

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Bravig Imbs  
- poems -**

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## Bravig Imbs(1904 - 1946)

Bravig Imbs was born in 1904 in Milwaukee to Norwegian-American parents. A graduate of Dartmouth College, he worked as a proofreader for the 'International Edition of the Chicago Tribune in Paris.

In Paris he befriended George Antheil, Pavel Tchelitchew, René Crevel, Georges Maratier, and later Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. In 1931, his wife Valeska gave birth to a child, and Gertrude Stein ended their friendship because of her aversion of childbirth.

He wrote novels, poems and a memoir, and played the harpsichord. He translated some poems by Georges Hugnet. He also co-wrote books with Bernard Fay and André Breton.

In 1944, he worked as a radio announcer, under the pseudonym of 'Monsieur Bobby'. He was killed in a car accident shortly after.

# Sleep

## I

slowly the ponderous doors of lead imponderous  
pushed by a wedging force unthinking opened  
how like a cloud I floated down the dim green air  
unthinking of the soft violence of odorous winds  
the falling plaint of hidden violins  
and eyes  
following

## II

doors unto doors unfolded downward  
and I was like unto a sailing ship  
stern downward sailing on a dim green sea  
unmindful of the rich push of flowery winds  
the melting voices of far seraphims  
and arms  
following

## III

slowly the ponderous doors of lead imponderous  
lowered above my head in absolute slow closing  
quiet as a shadow on a dim green wall  
I rested in my dark and ivory vault  
the violins were no more nor eyes nor arms  
hours on hours  
following

Bravig Imbs

# The Wind Was There

## I

all was in flight  
wild geese in the sky  
snow from the sky flying  
rivers hastening to the sea  
and waves from the midsea  
hastening to the shore

horses running from a fence  
fences running from the ground  
ground fleeing from the sky  
and the sky was filled with flying stars  
and suns innumerable

daisies springing from the grass  
pines fleeing up the mountainside  
even the mountain was in flight  
less swift than southward geese  
or rivers in the spring  
less swift than these but fleeing still  
stone upon stone scraping in slow erosion  
gravel grinding into dust and fleeing before the wind

## II

all was in flight  
even from a distance I  
my flight was faster than a fleeing cloud  
I only knew the wind was there  
swift and imperious and proud  
sharper than fine steel

## III

so shall I ever flee  
swifter yet swifter  
until the speed is such  
my spirit shall enkindle with the wind

and then  
a brown and crackled leaf I'll fall  
my flesh to shrivel into mould  
my blood to mingle with the seeping rain  
and all my body's flight become a strange return

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