

Poetry as Reverie in the Analytic Landscape.

Catharine Bailey

Presented at a scientific meeting at the Sydney Institute for Psychoanalysis [SIP] on June 18th 2020.

Edited for the purposes of publication.

In this paper I wish to reflect on how poetry as a form of reverie has influenced my work in the field of psychoanalysis and how I have come to think about and view many of my patients through this lens.

I have referred, amongst others to the work of several psychoanalysts namely Donald Winnicott, Wilfred Bion, Thomas Ogden, Annie Reiner and Philosopher and Poet Charles Simic and Theologian Martin Buber. I have been influenced by their writing in the process of developing my ideas about the Analytic Landscape and what goes on in that place.

Charles Simic in his book titled 'The life of Images' about Poetry and Philosophy says, 'My hunch has always been that our deepest experiences are wordless. There may be images, but there are no words to describe *the gap* between seeing and saying, for example. The labour of poetry is finding ways through language to point to what cannot be put into words.'

I begin my ramble through the analytic landscape with a short story, and from there we will go on a well trodden path by other thinkers before me, through an inner landscape that I will attempt to invoke through the use of poetry in order to describe the reverie or dream states that were experienced in the analytic space.

A while ago we bought a small mud brick cottage that had been converted from a barn. At one end of the building there was a large opening, but it had been blocked up with a wooden wall. The house was dark inside and we thought that it would be a good idea to let in more light, by removing the wooden wall and replace it with two large windows.

We contacted a carpenter who spent a long time assessing what could be done with the space by creating a new wall with windows. This new wall would then be attached to the mud brick wall that has a tendency to crack and crumble if interfered with too much.

After a considerable length of time and a lot of head scratching, he said; 'I think this job requires a bit of **quirkery** along the borders of the old wall in order for the new windows and wall to fit there correctly.'

'What does quirkery mean?' I asked.

'Well' he said, 'in the carpentry world if we have to do something different from standard carpentry we call it quirkery. On the surface the walls will all look the same, only we will know something has been done differently underneath.'

I thought to myself 'what a great idea and what a wonderful word..... Quirkery.....!'

I couldn't find 'quirkery' in the dictionary but it is related to 'quirky' which means far out, off beat, unconventional, peculiar, weird, strange, whimsical etc. Trying to describe to the average person what psychoanalysis is, reminds me of the words of the carpenter. 'We have to do something different from standard.'

I believe that Freud would also hold that free associations are a form of quirkery. And so I would like to think about the quirkery of psychoanalysis, and how the use of free associations, and therefore reverie and poetry, have assisted me in understanding my patients, opening a window for them into their internal world and to what it means to be truly human.

Thomas Ogden [2001] states that 'reverie can take any form including poetry.' He describes this as a process whereby the analyst takes a step back from the conscious or the familiar place of logical thought and experiences his waking dreams. This dream state is similar to 'the darkness of sleep' [Ogden 2001] and it seems to appear at a frontier, junction or 'contact boundary' [Bion] between unconscious and conscious states.

It is at that place where, as Ogden describes it, 'dreaming, and reverie....playing and creativity are born,' where imagination and fantasy arise, and where thoughts find a link to symbolic forms such as words, AND a thinker to think them.

The rigour of the psychoanalytic training combined with my personal analysis has contributed to a process that has been running along parallel tracks that, from time to time, appear to intertwine and cross over each other.

Thoughts about my patients and their struggles to exist are born in that nebulous intersubjective or shared space between us in the analytic setting. The space that Thomas Ogden [1994] calls 'The Analytic Third.' He defines the analyst's dream and the analysand's dream as coming together to form The Analytic Third and as such this is 'The subject of analysis' [Ogden 1994].

Similarly this space or Analytic Third was created between my Analyst and I, and grows between my patients and I, and is the subject of analysis.

This is the space where the phenomenon that we call transference and counter transference, reverie and a unique conversation take place.

