



THE POET'S EYE

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I really enjoy reading Plato. I am always struck by the significance of Plato's allegory of the cave. We are all bound by convention to some extent and influenced by our surroundings. Perhaps any attempt to find enlightenment, whatever one perceives that to be, will require us to venture outside of our own caves. The poem was written in December 2012.



The Cave

I too was in a dream and sound asleep,
A dweller in a cave of common themes,
Where shadows were the subject of our dreams,
They danced behind the fires in the dark,
The flickers of some odd reality,
Which never seemed to make much sense to me.
I took my place among those in their trance,
I spent my days discussing what was right,
But as I ventured closer to the light,
Inconstantly, our sunlight seemed to dance
And dislocate our dreary day without
A dawn, thus spawn the nature of my doubt.
I searched within the confines of my mind,
And found such places I had never been,
I weighed the chains that I had never seen,
Then realized I'd never looked behind,
Or even thought that I was so restrained
By convention, where I'd willingly remained.
Breaking the bonds of slumber I awoke,
And left those souls that I could never save,
I left them groping in the gloomy cave.
Outside I met the Sun and thus I spoke:
"Great star! Your happiness can truly be
To bless the dawn by shining forth for me!"



I find the sonnet form to provide just enough room to neatly encompass an idea from beginning to end. We all have our psychological mountains to climb. Moreover, the pursuit of anything worthwhile is often a steep ascent with its perils and pitfalls along the way. For me the poem is about the pursuit of truth, amid the doubts and uncertainties that exist. It is also about facing unresolved issues and even poetry composition. However, my hope is that it may resonate in different ways, depending on the readers and the challenges they face when achieving their own goals. The poem was written in February 2022.



Summit

I have to climb the mountains in my mind;
I stem the sole and cling to what I know;
When on the edge and feeling so inclined,
I lose my grip the higher up I go.
I can't look down, so focus on a lie,
And grapple with the cliff I have to face,
To jam oneself within and wonder why
My heart it seems has never left the base.
The summit looms but seems so far away
And out of reach, and I am at a loss
To know if I can make it all the way,
When scrambling through the chaos and the choss.
But at the top I reach the mountain peak,
The heights, and all the answers that I seek.

Jonathan Lester has been writing poetry since 2000. He was born in Australia. His parents returned to England when he was young. Jonathan studied philosophy at university and continues to study history and

philosophy. He is passionate about classical and baroque music. Jonathan is married with two young children.

Featured image: "The Devil's Bridge, St Gotthard Pass," by J. M. W. Turner, ca. 1803-1804.

