

Leonard A Temme

Five Poems:

Ares

K Gets Around

Heidegger Reads Hölderlin

Woe

Imagine the Immense

Ares

Ares, Aphrodite's sometime lover, god of war; born of Zeus; Ares,
ancient awful horror, god most hated by gods, disdained
even by his father;

Ares, brother of Eris – discord and strife, the provocatrice
of the 10-year Trojan war,
brother of Enyo – goddess of bloodshed and violence,

Ares, named for bane and ruin, an incarnate curse,
fathered Phobos – fear,
fathered Deimos – terror,
fathered Adrestia – revenge/nemesis/retribution,
fathered Eros – Eros;

Ares, who has still always lived – never died – vibrant
in the hearts of man, vibrant in the ancient, modern worshiped
passioned battle lust of war as blood bathing ancient modern
grieving Aleppo, its anguished cry cried in the rising chorus of

Ares ascending, ascending, ascending, bombs
descending

descending

descending,

voices shouting around the world
proclaiming the law of war a law (!)

Ares, for whom war is sport, delight, joy, but who in battle
himself is (yes) cowardly,
(yes) weak,
(yes) timorous.

Ares, yet another god forged
in the human, all too human
image of the violent
coward venial man

disgusting.

K Gets Around

(Rondo)

K is for K¹

K is for K²

K is for C³

K is for T^{4,5}

K is for A⁶

K is for KR⁷

K is for G⁸

K is for M⁹

K is for O¹⁰

¹ Using *K* to replace *C* for the sound of ‘k’ whenever possible has all kinds of interesting consequences.

² *K* is for Kafka, a name that needs a pair of *Ks* to spell it korrekty. With so many *ks* in his name, Kafka used *K* a lot in his writing.

³ *C* is for the *C(K)astle*, one of Kafka’s novels.

⁴ *T* is for *The Trial*, another of Kafka’s novels.

⁵ In both *The C(K)astle* and *The Trial*, the main karakter is always referred to by the initial *K*, making it impossible to read those novels without the sense that they are autobiographical, describing Kafka’s experience of the world. *The Trial* is the story of *K* who is akused and prosekuted for a krime of which he knows nothing and which is never deskribed. *The C(K)astle* is the story of *K*’s trying to negotiate with the administrative bureaukracy of the *C(K)astle*, a bureaukracy that is kompletely remote and opaque. Of kourse these are autobiographical novels since they describe the world of Everyman. Welkome to now, here.

⁶ The title of Kafka’s first novel, *Amerika*, is striking because the title replaces the ‘c’ with the ‘k’, but this is a koincidence of two kultural accidents. ‘*K*’ in German is not ‘*k*’ in English, while spelling the name of our country with ‘*k*’ is not only formally inkorrekt, the spelling has explicit references to a violent, racist tradition still alive today. The ‘*k*’ in *Amerika* is a shorthand that underskores some of the troubles that permeate Amerikkkan society. Because of these troubles, some argue that Amerikkka with the ‘*k*’ is formally korrekt, while spelling it with the ‘*c*’ is a fabrication, a konscious lie. But the semiotics of the spelling embedded in the Amerikan mind were not in Kafka’s, whose working title of the novel was *The Man Who Disappeared*, which today might more aptly be changed to *The Country that Disappeared*, or ironikally enough *The Invisible Man*.

⁷ The main karakter of Kafka’s *Amerika* is Karl Rossmann, another koded reference to Kafka’s own name.

⁸ *G* is for Gregor $S_{(K)a(a)}m_{(f)S(k)a(a)}$ who in 1915 Kafka saw awaken in bed one morning from troubled dreams to diskover that he had been transformed into some form of vermin, not unlike a giant roach.

⁹ *M* is for *Metamorphosis*, the title of Kafka’s story of Gregor $S_{(K)a(a)}m_{(f)S(k)a(a)}$ ’s travail.

¹⁰ *O* is for Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* is a panoply of stories deskribing the transformation of individuals into non-human entities, invariably due to an akt of one or another of the Greco-Roman gods. For Gregor $S_{(K)a(a)}m_{(f)S(k)a(a)}$ there are no gods; the transformation is not deskribed; it is simply a konsequense of the man’s eksperience. The reader supplies the eksplanasion, kontekst, and interpretation. Good luck with that.

