

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Jean Cocteau**

**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

## Preamble (A Rough Draft For An Ars Poetica)

...Preamble

A rough draft  
for an ars poetica

. . . . .

Let's get our dreams unstuck

The grain of rye  
free from the prattle of grass  
et loin de arbres orateurs

I

plant

it

It will sprout

But forget about  
the rustic festivities

For the explosive word  
falls harmlessly  
eternal through  
the compact generations

and except for you

nothing  
denotates

its sweet-scented dynamite

Greetings  
I discard eloquence  
the empty sail  
and the swollen sail  
which cause the ship  
to lose her course

My ink nicks  
and there

and there

and there

and

there

sleeps  
deep poetry

The mirror-paneled wardrobe  
washing down ice-floes  
the little eskimo girl

dreaming  
in a heap  
of moist negroes  
her nose was  
    flattened  
against the window-pane  
of dreary Christmases

A white bear  
adorned with chromatic moire

dries himself in the midnight sun

Liners

The huge luxury item

Slowly founders  
all its lights aglow

and so  
sinks the evening-dress ball  
into the thousand mirrors  
of the palace hotel

And now  
it is I

the thin Columbus of phenomena  
alone  
in the front  
of a mirror-paneled wardrobe  
full of linen  
and locking with a key

The obstinate miner  
of the void  
exploits  
his fertile mine

the potential in the rough  
glitters      there  
mingling with its white rock

Oh  
princess of the mad sleep  
listen to my horn  
and my pack of hounds

I deliver you  
from the forest  
where we came upon the spell

Here we are  
by the pen  
one with the other  
wedded  
on the page

Isles        sobs of Ariadne

Ariadnes  
    dragging    along  
Ariadnes        seals

for I betray you my fair stanzas  
to  
run and awaken  
elsewhere

I plan no architecture

Simply  
deaf  
like you        Beethoven

blind  
like you  
Homer  
numberless old man

born everywhere

I elaborate  
in the prairies of inner  
silence

and the work of the mission  
and the poem of the work  
and the stanza of the poem  
and the group of the stanza  
and the words of the group  
and the letters of the word  
and        the least  
loop of the letters

it's your foot  
of attentive satin  
that I place in position  
pink  
tightrope walker  
sucked up by the void

to the left        to the right  
the god gives a shake  
and I walk  
towards the other side  
    with infinite precaution

Submitted by Linda M. Gibbs

Jean Cocteau