

These Lines

*Verse, poesy, and gestures various:
collected seasonally.*

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Daisy

*"Plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes,
Nunc..."*

—Catullus.

You were my playmate by the sea.
We swam together.
Your girl's body had no breasts.

We found prawns among the rocks;
We liked to feel the sun and to do nothing;
In the evening we played games with the others.

It made me glad to be by you.

Sometimes I kissed you,
And you were always glad to kiss me;
But I was afraid—I was only fourteen.

And I had quite forgotten you,
You and your name.

To-day I pass through the streets.
She who touches my arm and talks with me
Is—who knows?—Helen of Sparta,
Dryope, Laodamia....

And there are you
A whore in Oxford Street.

&

Richard Aldington

Childhood

I

The bitterness, the misery, the wretchedness of childhood
Put me out of love with God.
I can't believe in God's goodness;
I can believe
In many avenging gods.
Most of all I believe
In gods of bitter dullness,
Cruel local gods
Who seared my childhood.

II

I've seen people put
A chrysalis in a match-box,
"To see," they told me, "what sort of moth would come."
But when it broke its shell
It slipped and stumbled and fell about its prison
And tried to climb to the light
For space to dry its wings.

That's how I was.
Somebody found my chrysalis
And shut it in a match-box.
My shrivelled wings were beaten,
Shed their colours in dusty scales
Before the box was opened
For the moth to fly.

And then it was too late,
Because the beauty a child has,
And the beautiful things it learns before its birth,
Were shed, like moth-scales, from me.

III

I hate that town;
I hate the town I lived in when I was little;
I hate to think of it.
There were always clouds, smoke, rain
In that dingy little valley.
It rained; it always rained.
I think I never saw the sun until I was nine—
And then it was too late;
Everything's too late after the first seven years.

That long street we lived in

Was duller than a drain
And nearly as dingy.
There were the big College
And the pseudo-Gothic town-hall.
There were the sordid provincial shops—
The grocer's, and the shops for women,
The shop where I bought transfers,
And the piano and gramophone shop
Where I used to stand
Staring at the huge shiny pianos and at the pictures
Of a white dog looking into a gramophone.

How dull and greasy and grey and sordid it was!
On wet days—it was always wet—
I used to kneel on a chair
And look at it from the window.

The dirty yellow trams
Dragged noisily along
With a clatter of wheels and bells
And a humming of wires overhead.
They threw up the filthy rain-water from the hollow lines
And then the water ran back
Full of brownish foam bubbles.

There was nothing else to see—
It was all so dull—
Except a few grey legs under shiny black umbrellas
Running along the grey shiny pavements;
Sometimes there was a waggon
Whose horses made a strange loud hollow sound
With their hoofs
Through the silent rain.

And there was a grey museum
Full of dead birds and dead insects and dead animals
And a few relics of the Romans—dead also.
There was the sea-front,
A long asphalt walk with a bleak road beside it,
Three piers, a row of houses,
And a salt dirty smell from the little harbour.

I was like a moth—
Like one of those grey Emperor moths
Which flutter through the vines at Capri.
And that damned little town was my match-box,
Against whose sides I beat and beat
Until my wings were torn and faded, and dingy
As that damned little town.

IV

At school it was just dull as that dull High Street.
They taught me pothooks—
I wanted to be alone, although I was so little,
Alone, away from the rain, the dingyness, the dullness,
Away somewhere else—

The town was dull;
The front was dull;
The High Street and the other street were dull—
And there was a public park, I remember,
And that was damned dull too,
With its beds of geraniums no one was allowed to pick,
And its clipped lawns you weren't allowed to walk on,
And the gold-fish pond you mustn't paddle in,
And the gate made out of a whale's jaw-bones,
And the swings, which were for "Board-School children,"
And its gravel paths.

And on Sundays they rang the bells,
From Baptist and Evangelical and Catholic churches.
They had the Salvation Army.
I was taken to a High Church;
The parson's name was Mowbray,
"Which is a good name but he thinks too much of it—"
That's what I heard people say.

I took a little black book
To that cold, grey, damp, smelling church,
And I had to sit on a hard bench,
Wriggle off it to kneel down when they sang psalms,
And wriggle off it to kneel down when they prayed—
And then there was nothing to do
Except to play trains with the hymn-books.