Ode to the Rambling House.

*We go together into the old rambling house.
You find a room at the back unnoticed before,
And you open the door.*

*An unexplored country is found.
And water seeps out of the stream
That had always been, flowing.*

*You add a stain or colour,
Yes, colours like paint from your pallet.
They flow and they mingle.*

*Old memories like black and white movies.
Devoid of sound.
Now they have feelings, emotions of all shades.*

*Despite years of destruction flowers still bloom
In these quiet meadows and back waters.
Secret hiding places in your landscape.*

*Truth and freedom are the prisoners you read about.
They have stood still, hidden for safe keeping.
Frozen in drab clothing, invisible inside your house.*

*They have waited in silence for years
To be disinterred by you from the dungeons of suffering.
And re-enter the halls of delight.*



Entering into analysis and later taking a patient into an analysis have been very different experiences from the familiar approach that I have had in the past with a psychotherapy patient.

Whether it was the marked differences in the training experience or because of the 'unlocking' experience of my own analysis or both I don't know, but as I travelled further from a familiar reality into a much more unknown territory, many instances of reverie, fantasy and imagination were invoked in me.

*Dreams are the wild flowers.
Rational thought is the crop
Side by side. [Bailey 2017].*

As time went on I found that I was bubbling over with a rich pool of thoughts and words and felt compelled to write down more and more wild associations like a child lost in the moment of play. Some of these words formed by themselves into poems and a few have been shared with my supervisors and my Analyst, while others have come to birth quietly over time, and continue to exist between pages of verse on any subject that I feel deeply moved by at the time. My experience was as if something deep inside was slowly emerging and reshaping my internal country like a river flowing more freely through the valley of new and old thoughts.

In the process I also rediscovered or tripped over, as it were, my old love for Art and painting. [More querkery, and possibly the topic of another paper].

What I'm saying is that, painting can also open a window or shed light on what I am feeling or thinking. Therefore what can't be put into words can still be visualized and understood.

The mind has to put aside the normal processes that it uses to look at a painting, in order to know what it is looking at. [Personal communication from Maurice Whelan] The same applies to other non verbal expressions such music and dance.

There is a constant flux or drift to and fro between the unconscious, preconscious and conscious where the preconscious acts like a contact barrier, frontier or assembly point between two places.

The preconscious is where there appears to be a virtual place, a receptacle or container for thoughts, un-thought thoughts, associated thoughts, feelings, wordless meanings, sensations, feelings, emotions, ideas and dreams that arise from a seemingly infinite, unknown, unconscious background.

Perhaps the preconscious, can be thought of as something like a toy box for the child, a paint palate for the painter, a musical instrument for the musician.

In other words an in-between space that links the child to his play, the painter to his painting, the musician to his music, the thinker to his thoughts. In this known space, fragments from the infinite unknown are dreamed into being, reshaped from their unconscious origins into pre-conscious thoughts and words.

These dream representations from the unconscious then transform into words, music, play and gestures. As they pass into consciousness they take on more familiar symbolic representations in the forms of physical gestures, facial expressions and

words. However so much seems to be lost in the process and there is often a sense of frustration in trying to truly express what we finally mean.

*The quiet trees bring me stories
With their sighs.
So much is lost in translation [Bailey 2016]*



In the first Chapter of his book titled 'Conversations at the Frontier of Dreaming,' [2001] Thomas Ogden describes a state of the 'analyst's waking dreams.' The analyst has to be prepared to frequent these borderlands and become a fringe dweller, if you will, in order to catch something like a signal, be it a sound, a visual image, a sensation or a shape that glides or flickers just below the surface at the boundary between the unconscious and preconscious.

Ogden stipulates that this place is where self consciousness is also generated uniquely through symbolization between the frontier of dreaming and what lies outside conscious awareness. In other words he is saying that, the experience of what it means to be truly human or, 'ourselves' lies largely outside our conscious awareness.

