

The Challenge by Rich Norman © 2014

To know—and not to blink
The black jewel, truth as a knot
To swallow down, coughing back and choked
Bitter is the light, a crease of knotted black
Never to forget it, not to let it fade
But instead, to know and see, in light— the darkest place
Revealed without an echo
Lips but choked of voice
The silence has then named us
Our wicked honest curse
To know the wind will swallow
The breath of perfect rose
Spilt into the evening—
Then lost in silent still
The fragrance but an echo
Lost and never known
The blackest jewel of truth
Our promise... unreturned.

Crushed beneath the sadness
Hope's eternal weight
The promise of life's sweetness
And laughing bitter fate
Befallen twice to teach me
The weight and wicked hope
That there may be a reason
Or purpose but the rope.

In darkest blood twice bitter
Dried and choked in fact
Never to deny, never to hold back
So how does Godless light
Then shine into your heart—?—
Dark and stiff its fingers
Clenched tight to darkest black.

Never in pretending
Is happiness but found, to answer up a truth
With false and lying proud
Are honied words as fetters—
A curse is sweetest breath
Unless it comes to answer
What truth has lain to rest.

Now the blackest weight
Upturned and spilt to light
I will answer darkness
By pouring forth new light
To know the end will swallow
Release but naught, and leave
The empty curse again
—forgotten, not to grieve
That life will be but spoilt
A ruin without note
I spilt a silver answer
Before and into sound
The silver hope of mankind,
In suffering darkness found!

I have built a temple
Of stone and light and hue
Perfect are its towers
As crystal laughter spilt
Of diamond light and opal
Tears and laughter shine
Shimmering and rippled
Is the treasured sky
Filled with empty lightness
My sunny world unshorn
Laughter falling, spilling
Cut loose and tether freed
Shining and forgetting...never heavy weight
All the world is silver, azure flecks of day
Yellow golden warmth, and honied amber waves
The wheat and flax of living
Rippled fields of woe
Filling, filled, forgotten
—so is all we know.

And now I may begin
My happy life at last
To know that nothing matters
My own lot I may cast.

*It is the Godless who have created joy—
Where, if not from despair itself, would the need arise?*