds,

calling out to them....

MUSIC

SOFT B.G. TO SET MOOD. HOLD

They seemed to fly across the sea.

The sea was still in their feathers;

Sea wind, rolling in on the rocks above Livorno,

Sea wind tufting their feathers

And I saw bright, mocking eyes.

MUSIC

ON ODYSSEUS QUICKLY HALF UP AND DENSER

Was it Odysseus

That prisoner of the waves

Who became like the sea?

Who became sea-eyed?

Who rolled through time?

The free man who broke the chains of the sea?

MUSIC

FULL UP SUSTAIN

And I saw fabulous shores rearing out of the mist their heads,

Sun flashing off their waving hair

Streaming into the wind

Firing the sun, and the birds that left their heads.

MUSIC

OUT

And I longed to leave these shores,

My face in that sun

That sea in my hair

Streaming in the wind towards

O God, where ....!

And I looked down the crowded blocks oozing into the canal....

MUSIC

SUSTAIN

To a year of waiting.

A year of loneliness

And wandering: Rome, Florence,

~~Pisa~~, Carrara, Vicenza, Brescia,

Rimini, Ascola, Rieti;

Everywhere looking, searching down the

Dark streets, in the fluttering forests,

Over fields white with sunlight.

And in the faces of people.

Who still frightened me, yes,

With their wild laughter  
 And the clamour of their words,  
 Unlike the soft speech of my home,  
 Yet it was they, the warmth of them,  
 The delight in their eyes,  
 The vigour of their anger,  
 The friendly touch of their hands  
 Who revived in me the desire to live,  
 Who renewed the flow of my blood,  
 Like the hidden rivers of spring  
 I was beginning again.

MUSIC

OUT

And then, one day,  
 Among the flowers of the hills  
 Above Umbria ....

SOUND

THE OCCASIONAL CHIRP OF A BIRD HEARD THROUGHOUT

PEIRINA

~~#####~~ (LAUGHING) Oh! You scared me!

MUSELLI 2

(LAUGHING QUICKLY) I was very awkward I'm afraid.

PEIRINA

Perhaps a little.

MUS 2

I just came up for a walk.

PEIR

And I too. I'm being naughty.

MUS 2

Oh?

PEIR

Yes. I'm not to be out alone.

MUS 2

No?

Peir

But I love it up here. When it's nice like today I run  
 away and hide up here. I can see the whole valley.

MUS 2

Yes. When it's clear.

PEIR

Are you afraid of me?

MUS 2

Yes.



FEIRINA Why?

MUS 2 Because I ... I've never met anyone .....

FEIR Come, Tell me.

MUS 2 So beautiful.

FEIR Everybody says that.

MUS 2 But you are.

FEIR AM I?

MUS 2 Yes, you are, very beautiful.

FEIR Come. Let's climb to the top.

SOUND BIRD FADES OUT

MUSELLI 1 My longing to cross the sea vanished then.  
 I had only the longing to be with her  
 I watched her as we climbed upwards  
 Through the May flowers, the breeze like  
 Soft music through them, and every flower a caress,  
 a whispered word, ~~a kiss~~.

Time stretched into an infinity of being here  
 With her, her company an endless Springtime.

My governess was right.

I knew nothing about the world.  
 When we reached the top  
 We sat down to rest, watching the *valley*  
~~Distant valleys~~ ..... (FADE)

SOUND REMOTE BIRD SOUND THROUGHOUT

FEIRINA What's your name?

MUSELLI 2 Francesco. Francesco Muselli.

FEIR. Oh!

MUS 2 What's the matter? What's your name?

FEIR Feirina Demolleschi.

MUS 2 I seem to remember hearing it.

(PAUSE) (TROUBLED) but what's wrong?

PEIR Your father was proscribed wasn't he?

MUS 2 Yes. By the Fascists!

(PAUSE) (AGITATED) What difference does it make?

PEIR Nothing. It was stupid.

MUS 2 But why did you start when I said ...

PEIR. Never mind Francesco. Do you think we should go down now?

MUS 2 Oh no. It's too early. But Peirina ...