Bion has described the state of reverie or waking dream as a place of 'no memory or desire.' But as Annie Reiner [2008] says, plunging in to the unknown at the contact barrier and letting go of the familiar, is frightening and often hard to achieve .

Occasionally when I am with a patient, I can't let go of the unsettling feeling that I'm about to plunge headlong through the contact barrier and into the unknown unconscious [as if into an abyss].

Sometimes it is possible to achieve a state of reverie where my mind swings to more tranquil imagery where I'm lying in a rowing boat on the quiet backwater of a stream. It is a hot sultry day and I'm just drifting along.....

I'm reminded of 'Ratty' from the book 'Winds in the Willows' by author Kenneth Graham. I'm just 'mucking around in my boat' with a fishing rod dipping over the side waiting in a dreamy state for something as yet unknown to nibble or bubble up from below the surface of the water. I have the boat or contact barrier to keep me afloat and from there I can lean over the side and look down into the water.

It is reassuring to read that Bion talked about being afraid, and that contact with another person can evoke an emotional storm.

Freud described a state of 'evenly suspended attention' whereby he would try to catch 'the drift' [Vol. 18, 1920-1922, p239].

Being above the water or at its surface feels like a safer place than actually lying in the water or plunging deep underneath!

What I'm saying is that in the analytic landscape, or analytic space if you will, both the analysand and the analyst can enter a mutual dream space or shared reverie, the preconscious place of free associations but not without the potential of anxiety and fear, at least early on in the process.

I would like to read you some lines from a poem by Poet Ted Hughes.

His poem is titled 'The Thought Fox.' In this poem the poet is waiting in the night for the dream or inspiration to appear. His pen is poised over the empty paper.

*'I imagine this midnight moment's forest:
Something else is alive beside the clock's loneliness.'*

He imagines in the dark starless night that a shadow is moving delicately and pensively across the snow. Suddenly at dawn a fox appears in his mind's eye;

*'with a sudden sharp hot stink of fox
it enters the dark hole of the head.'*

The poet seems surprised that on waking from his reverie his poem has been written. Even though there is an allusion of time passing with the ticking clock and night turning into dawn, there is also a sense of timelessness. The timelessness of a dream. The movement from the unformed shadows of the night to the brilliant green of the fox's eyes to the dawn of thought.

I think this poem captures the birth of thought from the unconscious into pre-consciousness into poetry; the preconscious being that frontier that is so relevant in our work. It also captures the loneliness of the poet at his work.

The words seem to finally flow in a rush from a primitive, indefinable place inside the poet's head. The hand moves over the paper like a brush over a blank canvas, capturing thoughts that jostle and jiggle but still retain the riddles of hidden emotional energy and phantasy until they burst through to the surface of the mind.

I think some poetry, paintings and music do arrive either as a surprise or unbidden and have the sensation of feeling inspired. However, many poems and paintings in my experience do not arrive like *The Thought Fox*, whole and entire on the page or canvas, but rather as a structure that carries with it the essence or a shadow of an idea, and from that moment can take many months to develop into its final form. There is an analogy between this process of writing a poem and the process of an analysis where it can take a very long time for the patient to be born into his own mind. But in the meantime the analyst's mind is already working hard, trying to grasp and process the essence of the patient, and to bring his mind out of the shadows. This is the loneliness of the analyst's work where he has to be prepared to sit in the dark for a long time.

The following poem arose very early on in a patient's analysis. One day the patient described in great detail one of a very few happy childhood memories of walking in the hills, and it was as if something like a phantasy was born and existed like a signature between us in a lively three dimensional space. We were briefly connected together in a virtual landscape. It felt very alive and powerful.

As it is quite long I will read a few short extracts from it.

*Extracts from **Reverie [January 2015].***

*For a moment I find myself in the landscape that you describe.
The external world fades from view and I'm walking here with you.
Springy moss underfoot. The cold crispness of fresh country air.*

*We leave behind all the hellish memories in the moment of feeling alive.
The purity of something snapping in the crystal clear present. Just being.*

In this timeless place of truth, you should know that you aren't alone.