K is for B & PG¹¹

K is for A(a)¹²

K is for DM¹³

K is for *vl*¹⁴

K is for NYDS¹⁵

K is for s a¹⁶

K is for m¹⁷

¹¹ Baryshnikov portrayed Gregor S_(K)a_(a)m_(f)S_(k)a_(a) on Broadway, and Phillip Glass wrote a piano suite inspired by the Gregor S_(K)a_(a)m_(f)S_(k)a_(a)'s *Metamorphosis*.

¹² But Gregor S_(K)a_(a)m_(f)S_(k)a_(a) has always reminded me of Archy, or rather, more korrekctly spelled with the lower case 'a' as in 'archy', who appeared for the first time in 1916, a year after Gregor first appeared on the scene.

¹³ DM is for Don Marquis, who introduced archy. Although the *Metamorphosis* was published a year before archy was 'born,' the first English translation of the *Metamorphosis* only appear in 1933, so I think it is unlikely that archy is direktly related to Gregor. I don't know whether Marquis kould read German or had heard about this strange roach from Prague; but since Gregor and archy describe a kommon human eksperience, they have a kommon ancestor in man.

¹⁴ *vl* is for *vers libre*. We happy few who remember archy know him as gigantic kakaroach with the soul of a 'vers libre bard.' He wrote using a manual typewriter, (remember those?) a mekanical machine that required force to depress the keys, and that needed two fingers to kapitalize anything (sans kaps lock). Writing for him was writing for the true artist; a painful, passionate need that drove him to the ekstremes of self-ekspression. To write with the typewriter of the time, archy had to klimb up to the top of the machine, above the keys, and fling himself with all his force head downward on the key. The impakt of his bodyweight was just enough to operate the key, 'one slow letter at a time'. He kould not work kapitalts at all and he had the devil of the time with the karriage return and advancing the paper to the next line. Of kourse archy had no way to put in a second sheet of paper.

¹⁵ NYDS is for the *New York Daily Sun*, whose editors in 1916 reported that they had one day inadvertently left a sheet of paper over night in the typewriter. The next morning they found on that paper that archy had typed:

expression is the need of my soul
i was once a vers libre bard
but i died and my soul went
into the body of a cockroach
it has given me a new outlook upon life

i see things from the under side now
thank you for the apple peelings in the wastepaper basket
but your paste is getting so stale i can t eat it
there is a cat here called mehitabel I wish you would have
removed she nearly ate me the other night why don t she
catch rats that is what she is supposed to be for
there is a rat here she should get without delay

¹⁶ s a is for s(S)hinbone a(A)lley, which was archy's beat. He became the bard of shinbone alley.

¹⁷ m is for mehitabel, the main karakter of archy's reported shinbone alley adventures, despite her effort to eat archy in the above first reportage. Still, that eksperience in a sense typifies mehitabel's self-involved karakter.

is for DD¹⁸

K is for GH¹⁹

K is for KK²⁰

KK is for WRH²¹

K is for OW²²

K is for A(T)P²³

K is for K²⁴

¹⁸ DD is for Double Day, which in 1927 published *archy and mehitable*, the kollected stories of the adventures of shinbone alley that archy reported.

¹⁹ GH is for George Harrimen who illustrated *archy and mehitable*. George Herriman created a number of komic strip karacters, including Krazy Kat. In fact, you kan't look at mehitabel without being reminded of Krazy and vice versa. Yet the personalities of the two kats are kompletely different; no similarity there. Another essential difference between archy and Krazy is that archy wrote a daily poetry column while Krazy was a daily komic strip in which text was only a part of the strukture. Krazy Kat debuted in 1913 and ran until Herriman's death 1944 (sad, sad day, sad indeed).

²⁰ KK is for Krazy Kat. Who kan possibly eksaggerate the virtues of Krazy Kat? That would be an impossibility. Oh that blessed, blessed kat. Krazy lived in C(k)oc(k)onino C(K)ounity, Arizona, with Ignatz Mouse and Offissa Bull Pupp as main karacters and Kolin Kelly, a dog who is the brickmaker; Joe Stork, the "purveyor of progeny to prince & proletarian; and Mrs. Kwakk Wakk, a skold and busybody duck who wears a pillbox hat.

