

DESCENT

Douglas Tisdall

As I wander through the ruins
Of my cave, joy comes only
When the damp vision on the wall
Flickers. In the frenzy of words
I could believe it was worthwhile,
Though I stand chilled,
Knowing each phrase to be a tombstone
In a marble city.

This descent into the grave
Must be taken, or I die,
Though perhaps in creation
I shall be demented anyway.

On the way down
Traditions are splintered
And poems severed in depression
From the base of my skull.

My eyes bleed
In the dark tower
While the serpent wind
Coils a labyrinth around me
And suddenly slips away.

With what strange discontent
I lie on the ribs of the whale,
Restless in the gallows
Of Stonehenge's ruins
With my poems scattered about me
Like broken slabs of marble!