*Your memory exists, it vividly lives like a child in your strong brave heart.
I'm here with you, in that wild place, my friend. I'm here with you in this dark.*

The poem tries to express the essence of the reverie, the deep connection, the lively intense immediacy of a shared intimate experience or 'The Analytic Third' in the moment before it is lost. Little by little noises and sounds go up into space, like an infant wailing or crying. These sounds are heard by the other and become the structure for thoughts, then words and a conversation between two people. A song sensed, taken in, understood and responded to.

Poetry lies somewhere in between or in the mix of a noise, a feeling, a colour, the spoken word, a song and sensory memory. It gathers in a preconscious space where the mother and infant communicate as do the analyst and the patient and as such it is a shared creation in that moment. The infant cannot dream himself into existence without the help of his mother and her dreams of him.

The patient also requires the analyst's reveries about him in order to be born into his own mind. This shared creation exists in the Analytic Third.

As we shall see in a moment, this is also the basis of a relationship between myself and my mind.

*The hidden soul lies in its shell.
A formed pearl
Longing to be found. [Bailey 2017]*



Poetry is just such a form waiting to be born into the mind of the poet in much the

same way as the patient longs to be born into his own mind; his own self through symbolic meaning, the alpha function and reverie of the analyst.

In this section of the paper I would like to take a side path in the analytic landscape and reflect on some ideas from Martin Buber's book titled 'I and Thou' [Reprinted 2015 edition, Bloomsbury Academic]. In his book Buber states 'This is the eternal source of art: a man is faced by a form which desires to be made through him into a work.' [Page 7]

While I struggled to read Martin Buber's deceptively slim looking book, and that some of his views about a personal God and religion aren't my own, I was struck by his philosophical thoughts or meditations on the relationship between I and Thou, as opposed to I and you. I believe that poems can capture this I/Thou relationship that we have with ourselves, our internal objects and others. And this leads me onto another way of looking at the analytic space or the dream frontier.

In Modern English we seemed to have all but dropped referring to the intimate other as 'thou' that is the 2nd person singular whereas, in French or Spanish for example, it is still used to denote a close or intimate relationship with an other.

When Buber reflected on the idea of 'Thou,' he seemed to be looking at the relationship between I and Thou as an intensely personal experience that we can only have in a spiritual dimension, for example the relationship between 'me and God' [God being Thou] and what Bion may be referring to as 'O,' the truth or Godhead.

As Buber put it, a relationship exists between the *Known or conscious state and the Unknown but intimately felt unconscious state.*

He describes the *Unknown state as an awareness of being 'close up against' something. Because it feels so intimate he calls it 'Thou'.*

Another example of this type of intimate relationship is the I/Thou between a mother and her infant and by extension the analytic relationship between the analyst and the patient.

Mother and infant may appear merged early in the baby's life, or in Winnicott's words, 'There is no such thing as a baby'.

Perhaps for very brief periods of times in analysis it may appear that there is no such thing as a patient or an analyst as in my poem 'Reverie'. In other words the analyst and the patient create between them a unique shared Third space, much as the poet becomes the poem, the artist the painting, the musician the music, the relationship the thing in itself. There is a co-shared space between the Known/ conscious state and the Unknown but intimately felt unconscious state.

To put it another way let us reflect for a moment on the intimate relationship between a mother and foetus. I have found it helpful for me to think about the analogy of a physical border in pregnancy, where the mother and foetus are separated by a membrane, the placenta, a few cells thick in much the same way we are all separated by our skin. The placental membrane is made up of the foetal tissues on the one side and the mother's endometrium on the other.

A shared place/space albeit almost one dimensional.

The two membranes are semi permeable barriers allowing the exchange or sharing of blood products, such as oxygen and the removal of carbon dioxide. There is an appearance of Mother and foetus being merged, but they are still two [barely distinguishable] separate physical forms.