There was nothing to see,
Nothing to do,
Nothing to play with,
Except that in an empty room upstairs
There was a large tin box
Containing reproductions of the Magna Charta,
Of the Declaration of Independence
And of a letter from Raleigh after the Armada.
There were also several packets of stamps,
Yellow and blue Guatemala parrots,
Blue stags and red baboons and birds from Sarawak,
Indians and Men-of-war
From the United States,
And the green and red portraits
Of King Francobollo
Of Italy.

V

I don't believe in God.
I do believe in avenging gods
Who plague us for sins we never sinned
But who avenge us.

That's why I'll never have a child,
Never shut up a chrysalis in a match-box
For the moth to spoil and crush its bright colours,
Beating its wings against the dingy prison-wall.

&

Richard Aldington

A Gargoyle on Notre Dame

With angel's wings and brutish-human form,
Weathered with centuries of sun and storm,
He crouches yonder on the gallery wall,
Monstrous, superb, indifferent, cynical:
And all the pulse of Paris cannot stir
Her one immutable philosopher.

&

Edmund Kemper Broadus

Clouds

Down the blue night the unending columns press
 In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,
 Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow
Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.
Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,
 And turn with profound gesture vague and slow,
 As who would pray good for the world, but know
Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.
 I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as these,
In wise majestic melancholy train,
 And watch the moon, and the still-raging seas,
And men, coming and going on the earth.

&

Rupert Brooke

The Way That Lovers Use

The way that lovers use is this;
They bow, catch hands, with never a word,
And their lips meet, and they do kiss,
—So I have heard.

They queerly find some healing so,
And strange attainment in the touch;
There is a secret lovers know,
—I have read as much.

And theirs no longer joy nor smart,
Changing or ending, night or day;
But mouth to mouth, and heart on heart,
—So lovers say.

&

Rupert Brooke

One Day

Today I have been happy. All the day
 I held the memory of you, and wove
Its laughter with the dancing light o' the spray,
 And sowed the sky with tiny clouds of love,
And sent you following the white waves of sea,
 And crowned your head with fancies, nothing worth,
Stray buds from that old dust of misery,
 Being glad with a new foolish quiet mirth.

So lightly I played with those dark memories,
Just as a child, beneath the summer skies,
 Plays hour by hour with a strange shining stone,
For which (he knows not) towns were fire of old,
 And love has been betrayed, and murder done,
And great kings turned to a little bitter mould.

&

Rupert Brooke

Passing Near

I had not till today been sure,
 But now I know:
Dead men and women come and go
 Under the pure
 Sequestering snow.

And under the autumnal fern
 And carmine bush,
Under the shadow of a thrush,
 They move and learn;
 And in the rush

Of all the mountain-brooks that wake
 With upward fling
To brush and break the loosening cling
 Of ice, they shake
 The air with Spring!

I had not till today been sure,
 But now I know:
Dead youths and maidens come and go
 Below the lure
 And undertow

Of cities, under every street
 Of empty stress,
Or heart of an adulteress:
 Each loud retreat
 Of lovelessness.

For only by the stir we make
 In passing near
Are we confused, and cannot hear
 The ways they take
 Certain and clear.

Today I happened in a place
 Where all around
Was silence; until, underground,
 I heard a pace,
 A happy sound.

And people whom I there could see
 Tenderly smiled,
While under a wood of silent, wild
 Antiquity
 Wandered a child,

Leading his mother by the hand,
Happy and slow,
Teaching his mother where to go
Under the snow.
Not even now I understand—
I only know.

&

Witter Bynner

The Whole White World

The whole white world is ours,
and the world, purple with rose-bays,
bays, bush on bush,
group, thicket, hedge and tree,
dark islands in a sea
of grey-green olive or wild white-olive,
cut with the sudden cypress shafts,
in clusters, two or three,
or with one slender, single cypress-tree.

Slid from the hill,
as crumbling snow-peaks slide,
citron on citron fill
the valley, and delight
waits till our spirits tire
of forest, grove and bush
and purple flower of the laurel-tree.