²¹ WRH is for William Randolph Hurst who published Krazy Kat for years, even after Krazy's popularity dropped. Hurst was paying Herriman more than three thousand dollars a month at the time, and refused to kut his salary although Krazy Kat did not kover his salary any longer. Hurst was kommitted to Krazy.

²² OW is for Orson Wells. It is widely thought that the brash, arrogant, willful twenty-six year old Orson Wells, the boy genius, modeled his *Citizen Kane* on William Randolph Hurst and that the last word in the film, 'Rosebud,' while a McGuffin, is a veiled reference to Hurst's pet name for his lover's genitalia, her 'tender button' (see Stein, Gertrude). Whether this is true or not is still debated, but Hurst's portrait as reflected in Kane, or vice versa, led Hurst/Kane to use his extraordinary power to suppress the film and derail Wells's meteorik kareer. But *Citizen Kane* and Wells's fame survived Hurst's efforts, and Wells is now widely aknowledged as one of the world's foremost film direktors.

²³ A(T)P is for Anthony (Tony) Perkins, who Wells direkted in his 1962 film, *The Trial*, which Wells klaimed to be his best film, but he klaimed lots of things that he did not necessarily believe. That is one frequent karacteristic of artists; passion often leads them to put their feet in their mouth and dance.

²⁴ And with this, we are back to Karfka. It seems klear to me that Gregor S_{(K)a_(a)m_(f)S_{(k)a_(a)} and archy got it right; being human is a trial.}

Heidegger Reads Hölderlin

(A Haicoup²⁵)

Martin Heidegger²⁶ reads Friedrich Hölderlin²⁷;
but why; one, a crazed²⁸ German poet
and the other, a Nazi?
Heidegger bears witness to what he is.
He attests to himself. Language
is the self, self-attesting itself. The origin
is naming, naming the gods,
world, and time, being this moment now
when the poet, discovering language,
names the real so we discover ourselves
before slipping from view again.

But can machines think²⁹? The
imitation game is no less game than
is poetry a game, neither
a harmless pastime³⁰. “These machines are intended
to carry out any operations
which could be done by a human.³¹”
It’s our beloved digital computer,
Since we cannot tell the difference between
the simulacrum and the real,
the difference is illusory – clockwork – Hoffman’s³² problem
with Olympia, or Frankenstein’s. The
space inside is empty, the one language

²⁵ A poetic structure derived from the haiku. It was first described in the Fitzpatrick-O’Dinn, D. *Table of Forms* (Spineless Books, Urbana, Ill 2006) as “a poem with a 5-7-5 structure pertaining to any unit except syllables.”

²⁶ Martin Heidegger (1887-1976) is arguably one of the twentieth century’s greatest philosophers and equally arguably was an unrepentant Nazi.

²⁷ Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843) is recognized as rivaling Goethe as Germany’s greatest poet. Heidegger wrote extensively about Hölderlin’s poetry, using it as a vehicle to describe the importance of language as the kernel for being aware and thus for being.

²⁸ Hölderlin died mad.

²⁹ This is the deep question that Allan Turing posed in his 1950 paper, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence,” (*Mind*, New Series, Vol. 59, No. 236 (Oct., 1950), pp 433-460) in which he argues that: (1) the imitation game is the correct way to answer the question, (2) anything you can do I can do just as well, if not better, if I am a machine, and (3) consciousness is not only an irrelevancy but placing importance on consciousness inevitably leads to solipsism and hence must be erroneous.

³⁰ Heidegger quotes a letter from Hölderlin to his mother in which he says, “writing poetry is the most innocent of occupations.” During this same period in his life, Hölderlin also wrote that language is the most dangerous of goods. In Martin Heidegger’s: “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry”, in *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry*, (translated by Keith Hoeller), Humanity Press, Amherst 2000.

³¹ Quoted from Turing, Computing machinery and Intelligence.

³² E.T.A. Hoffman (1779-1822) whose writings helped fuel the foundations of German Romanticism. His stories were adapted as the librettos for the ballets *The Nutcracker* and *Coppélia* and the opera, *The Tales of Hoffman*. Note that Hoffman was a contemporary of Hölderlin and Mary Shelley (1797-1851) of Frankenstein fame.

fills as self is imminent
and private, 'but what are poets for
in a time of need?'³³

Language and self; poet as
priest mediating the self and the gods
or world. (What's the difference?)
Remember The Snowman³⁴, 'a mind of winter,'
empty; remember the clockwork machine
working, unseen, inside, pure logic, gears meshing,
imagine across the universe, space
no mind can ever reach that quiet,
that dark, pure place to
behold 'the nothing that is not there
and the nothing that is'³⁵.

