

ANOTHER DAY ON EARTH

TIM GRAVESTOCK

And from there those that lifted eyes could count Five mountain
ranges one behind the other Under the sunset far into Vermont

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A FEW WORDS TO BEGIN



This collection is not an exercise in photo-illustration, nor is it a book of poetry. The words and images were created independently of one another then married together to form a whole. It was never in my mind to reproduce any poem in its entirety, the extracts have been deliberately taken out of context to create a wider reaching work. I maintain great respect for the authors of these words and pray that they will not turn in their graves in response to my cavalier treatment of their work. I adhere to no religious faith.

ANOTHER DAY ON EARTH

It was Friday morning. A number of high-ranking space officials including Vasily Mishin and Boris Chertok flew to Baikonur to oversee final preparations for the first Soviet manned rocket launch in more than two years. In the mountains of Bolivia, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and his guerilla returned to their cache to find twenty-three tins of milk, almost half of their supply, were missing. 'Tinned milk is a great corrupter' he noted in his diary.

In England, in his rented shared kitchen in Kilburn, North London, Derek Bass used the last of the milk in his tea ... there was no sugar. The Daily Mail, left behind by another, lay on the table, open at page ten. 'Dianna Rigg To Quit The Avengers' it reported. He turned on the tatty transistor radio, it was playing the number one single 'Something Stupid'.

It was just another day on Earth.

18.25 Fairy Cross, Devon, England

I DIED for beauty, but was scarce
Adjusted in the tomb,
When one who died for truth was lain
In an adjoining room.



18.45 County Mayo, Eire

THEY knelt in the leaves
And eerily played
With the glittering things,
And were not afraid.
And when they went home
To hide in their burrow,
They took them along
To play with to-morrow.



18.45 Dali, Yunnan, China

"SISTER, do not raise my wrath.
I'd make you into mutton broth
As easily as kill a moth"

The sister raised her beaming eye
And looked on him indignantly
And sternly answered, "Only try!"



19.15 Roswell, New Mexico, USA

THE buzz-saw snarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.



20.45 County Mayo, Eire

“KIND words are more than coronets,”
She said, and wondering looked at me:
“It is the dead unhappy night,
and I must hurry home to tea.”



21.20 Phuket, Thailand

16

I DON'T know if you're alive or dead.
Can you on earth be sought,
Or only when the sunsets fade
Be mourned serenely in my thought?



17

00.00 Bran, Romania

ONE need not be a chamber to be haunted,
One need not be a house;
The brain has corridors surpassing
Material place.



02.15 Camden Town, London, England

WHEN it comes, the Landscape listens
Shadows hold their breath
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death



AND when she had thus said,
she turned herself back,
and saw Jesus standing,
and knew not that it was Jesus.



I decided then I should take a whole week
off,
be on the safe side,
just shut the computer down,
forget the whole damned silly
business
for awhile.

as I said, that was
yesterday.



THERE will be thunder then. Remember me.
Say ' She asked for storms.' The entire
world will turn the colour of crimson stone,
and your heart, as then, will turn to fire.



05.15 Chengdu, Sichuan, China

28

STRANGE to see that usual dark road paving wet
With shallow dim reflecting rain pools, looking
To north, where light all night stayed and dawn braving yet
Capella hung, above dark elms unshaking, no silence breaking,
And still to dawn night's ugliness owed no debt



29

07.10 Bedmond, Hertfordshire, England

‘O ELENOR, I am thy husband's head,
Who, sleeping on the stones of yonder tower,
Was 'reft of life by the accursèd duke!
A hirèd villain turn'd my sleep to death!



07.45 Kilburn, London, England

SO MANY stones have been thrown at me,
That I'm not frightened of them anymore,
And the pit has become a solid tower,
Tall among tall towers.



Acknowledgements

The texts on these pages have been extracted from the following poems:

P1 'Out, Out -' *Robert Frost*

P4 'I Died For Beauty' *Emily Dickinson*

P5 'Spoils of the Dead' *Robert Frost*

P6 'Brother And Sister' *Lewis Carroll*

P7 'Spoils of the Dead' *Robert Frost*

P8 'Echoes' *Lewis Carroll*

P9 'I don't know if you're alive or dead' *Anna Akhmatova*

P10 'One Need Not be a Chamber to be Haunted' *Emily Dickinson*

P11 'There's a Certain Slant of Light' *Emily Dickinson*

P12 'The Gospel according to St. John' 20:14

P13 'Goading the Muse' *Charles Bukowski*

P14 'You Will Hear Thunder' *Anna Akhmatova*

P15 'Going Out at Dawn' *Ivor Gurney*

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P16 'Fair Elenor' *William Blake*

P17 'Solitude' *Anna Akhmatova*

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