Yet not one wearies,
joined is each to each
in happiness complete
with bush and flower:
ours is the wind-breath
at the hot noon-hour,
ours is the bee's soft belly
and the blush of the rose-petal,
lifted, of the flower.

&

H. D.

Pursuit

What do I care
that the stream is trampled,
the sand on the stream-bank
still holds the print of your foot:
the heel is cut deep.
I see another mark
on the grass ridge of the bank—
it points toward the wood-path.
I have lost the third
in the packed earth.

But here
a wild-hyacinth stalk is snapped:
the purple buds—half ripe—
show deep purple
where your heel pressed.

A patch of flowering grass,
low, trailing—
you brushed this:
the green stems show yellow-green
where you lifted—turned the earth-side
to the light:
this and a dead leaf-spine,
split across,
show where you passed.

You were swift, swift!
here the forest ledge slopes—
rain has furrowed the roots.
Your hand caught at this;
the root snapped under your weight.

I can almost follow the note
where it touched this slender tree
and the next answered—
and the next.

And you climbed yet further!
you stopped by the dwarf-cornel—
whirled on your heels,
doubled on your track.

This is clear—
you fell on the downward slope,
you dragged a bruised thigh—you limped—
you clutched this larch.

Did your head, bent back,
search further—

clear through the green leaf-moss
of the larch branches?

Did you clutch,
stammer with short breath and gasp:
wood-daemons grant life—
give life—I am almost lost.

For some wood-daemon
has lightened your steps.
I can find no trace of you
in the larch-cones and the underbrush.

&

H. D.

Sea Gods

I

They say there is no hope—
sand—drift—rocks—rubble of the sea—
the broken hulk of a ship,
hung with shreds of rope,
pallid under the cracked pitch.

They say there is no hope
to conjure you—
no whip of the tongue to anger you—
no hate of words
you must rise to refute.

They say you are twisted by the sea,
you are cut apart
by wave-break upon wave-break,
that you are misshapen by the sharp rocks,
broken by the rasp and after-rasp.

That you are cut, torn, mangled,
torn by the stress and beat,
no stronger than the strips of sand
along your ragged beach.

II

But we bring violets,
great masses—single, sweet,
wood-violets, stream-violets,
violets from a wet marsh.

Violets in clumps from hills,
tufts with earth at the roots,
violets tugged from rocks,
blue violets, moss, cliff, river-violets.

Yellow violets' gold,
burnt with a rare tint—
violets like red ash
among tufts of grass.

We bring deep-purple
bird-foot violets.

We bring the hyacinth-violet,
sweet, bare, chill to the touch—
and violets whiter than the in-rush
of your own white surf.

III

For you will come,
you will yet haunt men in ships,
you will trail across the fringe of strait
and circle the jagged rocks.

You will trail across the rocks
and wash them with your salt,
you will curl between sand-hills—
you will thunder along the cliff—
break—retreat—get fresh strength—
gather and pour weight upon the beach.

You will draw back,
and the ripple on the sand-shelf
will be witness of your track.
O privet-white, you will paint
the lintel of wet sand with froth.

You will bring myrrh-bark
and drift laurel-wood from hot coasts!
when you hurl high—high—
we will answer with a shout.

For you will come,
you will come,
you will answer our taut hearts,
you will break the lie of men's thoughts,
and cherish and shelter us.

&

H. D.

Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service

Look, look, master, here comes two religious caterpillars.

—The Jew of Malta.

Polyphiloprogenitive
The sapient sutlers of the Lord
Drift across the window-panes.
In the beginning was the Word.

In the beginning was the Word.
Superfetation of τό ἔν,
And at the mensual turn of time
Produced enervate Origen.

A painter of the Umbrian school
Designed upon a gesso ground
The nimbus of the Baptized God.
The wilderness is cracked and browned

But through the water pale and thin
Still shine the unoffending feet
And there above the painter set
The Father and the Paraclete.

.

The sable presbyters approach
The avenue of penitence;
The young are red and pustular
Clutching piaculative pence.

Under the penitential gates
Sustained by staring Seraphim
Where the souls of the devout
Burn invisible and dim.

Along the garden-wall the bees
With hairy bellies pass between
The staminate and pistilate,
Blest office of the epicene.

