

*chris hall*

a saga

## a saga

arriving at

    a quiet town  
set in a harsh landscape  
    quiet yet  
    along th cobblistones  
a sinistral tread

giving nothing  
nothingaway in th face v  
    oblique enquiries  
profferd offhand  
by th tired investigator  
skeptickl still  
though not yet  
    totally cynicl

bearing in mind  
all th portents  
v global disaster  
conflict across continents  
irrisistabl pandemics  
th slant v th sunlight  
th remnants v moonshine  
left on th pavement

*scorch*

*spectr*

*came there then*

nd as they ponder  
nd shake their heads  
at th snapshot framed  
by th palm v th hand  
up there by th watchtower  
nd down by th brimmingpool

all will be noted  
noticed nd noted

*scorch*

*spectr*

*came there then*

*bereft*

*berated*

*came there when* noted n codified

given substance  
by iteration  
endorsement  
tokens v proof

*there nd then*

*nd there again*

*pallid perhaps*

*without n when*

*scorch n spectr*

*came there then*

*came then glad cries came skin nd then*

*came shriek, glad cries, scorch skin nd then*

*shudderd, lessend, shudderd again*

*spectr*  
*spectr*

*came there when*  
*scorch nd screech n unsurmount*  
*n generation never t mean*

i would be there      *masque, your horoscope or ballad*  
where th silkie came ashore  
plucking flaked scales from grey sand  
nd asking questions v th ferryman

i would be there  
(baphomet or whatever)  
traces v ash n dizzy perspiration

sideswipd  
sidekickt  
swallowtaild

*having th measure v daybreak*  
*slightly deaf n aching at th edge*

fetch th stool where once was firegate  
fetch th remains

th brickbats nd th pavingstone  
them as be

unblest by hearsay      pardoner's tales

*nd from stretcht shades  
stark screen n shaft  
shaft nd screen n sudden shudda  
screen nd shaft nd shudda'd shade  
th notion stirs*

*an abstract vengeance  
nameless, swift nd undeterred*

*carbine  
crack  
th barest thud*

*nd water fleckt with just a hint v scarlet  
closing over, closing in*

*why're these creatures coming t this wedding  
v th bedevil'd bride n th brutal groom?  
why do they stand twixt pulpit font  
in th gangway t th altarpiece  
in eyeshot v avatars*

*these sires nd sirens  
v silverscreen banaliti*

*have they not heard  
in their harbours nd havens  
th high priests v barbari  
soon t return  
from their foxtrot pursuits  
sanguinary lustlobes  
slaughter-sated  
full o frenzy  
from th blood v th cubbing?*

*ay soon t return  
stealthi by nightlight*

*carouse consumed  
bearing shardlowd heads  
n bits v insignia?*

so com away outta there  
telltale Lucifer  
suckld in miracl  
fatherd in flame;  
com away outta there  
spawnd in vernacula  
augerd by oracl  
summn'd by name

*nd at th pierrot point  
th nadir strikes:  
th nadir strikes:*

hex  
handshake  
transubstantiation

*strikes you at last  
nd again at length*

here is th tale  
v th earthli nurse  
who siezed th merchild  
from th mother by th rockpool  
ignoring th howls  
n th torment v breachbreak  
her ganglions aflame  
with rupture nd loss

siezd it n scuttld  
in t th hinterland  
at last possessd  
v a sentient being  
ready t recompense  
all those years  
v barren disappointment

an infant unclutterd  
tabula rasa  
by line or legitimaci

*nd this be th legend  
v a tidal creature  
riding th heavy waves  
on th salt surge nd th skerri spray  
hearing from th high winds*

*v th theft v th new pup  
from th shelter v th stricken mate  
nd her waking fate  
in th blindness v her anguish  
veering who knows where  
by a devious route on an alien shore*

still they spy her  
wandering promontories  
lurking by a late casino  
or holding out hope  
from an upstairs casement

nd yet they tell  
v th noctal visitation  
t th earthli nurse as there she sits  
nd sings her song by lilliwean  
v th grumliguest with his seabright eyes  
nd how he told v th summer's day  
when th sun shines bright on every stane