This is an example of a borderland, a frontier or the place between two different walls as in my cottage, and interesting to think about with reference to what I discussed earlier about the preconscious or contact barrier between the analyst and the patient.

Winnicott refers to 'Primary Maternal Preoccupation' as an emotional state experienced by the mother for her infant. It appears to be a merged psychic state between mother and infant that begins before birth and continues for a while after the birth of her infant. It's a well known fact that infants are born quite premature in the sense that if they aren't born at or before nine months, it would be impossible to be born naturally as the head would be too large to pass through the birth canal. So physically and neurologically the infant is totally dependent on his mother for everything in order to sustain life for a long time.

By extension it makes sense that psychic separation appears impossible at birth and disruption of this union threatens the 'ongoing being' [Winnicott] of the infant.

Whereas the infant has yet to be born into his own mind, so the patient's mind is still 'in utero' and has yet to be born during the process of analysis.

The mother/infant analogy of a merged psychic state is a deeply sensual feeling state, a wordless state of union. At first this state appears to be without form or separateness as if the mother or analyst has to dream at the contact barrier [the endometrium if you will] in order to facilitate the infant/ patient dreaming himself into existence.

Perhaps this very early state is akin to that described by Thomas Ogden as the autistic contiguous state, a natural state that exists in the infants mind prior to the developmental stages of the paranoid-schizoid position followed by the depressive position as identified and described by Melanie Klein.

In dreaming up the baby, the mother or the analyst create a safe place, a facilitating / containing environment/relationship, the Analytic Third where the infant/patient can come into self consciousness.

Over time a feeling of connectedness and a familiar secure attachment [Target] is created and paradoxically an increasing sense of growth towards separateness and the formation of ones own mind is enabled. In order for the infant/patient to become whole or transformed into selfhood, he must be born into his own mind. In the developing alive and secure space that has been created with the 'Good enough Mother' [Winnicot] a thought can be born from the unconscious into self consciousness and a conversation or communication takes place to and fro where both minds appear to be in synchrony, where the sounds and physical movements of bodies are together in an early song and dance or engaged in symbolic play.

Beta elements are transformed to alpha elements by the alpha function of the mother/analyst. [Bion].

A fly sitting on a wall might think that a typical proto-conversation, either with words or wordless song or movements to and fro between a mother and her infant, as naturally acceptable; but those conversations or free associations that take place during an analytic session between an analyst and patient may sound more like a folie a deux, or querkery. That is, off beat, strange or weird.

As I have said, Winnicott described 'Primary Maternal preoccupation' as a state of mind that a mother falls into with her infant. A type of perinatal madness that is entirely normal. So perhaps the analyst has to develop a similar type of preoccupied madness in order to be with her patient at the preconscious frontier or contact barrier, in the analytic third space or what we also refer to as the intersubjective space.

Anna Freud told her colleagues to take off their glasses so that things are slightly out of focus, in order to be an open door for their patients' communications.

The analyst's reverie or waking dream state is similar to that of the mother for her baby trying to decipher his cries. Being slightly out of focus and putting aside the normal processes of looking and hearing, that is feeling.

In a sense these types of pre or proto-conversations embody the true meaning or essence of thought and it takes time for the mother/analyst to develop a particular type of attunement in order to understand what the baby/patient is trying to say.

As Donnel B Stern states in his paper titled 'Words and wordless in the psychoanalytic situation' [2002], 'Without the continuous infusion of the non verbal and the vitality of the unconscious, language would be a dead thing'

Distant thunder.