PEIR Ssssh. Listen to that bird?

MUS 2 You are beautiful Peirina.

MUSIC GROWING THROUGH TO CHORUS

I met her among the flowers

Her black hair massed like the mountains

Over the Umbrian plains;

Eyes like original night

And her breasts

Like the swelling earth under the spring rains.

CHORUS (THREE MALE VOICES CHANTING)

I am on fire

I sing your passion

That serves my desire.

I will lead you into the fields of light

O my loved one.

I will speak softly like the birds of the night

Of my passion .

I will read your eyes and speak them into your ear

The message I see, here,

Written in liquid fire.

And I will have my desire.

MUS 1      Then in late August, after a period of rain,  
                  We met at the usual hour  
                  Climbing silently through a gusty afternoon.  
                  And felt the dying of things in the air.  
                  When I kissed her, her eyes held a message of fear.

MUS 2      What's wrong?

PEIR        Francesco (PAUSE)  
                  I'm going to have a child.

MUSIC      QUICKLY UP AND OFF

CHORUS     (AT A HIGH FAST PITCH)  
                  O fear fear fear  
                  That turns round  
                  In the hand in the head  
                  Like a pain like a fire  
                  Blown by the wind  
                  Down the plain to disaster  
                  To the sea ...

MUSIC      OFF

MUS 2      Oh!

PEIR        What are we going to do?

MUS 2      Get married Peirina.

PEIR        I can't!

MUS 2      You can't!

PEIR        My Marriage has been arranged

MUS 2      You are mine Peirina! We will run away. We'll cross  
                  the ocean to America. I'll get a job.

PEIR        No, Francesco.

MUS 2      You don't love him!

PEIR        No.

- MUS 2            Then we must go Peirina. Don't argue. I will arrange tomorrow for .....
- FEIR             Francesco. I can't go with you. It would be miserable, that life.
- MUS 2            Do you love me?
- FEIR             Yes, but love is not enough. I had a long talk with mama the other day ...
- MUS 2            Not enough! Then what is enough? What did she say? does she know your condition?
- FEIR             No, she doesn't know and I am terrified...I can't let her know. She would never forgive me.
- MUS 2            This is crazy! You're just a child to talk like this! If you love me. That is enough. You must come. I won't let you not come. And we won't starve Peirina. When we get to America...
- FEIR             Stop it! You know I can't. It's you are the child! Life is not that simple and you know it. It is not just a matter of love. There is money and position. You have none! Your father is an outlaw. Prescribed! I couldn't possibly marry you!
- MUS 2            Peirina, Peirina, is this all? Is this the end? I love you my darling. I love you. Don't you understand? and you love me. And that is more, far more important than money or position. It is everything! Please don't plunge us both in unhappiness by leaving me. I wouldn't want to go on living without you.
- PEIRINA          Oh darling please! I don't want to! I ....
- MUS 2            Do you love this other man?
- PEIRINA          No. I have never met him.
- MUS 2            Who is he?
- FEIR             Grandizetti.. Paolo.

MUS 2           The government man? The Fascist! Oh he has a fine position!

FEIR            He has. Mama said.....

MUS 2           Mama said, mama said. ~~Think for yourself for God's sake.~~

FEIR            You're jealous of anyone who has a position. That's what it is!

MUS 2           Do you call that a position? He's a simple mobster.

FEIR            I'm not talking with you. I'm going home.

MUS 2           Not yet, Peirina. Listen to me. You must ... (FADE)

MUSIC           FRAGMENTARY, EXCITED, ANXIOUS, SOOTHING OUT TO

MUS 1           In the end she promised to go away with me  
                   We were to meet at eight in the evening  
                   Outside her house.  
                   But when I arrived the place was in darkness.  
                   I stood for two hours in the <sup>hazy</sup>blazing moonlight  
                   Before I approached the house.  
                   There was no one there.  
                   What was I to do?  
                   I felt like a man dropped on another planet,  
                   Alone throughout all existence.  
                   But perhaps the plot had been discovered  
                   Perhaps.....  
                   I ran back through the dark, hopeless hills  
                   To the town where I was staying,  
                   Climbing the stairs.... I knew  
                   I knew ... Opening the door.  
                   But the room was empty  
                   Looking strangely at me.  
                   O Peirina! Where are you?  
                   But only the old woman downstairs  
                   Heard me and banged her door

