

To S. Palmer and The Ancients;

O dear Samuel, I have, I fear, become as unto The1. Aroused by curiosity, I espy from my heavenly and innocent perch the goings-on of modern Man and am overcome with the rage that so often marked my earthly wanderings. I want to turn and flee in abject horror and yet cannot avert my gaze from the dark images Experience unfolds – transfixed by the banalities and hypocrisies of this current age. Must Humankind never hope for better?

*This man was hired to depress Art.*

Note that I once made this observation in a hastily scrawled annotation to the title page of the *Discourses* – that tome of tripe penned by the grand charlatan of portraiture, Reynolds. The Satanic abstractor, who grew fat and famous peddling the dullness of generalisation and calling it unique – a businessman masquerading as artist.

And what do we see today but exponentially more of the same? I would now alter this to read:

*These ARTISTS were hired to depress Art.*

For as it was the religious who killed Christ, so it is now the artists who are killing Art. To be infused with Prophecy was not, in our day, a prelude to the launch of a yet another confessional one-man show or the commissioning of some sterile documentary on Romanticism, replete with synthesised pizzicato strings being plucked endlessly on a computerised loop. No, Dear Palmer, once it was the due of the Artist to wield the hammers of Los, wrestle with the Infinite and TAME IT INTO SHAPE!

Mark this, Samuel: True Art has always been and will always remain a calling. So strong, in fact, is its Holy import, that even were the Artist to neglect his spiritual duty, the Imagination would deign to kidnap him and do as it wanted with the human instrument, regardless. Art is being possessed, not a means by which to accrue possessions.

But to this generation, Prophecy is a lark. A tattoo here, a piercing there, and – *voila!* – instant visionary. And yet you and I were derided by the aesthetic establishment throughout the course of our careers – THEY WERE OUR GREATEST ENEMY – slandering us as mad or, even worse, ignoring us! Too few of those donning the mantle of Art today could have borne such temporal struggles with the poetic resolve that you and I and the beloved Ancients exhibited. How did we manage? Because Belief alone, blessed Samuel, was sufficient bread to feed starving artists in ages past.

Today, though, we see Newtons everywhere – hunched over screens, on their laps and in their palms. And yet never will Technology be held accountable for diverting us from real Art. Such distraction, we are told, is not the result of Humankind being constrained to converse in “tweets”, to ignore the infinite Reality in favour of finite artifice, to reside in the fractious illusions of social media whilst lying to itself about *togetherness* and *interconnectivity* – rather the blame is conveniently placed on nebulous psychiatric aberrations bearing coldly mechanistic acronyms: ADHD, OCD, *et alia*.

Could you have ever believed, dear Palmer, that there are now those who would seek to diagnose Art and, in so doing, denude it of all potency? How comfortable these pretenders sit within arbitrary spectrums, feasting on pills, regarding Passion and Imagination as suspect! There are even some who would fashion me “bipolar” – for Prophecy to them is palatable only if it can be negated through medication. *Relax, everyone*, they intone with misleading calm, *there is no such thing as God. There is no Prophecy, there are no Angels, there is no Art. All just a bit of madness. Now, go off to Westfield and buy some more shit you do not need.*

Yet somehow, there I remain, still on their bookshelves – preserved, I presume, because of Huxley and his mescaline.

Such are the visions I receive when I from Eternity reincarnate myself to the ratio of the senses five. I wonder, Beloved Palmer and the Blessed Ancients, if you have witnessed the same since from your mundane shells you flew?

Incidentally, did you know that the city of London, capital of a nation whose unofficial anthem is composed entirely from my Prophecy, still – nearly two centuries on – has neither found the time nor the resources to provide myself and my angel Catherine Sophia with a proper grave marker?

And yet how little this means when I consider the words of our Saviour to His disciples: *If the world hates you, know that it hated me first.*

I remain your eternal Friend,

Wm. Blake