***Arthur Machen***

***and the Great God Pan***

1.

Your great god Pan: he’s not the sort

Of chap you’d care to run into

In a dark valley, if it’s true

He goes in for such bestial sport,

Unspeakable debaucheries

And horrid evils, such as what?

Some sort of inter-species smut?

Child-sacrifice, eating babies?

Could you be a bit more…specific?

No? Let them, then, be nameless evils,

In which we will assume the Devil’s

Mixed up somehow; it’s quite horrific,

Beyond description, quite taboo

To mention, awful, awful stuff!

Then I’ll suggest (and call your bluff)

That all you mean to say is, *Boo!*

2.

*Oscar, don’t mock! The matter’s grave.*

*Make a mere lesion in the brain*

*And who knows what we may unchain,*

*What Titans brooding in their cave?*

*What atavistic forces dire*

*May from the saurian depths erupt?*

*The man with whom last night you supped*

*May now be dancing round a fire*

*In a dark wood, with great god Pan—*

Yes, doing things unspeakable.

*Or spoken nowhere but in Hell!*

*You would not recognise that man,*

*So genteel in the light of day,*

*His features would be so distorted*

*Like some daemonic thing aborted*

*Into the world and seeking prey!*

3.

Well, Stevenson *has* given us Hyde,

Who hides inside one Dr Jekyll.

I merely jest, I do not heckle.

It’s true, who knows what *things* abide

Deep in the darkness of the soul

Or in the brain’s small ivory cells?

Some in themselves bear hidden Hells

Christ could not harrow or make whole.

*Kernahan, Oscar, said that you,*

*You at the height of your success,*

*(Fat, riotous) turned more or less*

*Into the Hyde Stevenson drew.*

*The monsters in us, once they break*

*Loose, and gain advanced weaponry,*

*Become an army of Hydes, as we*

*Stand by and watch, too cowed to speak.*