And a wind came up over the *Compania*.  
 That night I tramped a thousand miles through myself  
 To come out in the morning  
 On the dead world that would imprison me forever.  
 There was a knock at my door.  
 Peirina! It was the old woman  
 Who put a letter in my hand.  
 How was I to open it? How?  
 It was spread in front of me, at  
 Last, on the table, pressed back  
 For I could not hold it.

**PEIRINA'S VOICE**

Dear Francesco,

When I got home that day after our talk *Mama* was waiting  
 for me. She accused me and I fainted in my fright. It was this  
 that gave me away.

I have confessed all to her and she has taken me away -  
 I cannot say where - I fear it. I do not want to Francesco.  
 But there is nothing to do. I must.

So you see what our love has turned to after all Francesco.  
 This horror. Oh please never approach me, never try to approach  
 me again. I will not go back home till after the marriage.

But I do not hate you. I will always remember you and our  
 love however impossible that it should have continued.

My Love. Goodbye

PEIRINA.

**CHORUS**

(VERY HIGH AND STRONG ALMOST HYSTERICAL PITCH)

Down the crowded streets  
 The slime ridden, the fould holes of streets  
 Turning on an axis of utmost, of foul desecration

And the air like the fetid vapour of child death,  
 Ghill winter around the moon

Thumbs in my ears. O to take away the ...

Take away the...

And death not the reckless smile, nor the happy peregrination

But the foul foot smelling disease

That crowds the limbs

That pales the bones beyond the utmost

Most horrible

Similitude of death, the reckless stab in the brain

Aching resolve of the heart.

O this end. O this heart that has no purpose  
 but death.

O this end

MUSIC WAVERING, DAZED.

MUS 1

I climbed the church steps

And prayed in the sight of God,

"Strength. Give me strength or I will die."

And I prayed the Lord to forgive me

Looking into those farthest crevices ~~of being~~

Ribbing the Gothic darkness

And I sought among the darkness

O for the fair light, the simple light,

The first light,

The light of him who gave

And giving died and dying forgave.

But no light scratched a word in the darkness.

Only some pigeons scratched in the darkness.

And outside an old woman leaned her head against the wall

And I saw two children  
 Eating the head of a rat  
 And that night  
 A girl screamed and ~~fell dead~~ in the hall.

MUSIC

WOVEN INTO PASSAGE.

MUS 1

Darkness. Nor any stirring young dawn again.  
 Nightmare. O God I saw as it were  
 Peirina of the warm brown eyes  
 With a shudder of pain  
 Pull a sliver of flesh from her bleeding thighs

MUSIC

SHUDDERING

MUS 1

I walked down the foul streets  
 In the bewilderment of pain.  
 The rain had scattered new leaves  
 On the plain, each one like the curled  
 Brown body of a child slain  
 And the spire of the church in the pool of the sun  
 Made a gaping wound in the side of the dawn,  
 And daylight scattering it's fine white dust  
 Settled on the branches, choking the thrush.  
 I saw the city waking with a cold white grin  
 To the world of its creation of death and sin.  
 And I remembered my dreams of the sea.  
 Could they cover all this?  
 Could they set me free?  
 But as I walked that noon  
 Back and forth continually  
 By the river where the white houses



Dipped down to the dirty water,  
 Someone put his hand on my shoulder,  
 And turning I did not know him.

STRANGER Muselli?

MUS 2 Yes.

STRANGER Come with me.

MUS 2 What do you mean?

STRANGER Never mind what I mean.

MUS 2 I want to know what for.

STRANGER For your treason you filthy swine.

MUS 2 Who are you?

STRANGER Never mind who I am

MUS 2 Well you have the wrong man.

STRANGER O no! I have followed you. You can't fool me.

MUS 2 This is a trick.

STRANGER To catch a rotten traitor.

MUS 2 Who sent you?