³³ From Hölderlin's poem: "Bread and Wine" "...and what are poets for in a time of need?/ But they are, you say, like those holy priests of the wine-god / who traveled from land to land in holy night." I think so.

³⁴ The Wallace Steven's "The Snowman."

³⁵ From the last tercet of Steven's "The Snowman".

Woe

(A Song for Thanksgiving)

The best way to deal with emotions is bury them
in facts, one fact after another after another.

The day has not yet begun. Our sons
and daughters have not yet arrived
with their families. The smell of turkey
has not yet filled our house. The turkey
is finally thawed in the refrigerator and
is ready to be cleaned. The pies are done
(pumpkin & apple) and have cooled overnight.
The blessings will not be hard to list,
I'll just recall the morning news.

A rhesus macaque³⁶ caged in the East African
Research Institute in the Zika³⁷ Forest³⁸ near
Entebbe, Uganda developed fever in 1947.

The researchers eventually identified
the transmissible agent as a virus³⁹
first described in 1952⁴⁰ that was
subsequently isolated from a human
in Nigeria in 1954. Until about 2007⁴¹
confirmed cases of Zika virus infection
from Africa and Southeast Asia were rare,
but then a major epidemic occurred in
Yap Island, Micronesia. More recent
epidemics occurred in Polynesia, Easter
Island, the Cook Islands and New Caledonia⁴²

The best way to deal with emotions is
with facts. The more the better. With enough

³⁶ Rhesus macaques are an old world primate native to Africa and Asia. They are known to be susceptible to infection by an Asian-lineage ZIKV closely related to the strains currently circulating in the Americas.

³⁷ Zika is Luganda for *overgrown*.

³⁸ The forest covers about 62 acres near the swamps of Waiya Bay, an inlet of Lake Victoria.

³⁹ A virus is any of various submicroscopic agents that infect living organisms, often causing disease, and that consist of a single or double strand of RNA or DNA surrounded by a protein coat. Unable to replicate without a host cell, viruses are typically not considered living organisms.

⁴⁰ Dick, GW; Kitchen, SF, Haddow, AJ.: Zika virus (I). Isolations and serological specificity. *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* (1952) 46(5): 509-520.

⁴¹ Duffy, MR. et al.: Zika virus outbreak on Yap Island, Federated States of Micronesia. *New England Journal of Medicine*. (2009) 360: 2536-2543.

⁴² Zika Virus Net.com; <http://www.zikavirusnet.com/history-of-zika.html>

facts you can build a wall. I reached
for a piece of brown thread that was
on the floor to toss it into the trash,
not much more than a pile of rivaled lint,
but as I grasped it, the little monster
punctured the tip of my middle finger,
slipped below the skin, and was gone.
A little bead of blood marked were it entered.
I don't know what it is, I can't find it, but I can
squeeze out another bead of blood. I feel
the monster becoming part of me,
working its way through my system.
I am no longer an observer of the world's woe

Facts provide assurance. They cage emotions.
They give a sense of order and control.
They help me not feel the recent news
from Brazil that 13 children who had seemed
normal at birth developed Zika-related
microcephaly by their first birthday⁴³.

During Thanksgiving dinner we talked about
the food, the parade, the entertainment,
but no one watched the football games
on the television playing in the background.
The family gathered together is enough. Memories
and stories of daily life are enough. We talked
of Christmas coming next month, and
noting that the parade brings Santa to Macy's,
we wondered what will happen in the age
of the virtual and whether Santa will come
via Amazon for a child avatar to sit on a Santa avatar's
lap. In how many worlds can we live at one time?

Facts give the illusion of control, of an
ordered world. Zika spread rapidly
throughout South and Central America,
reaching Mexico in November 2015.
On January 15, 2016 the CDC⁴⁴ advised
pregnant women to consider postponing
travel to Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador,

⁴³ McCarthy, M. Zika related microcephaly may appear after birth, study finds. *British Medical Journal* (Clinical research ed.) 355: 2016 Nov 23 pg i6333

⁴⁴ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: CDC issues interim travel guidance related to Zika virus for 14 countries and territories in Central and South America and the Caribbean:
<http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/s0315-zika-virus-travel.html>

French Guiana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras,
Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay,
Suriname, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico.

