

As I walked up that dusty hill  
I saw three men upon a cross.  
I started to yawn in the mid-day sun.  
No big deal, no great loss.

But then I heard a cry like never before.  
I heard a cry of someone who knew  
that what I saw was not the same.  
And so, I paused to give it a name.

“Ordinary” was the name that came to mind.  
Some people were doomed to die, no business of mine,  
but then I heard the claim,  
“That one there, he's done nothing wrong!”

It wasn't this that stopped me cold  
or even tales of who he claimed to be.  
No, it was the tales of those who said "He forgave me!"  
It was the tales of those who said "Yes. He healed me!"

Yes, I've heard of people healed before  
and I have heard of people forgiving before,  
but not of healing of the immediate kind  
and not of healing of the spiritual kind.

This caused me to stop to look upon the ones  
who had been chosen to die in the hot sun.  
And looking up there I couldn't say  
which one was he and which one was not that way.

No testimony could any of them give  
to save themselves and perchance to live.  
Aloud I questioned "of whom do you speak?"  
but all I asked, they just looked away.

The one on the right seemed to spit and snarl  
and curse aloud all those who had come.  
And then I heard the one on the left ask that other one  
to enter the kingdom of heaven on that day.

What that meant? I could not say.  
But the look upon the penitent's face  
had not the eyes of one who expected to die,  
this face, these eyes, expected to thrive.

To thrive upon the cross, of course,  
is foolishness at it most extreme.  
But the words of that other one  
made his face calm and serene

Now I have seen many die  
upon the cross as I idly passed by  
but never before had I ever seen  
someone who died truly at peace.

And as that other one cried out "it is finished"  
I looked around, and I found, as plain as day,  
not a smile or a smirk upon a face,  
but only tears that they wiped away

I breathed a sigh, "Truly it is done."  
I returned to my business like the others who had come.  
Back to what I had done before  
and of that other one, I tried to think no more.

But memories are a quite a strange thing  
and truth is quite another thing,  
and in my day dreams, and in my night ones, too,  
I think upon those that in plain view

Revealed themselves to me on that afternoon  
And I think "To a criminal comes their ruin.  
For sin which is owed onto the state  
by those who offend, justice is served as on a plate."

But then I think about the one on the left.  
Who hung beside that other one, accused as much,  
and asked for forgiveness on that day.  
Forgiveness, we know, that none can pay.

Then I heard, such a foolish thing,  
that this other one who that day had died,  
though I had seen his life relieved,  
into now, life had breathed.

This is a thing I know to be true,  
such things are of dreamers and of fools,  
that someone they love might be  
Walking around like you and me.

Dreams are dreams and hopes are too,  
for mortal man, like me and you,  
but for God all things might live  
though we ourselves would likely deny.

Yet one day, I thought I saw,  
that other one stand strong and tall  
and speak and walk for all to see,  
but then again, eyes can deceive.

Now I find that I don't know what to do.  
I might be just the same as you.  
Perhaps you have heard the tales or you have seen  
the living, walking of the dead Nazorean.

Many days have long since passed.  
With the time, memories are known not to last  
but not a day since have I ceased  
to think that God was within our reach.

When that other one who was crucified  
did not deny the one hanging by his side.  
The one who knew within his human grasp  
lay the last chance of forgiveness and peace, at last.

Perhaps that other one is dead and gone.  
Yet still, it seems, that his memory lives on  
and offers us a chance to make  
the same request, if the risk we would take:

“Remember me Lord, when my time shall come  
to enter into that great unknown.”  
And, by grace, perhaps God may say,  
“You'll be with me forever, starting today.”