Sweeney shifts from ham to ham
Stirring the water in his bath.
The masters of the subtle schools
Are controversial, polymath.

&

T. S. Eliot

Approach

Only this morning I sang of roses;
Now I see with a swift stare,
The city forcing up through the air
Black cubes close piled and some half-crumbling over.

My roses are battered into pulp:
And there swells up in me
Sudden desire for something changeless,
Thrusts of sunless rock
Unmelted by hissing wheels.

&

John Gould Fletcher

Transposition

I am blown like a leaf
Hither and thither.
The city about me
Resolves itself into sound of many voices,
Rustling and fluttering,
Leaves shaken by the breeze.

A million forces ignore me, I know not why,
I am drunken with it all.
Suddenly I feel an immense will
Stored up hitherto and unconscious till this instant.
Projecting my body
Across a street, in the face of all its traffic.

I dart and dash:
I do not know why I go.
These people watch me,
I yield them my adventure.

Lazily I lounge through labyrinthine corridors,
And with eyes suddenly altered,
I peer into an office I do not know,
And wonder at a startled face that penetrates my own.

Roses—pavement—
I will take all this city away with me—
People—uproar—the pavement jostling and flickering—
Women with incredible eyelids:
Dandies in spats:
Hard-faced throng discussing me—I know them all.
I will take them away with me,
I insistently rob them of their essence,
I must have it all before night,
To sing amid my green.

I glide out unobservant
In the midst of the traffic
Blown like a leaf
Hither and thither,
Till the city resolves itself into a clamour of voices,
Crying hollowly, like the wind rustling through the forest,
Against the frozen housefronts:
Lost in the glitter of a million movements.

&

John Gould Fletcher

Houses

Evening and quiet:
a bird trills in the poplar trees
behind the house with the dark green door
across the road.

Into the sky,
the red earthenware and the galvanised iron chimneys
thrust their cowls.
The hoot of the steamers on the Thames is plain.

No wind;
the trees merge, green with green;
a car whirs by;
footsteps and voices take their pitch
in the key of dusk,
far-off and near, subdued.

Solid and square to the world
the houses stand,
their windows blocked with venetian blinds.

Nothing will move them.

&

F. S. Flint

Why Do Ye Call the Poet Lonely

Why do ye call the poet lonely,
 Because he dreams in lonely places?
He is not desolate, but only
 Sees, where ye cannot, hidden faces.

&

Archibald Lampman

Stravinsky's Three Pieces "Grotesques", for String Quartet

First Movement

Thin-voiced, nasal pipes
Drawing sound out and out
Until it is a screeching thread,
Sharp and cutting, sharp and cutting,
It hurts.
Whee-e-e!
Bump! Bump! Tong-ti-bump!
There are drums here,
Banging,
And wooden shoes beating the round, grey stones
Of the market-place.
Whee-e-e!
Sabots slapping the worn, old stones,
And a shaking and cracking of dancing bones;
Clumsy and hard they are,
And uneven,
Losing half a beat
Because the stones are slippery.
Bump-e-ty-tong! Whee-e-e! Tong!
The thin Spring leaves
Shake to the banging of shoes.
Shoes beat, slap,
Shuffle, rap,
And the nasal pipes squeal with their pigs' voices,
Little pigs' voices
Weaving among the dancers,
A fine white thread
Linking up the dancers.
Bang! Bump! Tong!
Petticoats,
Stockings,
Sabots,
Delirium flapping its thigh-bones;
Red, blue, yellow,
Drunkenness steaming in colours;
Red, yellow, blue,
Colours and flesh weaving together,
In and out, with the dance,
Coarse stuffs and hot flesh weaving together.
Pigs' cries white and tenuous,
White and painful,
White and—

Bump!
Tong!

Second Movement

Pale violin music whiffs across the moon,
A pale smoke of violin music blows over the moon,
Cherry petals fall and flutter,
And the white Pierrot,
Wreathed in the smoke of the violins,
Splashed with cherry petals falling, falling,
Claws a grave for himself in the fresh earth
With his finger-nails.