Be specific about what you think is true.

Use facts as the perfect defense.

We can drop the news of the rounding
up of Jews or Arabs or Syrians or Turks
or Copts or Kurds or Blacks or Mexicans
or the sick or quarantines or ghettos⁴⁵. We can
drop the news of extra-judicial killings
or the stalled peace talks or North Korea's
latest tests or the continued conflict over Kashmir.
We can drop all that and close our minds and give
thanks, here, now, blessing a list of grateful
gratitude beatitudes. We can drop the woe from our heart
and know the world, the 65 or so Chinese who died
in the construction accident, the 13 babies with
Zika-related brain damage or their mothers with
Zika-related heartache and the world's untold woe,
drop all that for the present Thanksgiving day.

Facts help, the more the better; list them all.

The mosquito and other arthropods transmit
the Zika virus (ZIKV), which is a member
of the *Flavivirus* genus of the *Flaviviridae*
family. Zika is related to dengue, yellow fever,
West Nile and Japanese encephalitis. Along
with other viruses in the *Flaviviridae* family,
Zika is enveloped with a non-segmented,
single-stranded positive sense RNA genome.
The 10,617-nucleotide long Zika genome
encodes for a polyprotein with three structural proteins,
capsid, premembrane/membrane, and the envelope
and seven non-structural proteins^{46, 47}.
Virions on the cell membrane surface
enter the host cell and mRNA transcription
takes place in the host cell cytoplasm.

As of today⁴⁸ the CDC reported 4,262 cases

⁴⁵ Donald Trump, President - elect

⁴⁶ Kuno G., Chang, GJ. Full-length sequencing and genomic characterization of Bagaza, Kedougou and Zika
viruses. *Archives of Virology* (2007), 152: 687-696.

⁴⁷ Weaver, SE et al. Zika virus: History, emergence, biology, and prospects for control. *Antiviral Research* (2016)
160 69-80.

⁴⁸ 24 November 2016 (Thanksgiving 8:00 am) <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/intheus/maps-zika-us.html>

of Zika in the United States were contracted while travelling, and 182 were acquired locally, all in Florida. In Puerto Rico, on the other hand, 121 cases of Zika were contracted while travelling and 31,944 cases⁴⁹ were acquired locally, a huge number for the United States but a small number compared to the rest of South America, another reason for us to give thanks; another formulation of the them, not us; they, not we, you, not me dichotomy.

Facts help. The list of facts, of woes, is as close as the computer: The school bus driver's, "Are you ready to die?" quote. But all this is hard to turn off, as though we need to see the helpless suffering of others to know how good we have it. Amen.

I will not go hungry this Thanksgiving. No one in my family will go hungry this Thanksgiving, and you who are reading this likely will not go hungry either. The best way to deal with emotions is bury them in fact after fact after fact. Let us then give thanks.



⁴⁹ I am amazed as how quickly we slip into numbers, abstractions, and statistics, and how comfortable we are with such language. Our normal analytic way of dealing with this kind of information is with actuarial tables and statistics. The abstractions help us see patterns and such patterns are useful and important, but they are also wrong and misleading. Each one of these 31,944 cases is an individual life, not a number, not a statistic, not a cipher. To point this out is to reassert an observation that has become a platitude; but the platitude is no less true. The problem with platitudes is that they obscure their truth; they hide their significance. Here the significance is that each of the 31,944 individual cases is the experience of a particular life, and this lived experience is a person's total universe destroyed. The importance of this reality is beyond our comprehension since the reality is the impact of one individual's life compounded by 31,944 lives. The number of lives, 31,944, is not the number of identical or indistinguishable or comparable cases; it is the one unique individual event, a person's life denied to every one of the 31,944 people.

Imagine the Immense

The Cartesian “Cogito Ergo Sum” Illusion

Imagine, please, the image in the eye.
The balance of outside with inside
is screwball.

There is no balance; it’s
wrong, the door to dualism. Imagine,
the image in the eye;

the image of what?