*I'll com nd fetch*

*my littl young son*

*nd teach him how*

i saw th flare *t swim th faem*

cascade beyond th river

th eventide watchers

nd th nameless riders

that passed on th sand

*vencherin in t th dark*

*there t find*

*aids t struggl*

*something t celebrate*

*vencherin in*

*no holds barr'd*

*we havin taken*

*(ay havin taken)*

*over th years*

*helluva hammerin*

*bit v a battering*



*vencherin in*  
*(heyho; crackt old man*  
*no more th begginbowl*  
*no more th garthbucket)*  
*seein about y*  
*nought but collaps*  
*collaps nd calumni*

th women wi pseudonyms  
th men in th trenchcoats

overseers:  
friends v th bailiff

*vencherin in*  
*brave-manner standing*  
*stand no cumuppance*  
*stand f no messin*

fear no fear  
no pain  
(ay no  
fear'd o th pain  
tho not th painful entiti)

sudden: none  
come crashing down  
say it again: come crawling down  
thru bric a brac n nittigritti  
flanking death  
flanking mebbe  
th death v th firstborn

left here waiting  
waiting n wanting

knowing well  
knowing full well  
    that they have given  
    (yes they have given)  
th final decision  
t th creeps with th cashstacks  
    this woman downgraydid  
    that man dispenst with

nd y think  
n underneath y think  
all this calligraphi: all this f nothing

*nd when you stepping toucht  
just th curve of it  
when you*

*stepping toucht*

*continents*

*whale songs*

*n when you came upon me  
littl marauder*

*when you came upon me deft nd in earshot  
your heart nd my awakening*

*finally collided*

*somewhere beyond*

*th far vista*

*v an indeterminate planet*

nd we will bear witness  
all bear witness  
t brimstone nights  
nd halcyon days  
mayhem advancing  
seven steps down from th sidewalk

seepage  
camouflage  
terracotta walls

nd in th peaceful distance  
we will hear  
certain philharmonies

*job: a dancinmask*  
*brahms: a german requiem*

nd in th streets v avalon th aftermath  
nd waiting round th corner  
th same old thieves

*i psychopathi*  
*take thee hysteria*  
*t my bedevil'd bride*  
*t polish th chamber*  
*n burnish th barrels*

nd you shall marry  
a gunner good  
n a right fine gunner  
I'm sure he'll be

*t prime th powder*  
*nd finger th trigga*



n though i have  
grave doubts  
as t th veracti  
v many of  
th entries in my pocketbook

i would ask      *grief*  
                         *gwether*  
                         *wetherever*

that you might refer them  
to somesuch  
    nonesuch  
        salient facts  
        historical details  
        matters mythological

nd as th last approaches  
either by stealth  
or in th glare  
v th discardid footlight

it must be decided  
whether exist  
specific acts  
f which there can be  
no chance v reparation  
    restitution

given th benefit      v absolution  
                         resolution

n th final conclusion  
v all your enquiries

nd in those cases            indicative  
   accusative  
v unwarranted homicide  
th destruction v childhood  
can there be  
not even  
th slightest possibiliti v            reminiscence  
   reconciliation  
  
f if it transpires  
that these things be  
   not so  
we will arrive  
at th place v departure    separate still  
   none th clearer  
   never th wiser  
as t th conundrum  
   v what is what  
   n who is whom  
   in this plot  
   schema  
   scheme v things  
  
not least upon your returning  
will all be hidden  
    find eyes in shadow  
    broken glass

n my vengeance shall be  
that there will be no vengeance  
                    none v your traces  
                    scratcht upon me

i will not wear  
your dirty undergarments  
or your wig

given th accidental vagaries  
v capricious inevitabiliti

                    you will find me  
(try as you might)  
                    at length made narrativ  
                                    parabl'd  
                                    anthemised

older now:  
older though

                    given th antecedents

                    never th lesser  
                    (later or lesser)

vivid memries  
fading with th night  
rising with th tide

*scorch*

*spectr*

*came there when*

*bereft*

*berated*

*came there then*

*pallid perhaps*

*without n when*

*shudderd, lessend, shudderd again*

*spectr*

*spectr*

*then again*

in th end

it is th music that I will notice

magic bifer dawn blastid

th music

merciful heavens

nor yet th marigold

wretched nd scintillating

th woman's weird voice

nd not that second or that third xplosion