Third Movement

An organ growls in the heavy roof-groins of a church,
It wheezes and coughs.
The nave is blue with incense,
Writhing, twisting,
Snaking over the heads of the chanting priests.
 'Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine';
The priests whine their bastard Latin
And the censers swing and click.
The priests walk endlessly
Round and round,
Droning their Latin
Off the key.
The organ crashes out in a flaring chord,
And the priests hitch their chant up half a tone.
 'Dies illa, dies irae,
 Calamitatis et miseriae,
 Dies magna et amara valde.'
A wind rattles the leaded windows.
The little pear-shaped candle flames leap and flutter,
 'Dies illa, dies irae;'
The swaying smoke drifts over the altar,
 'Calamitatis et miseriae;'
The shuffling priests sprinkle holy water,
 'Dies magna et amara valde;'
And there is a stark stillness in the midst of them
Stretched upon a bier.
His ears are stone to the organ,
His eyes are flint to the candles,
His body is ice to the water.
Chant, priests,
Whine, shuffle, genuflect,

He will always be as rigid as he is now
Until he crumbles away in a dust heap.
 'Lacrymosa dies illa,
 Qua resurget ex favilla
 Judicandus homo reus.'
Above the grey pillars the roof is in darkness.

&

Amy Lowell

To Whistler, American

On the loan exhibit of his paintings at the Tate Gallery.

You also, our first great,
Had tried all ways;
Tested and pried and worked in many fashions,
And this much gives me heart to play the game.

Here is a part that's slight, and part gone wrong,
And much of little moment, and some few
Perfect as Dürer!

"In the Studio" and these two portraits,¹ if I had my choice!
And then these sketches in the mood of Greece?

You had your searches, your uncertainties,
And this is good to know—for us, I mean,
Who bear the brunt of our America
And try to wrench her impulse into art.

You were not always sure, not always set
To hiding night or tuning "symphonies";
Had not one style from birth, but tried and pried
And stretched and tampered with the media.

You and Abe Lincoln from that mass of dolts
Show us there's chance at least of winning through.

&

Ezra Pound

¹ "Brown and Gold—de Race." and "Grenat et Or—Le Petit Cardinal."

The Jester

I have known great gold Sorrows:
Majestic Griefs shall serve me watchfully
Through the slow-pacing morrows:
I have knelt hopeless where sea-echoing
Dim endless voices cried of suffering
Vibrant and far in broken litany:
Where white magnolia and tuberose hauntingly
Pulsed their regretful sweets along the air—
All things most tragical, most fair,
Have still encompassed me...

I dance where in the screaming market-place
The dusty world that watches buys and sells,
With painted merriment upon my face,
Whirling my bells,
Thrusting my sad soul to its mockery.

I have known great gold Sorrows...
Shall they not mock me, these pain-haunted ones,
If it shall make them merry, and forget
That grief shall rise and set
With the unchanging, unforgetting suns
Of their relentless morrows?

&

Margaret Widdemer

Love and the Bird

The moments passed as at a play,
I had the wisdom love can bring,
I had my share of mother wit;
And yet for all that I could say,
And though I had her praise for it,
And she seemed happy as a king,
Love's moon was withering away.

Believing every word I said
I praised her body and her mind,
Till pride had made her eyes grow bright,
And pleasure made her cheeks grow red,
And vanity her footfall light;
Yet we, for all that praise, could find
Nothing but darkness overhead.

I sat as silent as a stone
And knew, though she'd not said a word,
That even the best of love must die,
And had been savagely undone
Were it not that love, upon the cry
Of a most ridiculous little bird,
Threw up in the air his marvellous moon.

&

William Butler Yeats

The Mountain Tomb

Pour wine and dance, if manhood still have pride,
Bring roses, if the rose be yet in bloom;
The cataract smokes on the mountain side.
Our Father Rosicross is in his tomb.

Pull down the blinds, bring fiddle and clarionet,
Let there be no foot silent in the room,
Nor mouth with kissing nor the wine unwet.
Our Father Rosicross is in his tomb.

In vain, in vain; the cataract still cries,
The everlasting taper lights the gloom,
All wisdom shut into its onyx eyes.
Our Father Rosicross sleeps in his tomb.

&

William Butler Yeats

Contributors' Notes

Richard Aldington

Richard Aldington (8 July 1892 – 27 July 1962), born Edward Godfree Aldington, was an English writer and poet, and an early associate of the Imagist movement. He was married to the poet Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) from 1911 to 1938.