*There's a sound of distant thunder
Heavy roll of bowling balls
And clatter of a child marbles
Flung forcefully on the floor.*

*Then blobs of rain like molten glass
Crash miraculously on the ground
A thousand rainbow colours
And all around sound.*

*It's a child's heavenly collection
Of amazing marble showers
And on it goes, on and on
Rollicking through endless hours.*

*The loud barrage of noise
Fantastic prisms of light,
Are cacophony enough to delight
The heart of any fearless child*

As well as being a playful reverie, this poem has serious undertones such as distant thunder that symbolize the patient's deep fears. She described how losing her sanity felt 'like a child losing her marbles as they scatter noisily over the floor.' The weather had also been very stormy and these two ideas came together in my mind as I listened. In this poem, there is an attempt to listen to the fears of destruction and split off bad objects in the patient, thus allowing a deeper understanding and finding a way to contain her fears. Thus she is enabled to play in a more creative and imaginative space, despite the presence of some lingering frightening objects in her mind.

Sounds emerge from a baby/patient that seem jumbled to the adult ear like babbling or humming to oneself. But far from being meaningless ramblings they are a way of communicating a collection of feeling states or emotions and have the hallmarks of words, a song or a poem that can be dreamed into existence by the mother /analyst. Words become direct examples of symbolic meaning imbued with emotions around an emerging secure relationship. There is a growing sense of Subjectivity and Objectivity in the relationship between oneself and the other; And while there is an increasing development of separation within a containing environment, there is a growing curiosity to explore what had once felt to be destructive and very frightening.

A one dimensional monochromatic pre-birth no where place, of wordless fear and pain becomes, a two dimensional space of proto-conversations and thoughts of different hues. This in turn becomes a triangular or three dimensional polychromatic space, where the thinker finds himself in a lively relationship/environment with himself and the other.

Over time the secure infant develops the capacity to soothe or hold himself together until mother returns. In other words, sensations, thoughts, babbling or pre-words may also be a type of dream, hallucinated state or virtual/transitional place that the infant is able to use to soothe himself because of the 'facilitating environment' [Winnicott].

Eventually the infant/patient can use the dreamed up transitional object as a way of holding himself together when mother/analyst has gone and when he feels hungry in both the physical and psychic sense. In this way the infant/patient is also developing a relationship with himself, that slowly over time can be communicated to the mother/analyst.

I believe that poems, songs, music and painting can not only be expressions of our inner world but can also be ways of holding ourselves together and therefore types of Transitional objects.

With this in mind I would now like to expand our horizons for a moment as we explore the Analytic Landscape further and reflect on how poems can be viewed as objects of consolation or transitional objects for the analyst.

We can use, resort to, retreat to poems in order to hold ourselves together, and to make sense of a confusing and, at times a frightening world, both internal and external for ourselves and the patient. It is one way that I hold myself together, and

poems are the place or preconscious where I can run to like a child. It is my toy box, my consolation.

*Extracts from **I Shall Listen.***

*I shall listen to the rampant bird song
As I dive below the litter of wasted leaves
To reach the place of rambling roses.
Where nasturtiums bob their yellow heads
In the sunny warmth of intense pleasures
That only living things feel, without memory.*

*And I shall listen to the listening
As I climb up back up through the noisy day.
And clasp close to me the precious poems
That have arrived like birthday packages
With the messenger who calls at midnight.
Gifts found by chance in the toy box
Of morning consolations.....And I shall listen....*

Waking dreams appear to assemble, disassemble and re-assemble themselves in a seemingly random way as do the song or the poem conversations that takes place between the mother and infant, analyst and patient and between the I and Thou. The process is akin to the assembly of free associations but seems to be far from haphazard and more like quirkery or a jigsaw being puzzled out. The following extract is a reverie or assembly of seemingly random thoughts that I had about a new patient.

*Extracts from **Torn Clothes.***

*You with your torn clothes
Fashionable rents in material.
Like multiple cuts in young skin.*

*You try to hid from me
Your vulnerable child.
Beneath the eye catching layers.*

*But your tearful eyes fill
And pale cheeks redden
As you try to be brave
But only feel sadness and shame.*

*I came away later
quivering slightly inside
On finding a spot*

*Of the tenderest softness,
That felt fragile and new
Like the breathe of a baby
And hidden precisely
From view.*

Out of the unconscious or the unknown is born a pre-conscious uncensored thought that takes on an image and the form of language.

