

Final Breath

NOTE: This is a narrative poem. The rhythm is nuanced, but deliberate. The message is painful.

I

There's a darkness, a suffocating void. I feel its endless, merciless sinking, from **deep into deep**.

There's a striving, a pathetic flailing. And I sense its hopeless, meaningless knowing. . . . I sow **what I reap**.

I thought I could swim; I heard your crying. I thought I could save you with powerful strokes but **strength is a lie**.

This water is cunning; I feel its mocking. This water is lordless; it slips through my fingers . . . and **dares me to try**.

How can I help you? I can't even reach you. My God, you are drowning, and I can do nothing but **gasp for more air**.

How can I leave you? I barely can see you but the wake of your thrashing keeps me desperately clinging . . . to a **hope we can share**.

II

I am no Titan – to ride on the waves and wrest you from savage, watery death.

I am a David – slingless and stoneless, and this final psalm plays on my final breath.

*Tender broken child,
Shame was hiding in that touch.
He could not know his thieving would cost your soul so much.*

*Softly now my girl,
They're just echoes that you hear.
The demons now that plague you are but phantoms clothed in fear.*

*Angel lost in sorrow,
Our body is but dust.
He cannot stay your heart if you'll give yourself in trust.*

*Lover twice betrayed,
I'd cleave my soul in two.
If I could save myself, I'd trade myself for you.*

But I am drowning.