Edmund Kemper Broadus

Edmund Kemper Broadus (27 August 1876 – 17 December 1936) was an university professor and author.

Rupert Brooke

Rupert Chawner Brooke (3 August 1887 – 23 April 1915) was an English poet known for his idealistic war sonnets written during the First World War, especially "The Soldier". He was also known for his boyish good looks, which were said to have prompted the Irish poet W. B. Yeats to describe him as "the handsomest young man in England".

Witter Bynner

Harold Witter Bynner, also known by the pen name Emanuel Morgan, (August 10, 1881 – June 1, 1968) was an American poet and translator. He was known for his long residence in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and association with other literary figures there.

H. D.

H. D. (Hilda Doolittle, September 10, 1886 – September 27, 1961) was an American poet, novelist, and memoirist, associated with the early 20th century avant-garde Imagist group of poets, including Ezra Pound and Richard Aldington. She published under the pen name H.D.

T. S. Eliot

Thomas Stearns Eliot OM (26 September 1888 – 4 January 1965) was a poet, essayist, publisher, playwright, literary critic and editor. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, to a prominent Boston Brahmin family, he moved to England in 1914 at the age of 25 and went on to settle, work and marry there. He became a British subject in 1927 at the age of 39, subsequently renouncing his American citizenship.

John Gould Fletcher

John Gould Fletcher (January 3, 1886 – May 10, 1950) was an Imagist poet (the first Southern poet to win the Pulitzer Prize), author and authority on modern painting. He was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, to a socially prominent family. After attending Phillips Academy, Andover Fletcher went on to Harvard University from 1903 to 1907, when he dropped out shortly after his father's death.

F. S. Flint

Frank Stuart Flint (19 December 1885 – 28 February 1960) was an English poet and translator who was a prominent member of the Imagist group. Ford Madox Ford called him "one of the greatest men and one of the beautiful spirits of the country".

Archibald Lampman

Archibald Lampman FRSC (17 November 1861 – 10 February 1899) was a Canadian poet. "He has been described as 'the Canadian Keats;' and he is perhaps the most outstanding exponent of the Canadian school of nature poets."The Canadian Encyclopedia says that he is "generally considered the finest of Canada's late 19th-century poets in English."

Amy Lowell

Amy Lawrence Lowell (February 9, 1874 – May 12, 1925) was an American poet of the imagist school from Brookline, Massachusetts. She posthumously won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1926.

Ezra Pound

Ezra Weston Loomis Pound (30 October 1885 – 1 November 1972) was an expatriate American poet and critic, a major figure in the early modernist poetry movement, and a fascist sympathizer. His contribution to poetry began with his development of Imagism, a movement derived from classical Chinese and Japanese poetry, stressing clarity, precision, concision, and economy of language. His works include *Ripostes* (1912), *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) and the unfinished 120-section epic, *The Cantos* (1917–1969).

Margaret Widdemer

Margaret Widdemer (September 30, 1884 – July 14, 1978) was an American poet and novelist. She won the Pulitzer Prize (known then as the Columbia University Prize) in 1919 for her collection *The Old Road to Paradise*, shared with Carl Sandburg for *Cornhuskers*.

William Butler Yeats

William Butler Yeats (13 June 1865 – 28 January 1939) was an Irish poet and one of the foremost figures of 20th-century literature. A pillar of the Irish literary establishment, he helped to found the Abbey Theatre, and in his later years served two terms as a Senator of the Irish Free State. He was a driving force behind the Irish Literary Revival along with Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn and others.

Submissions

All submissions welcome.

Email up to 5 works per reading period to:
tuvell@outlook.com

Spring reading ends February 1, Summer ends May 1, Fall ends August 1, and Winter ends November 1.

Simultaneous submissions are fine, but *These Lines* wants first rights, and you as contributor must take care of any complications.

Consider when formatting that content will be published using Times New Roman typeface. A detailed demonstration of presentation and typography decisions is maintained as *These Lines*, volume 0, number 0, Summer 2020, created using public domain material.

About

Editor: David Tuvell

Please direct queries of any sort to:
tuvell@outlook.com

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<http://theselines.org>

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