It is a primitive language still imbued with multiple meanings not yet revealing its bare essentials. It emerges still surrounded by the memory of belonging to the 'thou' of unconscious or intrauterine life. Still covered with the sensation of birth, membranes or the memories of birth. So to my mind the language of poetry can be a bridge, transition or birth place between the Known and felt [Conscious I/Me] and the Unknown but felt [unconscious / Thou]. From beta elements to alpha elements to alpha function to 'O.'

Words emerge from thoughts

Through layers.

More seeds flourish.

In the background [Bailey 2017]



A poem can act like a fishing net or the string that gathers or knits together all the

loose and scattered pieces so that they come to form an observable object that feels alive and cannot be described so succinctly in any other way.

The poem is a collection of words with emotions attached that, when assembled in a particular order in the dreaming mind of the analyst, eventually seem to create an internal picture or landscape of the patient as a whole person from all his disparate parts, or a jigsaw where all the jumbled pieces that the patient brings to analysis will eventually fit together in a more harmonious whole. This map, painting, poem, song that has arisen out of the quirkery of analysis, allows the analyst to see what is possible and what is not, and how to process profound loss through grief.

The poem can be viewed as a kind of quirkery, a lens through which the patient can be heard and understood.

In the next poem it appears evident that there is a co-mingling of thoughts and memories that belong to both the analyst and the patient.

The resultant poem appears to be a jumble of what we refer to as transference and counter transference.

Even though there isn't the vivid dream like quality and detail of a three dimensional landscape in the mind of the analyst as there was in the poem titled Reverie, nevertheless there is a fusion of thoughts, emotions and sensations that jostle together in a two dimensional space, and jointly give birth to a poem that exists like a shared very damaged object to be taken in and processed by the analyst.

This poem seems to bring together in the poet's mind, many of the confused disconnected objects in the patient's mind. The projections, enactments, transference, lost and damaged objects, and other internal objects longing to be found and understood.

Extracts from Acts of Abandonment

*In the end he abandons me.
There is a distinct possibility
That we won't see each other again.
I feel sad, I didn't think I would.*

*He was noisy and nosy
Challenged boundaries and emotions
With laughter and teasing
Rage and despair.
But not very far below the surface
Lay a wounded baby, almost fatally...*

*He survived against the odds
Like a homeless street child
In violent storms of love and hate.
A frightened and frightening infant
In one shared shredded skin.*

But who is abandoned today?

*And who is abandoning who
In these tempestuous tides
Of fusion and ripping apart?*

*The holes of his sessions
Leave small tears in an hour of every day.
As he sails out of sight
Seeking other mothers under every stone.*

When the transition to the birth of feelings or emotions into words is lost or miscarries the resultant experience is a traumatic loss for the infant/patient particularly if it is repeatedly un-experienced, un-contained or un-interpreted by the mother/analyst. It is also a traumatic loss for the mother who has strived to give birth to the baby or for the analyst who has waited patiently for the patient be born into his own mind.

Facilitation by the mind of the mother/analyst at the preconscious or contact barrier, between the unconscious and the conscious, the unknown but felt [Thou] and the known [I/Me] is essential in the formation of the relationship, the so called 'Analytic third'. Without the facilitating process or the reverie of the mother/analyst, development cannot take place and the baby/patient cannot be born into his own mind and remains stuck in a one dimensional nowhere place.

As the mother dreams her infant into life with her reveries, so does the analyst with her patient. Miscarriages and births that end in the death of the mother or baby or both are truly tragic. Ultimately over time repeated losses lead to catastrophic breakdown as a result of the loss of transmission between the unconscious and the conscious, the unknown and the known, the I and the Thou.

