The Wound in the Water Libretto: Euan Tait

**Part I: The Cry of the Sea**

1. **Mammon in the Mind's Ocean**

In the depths of our human ocean

under the immense pressure

of the mind's suppressing waters,

desire, our own private Mammon,

what we think we want, stirs in us,

the broken creature of our lives roars,

and with its bellow tears the waters

and leaves them wounded, poisoned.

1. **I Call to You**

I call to you, like a creature

caught in a nylon net,

and you call back: " What

is your name, what

is my name?” All night,

we sing to each other

as creatures of our minds,

we ululate, weep, whisper

across. miles of damaged ocean

this mourning call, that you too,

a11 of you, know well: it sounds

with the agonised cry

of our wounded seas,

while our minds reel

with broken desire.

0 sweet sister sea,

0 damaged one,

0 harm in ourselves,

We, children of Mammon.

1. **The Wound in the Water**

The same rivers sing,

the same seas dance;

we're shaken by these storms,

as those we love;

yet from the glittering waters

and from the rich soils

our naked feet touch

comes the same

terrible high cry

like a bird caught in flight

by the white heat

or the mammon-heart arrow

as if the light itself

is draining from the dance

of the water, as if light,

itself, bleeds, and we,

we are the archer.

1. **The Song of the Sea**

I have walked this shore

all my life; my children leap

among the waves

like a spray of fire,

and always I listen:

I'll know any change

in their voices, I'll hear

any hidden sound

of their anguish or fear,

and in the last years

I have been shocked

into silence here:

the song of this sea

is changing. its music

s1ow1y unfamiliar,

the song becoming a cry,

like a vast creature

with a visceral wound.

The storm wind is howl.

I am no longer home,

I'm being led away

like a captive of myself,

like a sudden stranger,

like an exile.

1. **The Cry of the Sea
(Instrumental)**
2. **Interlude I - Spirit, Help Us**

Spirit, help us to hear

their cries like a coming storm

surging across the waters,

from boats packed with fear.

1. **Song of Sea £xile**

I, the exile,

my heart burning,

my lost life

a terrible fire,

songs of loved ones

crying all around me.

Oh endless,

endless home, the sea.

Oh my missing,

I am listening,

yet your silence

cannot answer me.

There, we left

our singing unfinished,

and our lives now

fall into the endless sea.

This the broken

gift of love:

the exile calls,

remembered names.

What you were

scorched on me.

your wounded names

sung to the endless sea.

Waves like voices

roar around you:

we're not silenced,

but cry out like the

sea.

Your anger,

fiery, living

is like love

that bleeds

like the endless sea.

Oh our exile,

torn by love,

singing words

you can no longer sing,

where's the shores,

the harbour, the horizon,

wanderer,

calling to the endless

sea calling to the endless sea?

1. **The Shadow of the Boat**

The shadow of the boat

though the bright beauty

of the exiles' clear water.

The body of the boat

and the voices streaming,

terrified, into the sea.

The quiet harbour,

the vacated houses,

and the trail of voices

evaporating, who cried

to the boat, carry me,

bear me like a child,

reborn, to another shore.

1. **The Strangers**

They, the strangers who walk among us, carrying their imagined unborn

child in their minds;

They, the strangers who came to us guessing, full of troubled beliefs,

meet the unexpected hiss.

They, the strangers none of us

have named, whom we do not know, whose lives seem utterly closed to us.

1. **The Song of Love**

I return again to the burning sea,

again to the sea alive with sunlight,

the fire water teeming

with the voices that travel to me

light-fast through the deep,

drowning voices,

voices seeking home.

Victims of mammon.

victims of my desire

that erupts as all our wars,

wars that send our hearts,

our whole being,

into permanent exile.

Here is the seashore

I once knew, now

unknown to me:

the air howls

with the cries of the estranged:

what is the sea? What now

are the seasons?

Where will we go

to be at home

as the ground melts

under our feet?

Where will we go

to heal our broken song?

Where be at home

except in a shattered music?

1. **Interlude2**

Spirit, help me to see

their broken stories

behind their eyes: a chair

Overturned, the faint smear

of a last shared meal

in their abandoned room.

**Part 3:The heart of the singer**

1. **The singer's dance**

The leaves have fallen away, and dance

to the wind-song in the garden,

and through new naked trees, we see

the two great rivers in their beauty

and restless power. The driven clouds

burn like comets in our aerial ocean,

the air is alight with the cries of birds flocking southwards like the music

once exiled from the heart, yet our hearts

erupt and here, on this wind-driven hill

we are drawn to the centre of the dance, and we know we arc helplessly singing,

and seeking whatever in us we cannot stop.

the song ceaseless, leaping, our utter yes.

1. **The Singer's Voice**

It's always there, sounding,

Circling in us; we reach in

to drawn it out, and find it

a familiar, hidden friend:

our shared song, its threads

woven from steel

made gossamer,

light as laughter, tensile,

strongly invisible,

present in the love

we attempt, in what

we seek to unfold

in each others’· lives

as students, friends,

in these singing,

unfinished days.

In our life-yes, our beings

sing from their depths;

and from our own lives

comes our answer of

thanks,

and our one song wings

into the falling, still fire

of the bright snow, slowly

turning our streets

toa deep and fragile

peace.

1. **Sea-singer**

It is not you alone, seasinger,

in the end, your voice

fizzing

into the oncoming waves,

but it is the grain of your voice

like a choral thread in the

rock

linking you song to song,

and we are gathering, all of

us,

choir, at theTromso\* shore:

Arctic church,\*. Hovig's spine,\*

Bucks

like a horse-herd of mountains,

and among us all, a singing

laughter

erupts like an unbroken sea.

1. **Epilogue**

Spirit, the cry has erupted

and now falls awtay

into the silence

of the seeking deaths

in the warm, bright waters.

Love, have mercy.

Love, say we knew you.

Love, that you knew us.

*Euan Tait, Cas-Gwent,*

*Gwent. Cymru,*

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"The text refers to the Arctic Cathedral by' the architect Jan Inge Hovig in Tromsø, a city in the northern part of Norway.