STRANGER Just to see you squirm I will tell you.

(PAUSE) The commissioner, Paolo Grandizetti.

MUS 2 That dirty Fascist?

STRANGER Quiet fool or I'll kick you to a pulp.

MUS 1 I struck at him and turned and ran  
 But he fired and caught me in the leg.  
 There were several of course.  
 And they took me to a concrete hall.  
 Alternately they beat me with clubs  
 and filled me with dope  
 until, what does it matter, a week? ten days?  
 I signed a confession of guilt.

HEAVY VOICE

To be executed on the morning of \_\_\_\_\_ 1939

Francesco Muselli, Enemy of the state.

Signed: Paolo Grandizetti

MUSIC

~~RESOLUTION~~ AND SUFFERING. SOMETHING DEEP AND PAINFUL *SUSTAIN.*

MUSELLI 1

I am a wanderer.

A wanderer in confusion; Not with that central agency

That drives Davidson in a single direction,

Towards his peculiar substance,

But without purpose, blown like the leaf

Along the waves of the wind

Into the gathering light of <sup>also</sup> dawn.

I neither know nor want an end.

I only want to live.

~~Yet,~~ I wonder if it was good fortune

Or evil, twisting chance

That saved me from the guns

Of the deliverer, the mask-like, inhuman

Foes who destroyed my father.

For I was saved. Yes. I was saved.

In the darkest corner of my cell

I heard a voice like a hammer blow

Above my ears.

~~MUSELLI~~

VOICE 1

Muselli!

MUS 2

Here.

VOICE 1

Come!

SOUND

HEAVY DOOR OPENING B.G.

VOICE 1

Come!

MUS 2

I am here.

VOICE 2                    Francesco Muselli?

MUS 2                      Yes.

VOICE 2                    You are released the death penalty.

MUS 2                      Released...

VOICE 2                    Only the death penalty. You are a soldier  
of the Italian Army in the war of liberation.

MUS 2                      War? What .....war?

VOICE 2                    The war. The big war! We are at war Private Muselli.  
Think! You have the opportunity to win freedom with honour.  
Here is the guard who will take you to your new  
quarters. Goodbye.

MUSIC

BRIDGE

MUS 1

War! What did it mean to me?  
Watching the slaughter, indifferent,  
On the African desert  
The eyeless savagery of butting steel  
And shredding shells, until,  
I, with others like me,  
Farmers, Mechanics, Doctor's sons,  
Peddlers, second rate violinists,  
Surrendered at the first opportunity,  
I think to a single British trooper.  
What did it matter?

MUSIC

SUSTAIN

Strange how things work with us.  
Slowly, for the second time in my life,  
I began to awaken.  
Out of the twilight of hell,  
Only the hell this time of hate and violence,  
The mockery of the cruel god,

## 19.

I awoke to the love of laughter,  
 Speech, the familiar movement of friends  
 Found in a prison camp.  
 How strange that we should move  
 Transparently from a kind of sleep  
 Into the easy and beautiful response  
 To all things living and loving and moving,  
 Response to the delicate and the changeable  
 And the suffering and the happy  
 Minutes of our scene. Things  
 We had never been aware of before  
 Take on a new significance, develop  
 To gods in our imagination.  
 How can the dead or the unseen move again  
 Before our eyes? How  
 Does Spring rove in subtle fingers  
 Over the dead pale of the land  
 Until the rivers move again, sluggishly at first,  
 And the veins of the roots turn purple  
 Swelling into green and tender points  
 Of edgeless, irrepressible force,  
 And the sap hisses through the woven branches,  
 Until the whole earth starts, <sup>alive</sup> ~~awakened~~,  
 And hales the staring sun  
 In a chaos of colored plumes  
 And flags and trumpets,  
 Blazing like golden guerdons in the sun,  
 And rising up the slopes of the rain,  
 Startles the rivers of birds

To flow unerring through the echoing sky  
 MUSIC SOFT GROWING AGITATED.

MUS 1 I had to get away  
 I had to be free  
 When the war was over  
 I would go to England and .... (FADE.)