In the words of the carpenter who introduced me to the word quirkery; 'We have to do something different from the usual way of doing things', in order to let in the light, and if we truly wish to assist our patients to be born into their own minds. The mind like a house needs windows and doors to let in the light and illuminate the internal landscape, and [to quote my first poem] 'disinter truth and freedom.... the prisoners that have stood still, hidden for safe keeping.....in the dungeons of suffering and to re-enter the halls of delight.'

My last poem is from William Shakespeare's play, The Tempest Act 4, scene 1.

Prospero:

*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and*

Are melted into air, into thin air:

*And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.
We are such stuff
as dreams are made on;
And our little life
is rounded with a sleep.*



Acknowledgements

Thank you to Psychoanalyst Maurice Whelan, my supervisor.

References.

Freud. S. *Standard edition of the complete works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 18 1920-1922. Vintage. The Hogarth Press. Page 239.

Hughes.T '*The Thought Fox*' by '*Ted Hughes*. Extracts from '*Collected poems.*' Edited by *Paul Keegan*. Published by Faber and Faber Ltd in 2003 and an ebook edition 2011. Page 21.

Grotstein'J.S. [2000]. '*Who is the dreamer who dreams the dreams? A study of psychic presences.*' Hilldale, NJ:Analytic Press.

Ogden.T.H. [2001] '*Conversations at the frontier of Dreaming.*' *Fort Da*, 7[2]:7-14

Ogden T.H.[2004] "The Analytic Third: Implications for Psychoanalytic Theory and Technique.' *Psychanal.Q.*' 73 [1]:167-195

Ogden. T.H. [2007] '*On Talking – as – Dreaming*' *Int. J. Psychoanalysis* 88:575-89

Reiner.A. [2008] '*The Language of the Unconscious: Poetry and Psychoanalysis.*' *Psychoanal. Rev.* 95[4]:597-624

Reiner, A. [2012] '*The development of Language*' in '*Bion and Being. Passion and the Creative Mind.*' Karnac Books, London, UK. Chap 3. p. 33

Shakespeare. W. *The Tempest* Act 4, scene 1, 148–158 Prospero:

Stern. Donnel.B [2002] '*Words and wordless in the psychoanalytic situation*' *J.Amer.Psychoanalytic.Assn.*, 50[1]:221-247

Winnicott.D.W. [1951] '*Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena A study of the first not-me possession.*' *Collected Papers. Through Paediatrics to Psychoanalysis.*' Tavistock publications. 1958 Chap 18 p.229.

Winnicott.D.W. [1971] '*Playing:A theoretical statement.*' In *Playing and Reality*. New York, NY:Basic Books Chap3. P.51

Winnicott.D. W.[1974]. '*Fear of Breakdown.*' *Int.R. Psycho-Anal.*, 1:103-107

Books.

Bion, W. [1962] *'Learning from Experience.'* Aronson New York, NY 1977

Buber, M. *'I and Thou'* [Reprinted 2015 edition]. Bloomsbury Academic

Graham. K *'Wind in the Willows.'*

Ogden, T.H [1992] *'The Primitive Edge of Experience.'* [Kindle edition].Aronson Inc. Northdale. New Jersey. London

Ogden, T.H. [1999] *'Reverie and Interpretation. Sensing something Human.'* [Kindle edition]. Karnac Books. London.

Ogden, T.H. [2012]. *'Creative Readings. Essays on Seminal Analytic Works.'* [Kindle edition]. Routledge.

Reiner, A. [2012] *'Bion and Being Passion and the Creative Mind.'* Karnac Books, London, UK.

Simic.C. [2017] *'The Life of Images: Selected Prose.'* [Kindle edition] Harper Collins Publisher

Winnicott, D.W [1965]. *'The maturational process and the facilitating environment.'* New York; International Universities Press.

Winnicott D.W. [1964] *'The child, the family and the outside world.'* Baltimore, MD: Pelican

Illustrations. Paintings created by Catharine Bailey.