We do not have words for what
the image is, nor of what it is
an image.

We drop in the pit of
inside out in outside in language.

Imagine, please,
the eye of I; that central sense of
Descartes’ I’s eye is as wrong
as it is right as long as it is seen (see
that trick word
seen?)

as fairyland false. The world
we know as real is fairyland false
falling inside the Eye of I.

The image is
the outside turned into the in-
side turned into the inside
of the brain where

It’s I.

IT’S EYE

It’s sky

Eye am

Eye will

Eye see

Eye live

Eye die

The immense i, I, eye, aye.

The I’s I of eye;

The I’s eye of I;

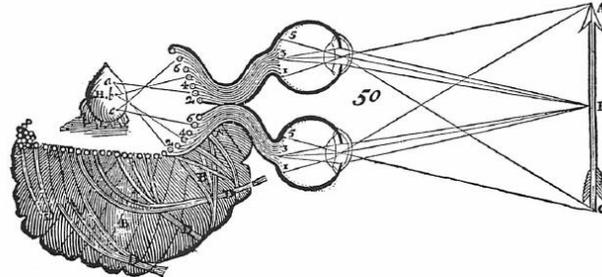
The eye’s I of I;

The eye’s I of eye;

The eye’s eye of I;

are all different,

they all mean different things,



Binocular stereoscopic visual system and its working, as imagined by Des Cartes. The two retinal images of a single object are accurately, point-for-point, projected upon the surface of the cerebral ventricles, where they are further transmitted to the centrally located pineal gland, H, the supposed “seat of imagination and common sense.” Here the homonymous “corresponding” or “syndynamical” impressions merge into a single visual “idea” – for example, of the object point A, via two retinal point I and I, along the two ventricular points 2 and 2, ultimately meeting in a common point a of the pineal gland (H). In this way a single binocular visual experience would be achieved, in spite of complete separation in the chiasma, a mistaken belief which Des Cartes took over from Galen and Vesalius. After the union of the two monocular images in the pineal gland, the impressions would be further transmitted to the brain substance, B and B, and deposited in it as a memory image. The problem of how the “corresponding impressions” are made to unite remained thus unexplained. From *Tractatus de Hominie* of *Traite’ de l’homme*, written 1660 and published 1686. After Figure 71 from Polyak, S. *The Vertebrate Visual System*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957.

but all see eye to I to eye
 the same way and lock us in
 a fairyland of fallacies seeing false
 the false Malfovea's image
 in every glance as the unseen error,
 the illusion is the real illusory that-ness
 we all know to be the true true that is not.

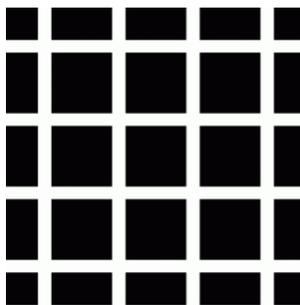
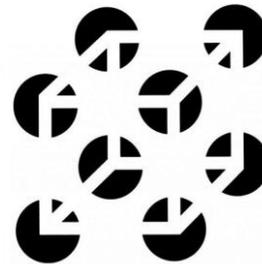
The word Eye see slips through the cornea, pupil, lens
 to be focused on the retina, in that one little spot,
 the fovea, where the image magic happens,
 where Malfovea conjures the real from the play
 of light and shadow. (It's all smoke
 and mirrors in here, folks).

The Eye (I) lives the habits of the language I (Eye) see.
 It's a commonplace to say Eye see/think the world
 through the lens of the words we say.

The world Eye see is the word Eye say
 Eye see the world through the lens of words.
 What's real, what do Eye see?
 Eye live/see/say the habits of the language every Eye lives/sees/says

Kepler knew Mal-fovea inverted the world,
 turned it on its head, upside down and backwards
 reversing the normal order of things. Mal-fovea's law
 is down is up, left is right and right is wrong
 and fair is foul and foul is fair and Eye hover through the
 illusions born of fog and fairy air for the little eye that's i.

How are Eyes to survive?
 Eye live the illusion that what Eye see is real.
 Eye believe that what Eye see is true.
 The Eye's I of Eye is I
 That old Cartesian cogito: Eye see therefore I am



Who knows
 what the hell we see?
 Who knows
 what the hell is real?
 Look, see what's there;
 look, see what's not.