AUTHORITY 1 Mr. Muselli, we have received your application for  
 emigration to Canada. Now would you give us... (FADE)

AUTHORITY 2 Of course we realize your difficulty. Family wiped  
 out eh? Rotten luck. I'll see what I can do for you  
 of course ... (FADE)

MUS 1 It seemed impossible;  
 Two years of waiting  
 to hear

SOUND CRY OF SEAGULLS AND STEAM WHISTLE. NOISE OF CROWD.

MUS 1 The sounds of freedom  
 The old sea of my childhood  
 Running with the wind  
 And the great white birds  
 Turning up into the Atlantic blue.  
 To see, that coast of my dreams  
 Show its granite head through mist  
 Clearing and turning into  
 The sun, to ride

SOUND FROM INTERIOR OF TRAIN

MUS 1 Through a twisting land  
 As savage as the eyes that looked at it.

SOUND TRAIN OFF

I went to Ontario.

FARMER Ever picked fruit before?

MUS 1 No.

FARMER You don't look very strong to me.

(PAUSE) O, all right!

MUS 1 And worked my way across <sup>the prairie</sup> ~~to Manitoba,~~ to Saskatchewan.

FARMER Want t'work uh?

What kin y 'do? <sup>oh</sup> It den't matter. If y'kin  
hold a shovel y'got a job!

MUS 1 *But* It was no use.

I couldn't stay still.

The long shadows of an evening  
Haunted the ground where I stood.

O of another evening!

An evening that bled

Round tears from the moon,

Still moon! When I fled

Through a town to an empty room,

Empty! And a still, white letter shone in the gloom.

→ No, I had to move on on on

To the end of the tracks, where there were no tracks,

Where houses and hills

And rails and wires vanished,

Like a smile or a word or a painting

On the blank stare of mesmeric stone,

Where miles without thought or gesture

Fold like <sup>↑</sup>dreams

Into time, and time is the sun

In a marble eye, perceiving its own

~~Reflection~~  
~~Perception~~, There life is unmasked and unnamed.

And love the madness of the moon,

And I would stand there in it's beam

Until that madness froze me.

O Davidson! when I met you

How was I to know your origin

Do I know it now?

In a small cafe (FADE)

SOUND

SUBDUE D SOUNDS OF RESTAURANT.  
 CLINKING PLATES ETC.

DAVIDSON

New here ain't ya?

MUS 1

Yes.

DAV

Order of beef, Sally. Been here long?

MUS 1

Oh two weeks.

DAV

Two weeks hey?

MUS 1

I wanted to go North from here.

DAV

North from here? Aint much north of here.  
 (PAUSE)

You wouldn't be prospectin would ye?

MUS 1

No, I hadn't thought of that.

DAV

Yeh? Huh! Never prospected eh?

MUS 1

That's for gold?

DAV

Dem<sup>3</sup> right its for gold.  
 (PAUSE)

I could take you where you'd find gold.

MUS 1

Oh you're a prospector?

DAV

Prospected most of m'life.

MUS 1

And you would take me with you?

DAV

Oh now? Anxious eh? I don't know about that now.

I didn't say that.

MUS 1 I don't really care about the gold, you know.

DAV No? Ha! You bet you don't eh! We'll see.

We'll see.

MUS 1 Are you ..... going soon?

DAV Soon? well, that depends ~~on circumstances~~

Got to get a partner.

MUS 1 I'm stronger than I look.

DAV ~~We'll see.~~ <sup>Well</sup> We'll see.

MUSIC BRIDGE

MUS 1 We'll see!

The restlessness that was my life

Beginning in the crying warmth,

The flesh discovery of hands

And eyes, ends /

At a frozen waste; no tears

But breathlessness; no tales

But what the hidden river

Disgorges on the giant sea,

Mother of us all, cold, ancient gorgon

from whose splashing womb

We flash out like meteors

Into ~~large~~ nature.....

SOUND RIVER

DAV Hey! Get up!

MUS 1 My God I'm frozen!

DAV No wonder. Sleeping by the river all night.

MUS 1 Why have you changed so?

DAV Changed?

MUS 1 You think I'm going to steal your gold,



DAV Ha! No one's ever stolen my gold.  
~~And~~  
 And you won't either.

(PAUSE)

Let's get going.

MUS 1 Where? Where? Do we have to go somewhere?

DAV Gone bushwacky eh? Hurry up, we've gotta make  
 a raft.

MUS 1 Go. What foolishness  
~~to wander in this dismal place~~  
*around this place*  
 As though ~~we~~ were going somewhere.

MUSIC BRIDGE

SOUND RAFT BEING DRAGGED OVER STONES

DAV See why we're lucky ~~to have~~ t'have trees?  
 No trees no raft. Now hold onto that rope.  
 There. In she goes.

MUS 1 Where are we going?

DAV Thirty miles downriver, ~~to~~ Muselli, as I told you.

MUSIC TO RIVER SOUND

DAV (SHOUTING OVER RIVER SOUND) Hear that?

That's the rapids we got t'clear. Hang on boy!

SOUND UP

MUS We can't make it!

Look at those rocks!

DAV Hell. We'll jump those .

It's farther down.

Then you'll see something.

MUS Oh what madness

To hang onto a bit of wood

As though it were the last breath of us.

Peirina I see your tears in these blown waves,

You swell them. Your hand <sup>lifts them.</sup>

O Muselli, why did you come here? *Peirina Peirina*

The frozen grip of this land

Like a cold hand around your ~~vital~~ heart. . .

Why did you come here?

To see the streams charging like nightmares

Down the slopes of these granite cliffs

Flailing and flashing in the sunlight?

Here is no gentle world-awakening,

But the gallop of horse's hooves across an early field

Breaking the dew and the startled buttercups,

And the yell of savage birds

In the first moonlight.

Why did you come here?

For you have seen it, now,

That which you have brooded upon,

Like the distant boom of a gun,

*Or* The captured glint of the metal hill

High above the soundless fiord,

The tremendous agitation of life

Shaking its blood colored hair

In the singing or silent air.

SOUND

TERRIFIC ROAR OF CURRENT

DAV

~~Now, here's your chance Davy. Thought he'd fool me eh?~~

~~Didn't care about the gold hey? Well, he won't in a minute.~~

MUS 1

*(QUETLY)*

God, deliver me

From that which I had no notice of.

I speak in congealing words.

I have no strength  
But to face my annihilation

~~At the hands of this stranger fate,~~

I who thought I knew life,  
That man it was who refuted it,  
That <sup>it was</sup> ~~life~~ was simple and beautiful  
If only we let it free.  
That was my dream of the sea !

DAV

~~(SHOUTING) Frank ! Give me that rope, there, will ya ?~~

~~(TO HIMSELF) Now I've got him. Nothing for him to hold.~~

MUS 1

I, who had the vision of finding ~~original~~ beauty,  
Came here to see the original land,  
As it must have been, whirling,  
Naked and alone, in all its purity.  
O Peirina you showed me ! You knew !.  
But I could not listen.  
You were this, that which I see, now  
In the depths of terror.  
And I thought that was love.  
I thought that was beauty.

~~DAV~~

~~Alright Dave. Crawl back to him now. He's turned away.~~

~~Hurry.~~

MUS 1

God I place myself in your hands.  
My vision was a limited one,  
As limited as the sun.  
I am very small and know very little.  
Sinking beyond sight into the whirlpool of days  
And years and the ages of man, ~~near~~ the unknown.

DAV

He's standing up !

*Do Muzelli Sit down!  
you fool!*

MUS 1

Where are you ?

Why do you seem dark in my eyes ?

O frozen tears

Why do you stare at me ?

DAV

~~Now !!!~~

*MUSELLI ! Mu Era*

MUS 1

~~Oh !!~~

DAV

~~What ? He's gone !! No gold for you now, Frank.~~

~~..... Jesus !!!! I'm going to hit that rock !!~~

~~Its..... !!!~~

SOUND

ROAR OF RAPIDS. ~~DOWN TO~~

MUS 1

Peiriii i i i i i i i i ..... !!!

MUSIC

TO END.

