

Green pants butterfly collar purple sombrero
a goliard dandy singing the new morality
an upbeat tune kept in time to his ebony stick
three-legged dance with once-in-a-lifetime kick steps

Inspired of the reliquaries to speak again
their loves and deeds their living wills and testaments
sifting through bones ashes scratchings in dust
for signatures of something to pretend to believe

A kiss of honeyed syllables unbuttoning
the stiff nether lip of a demanding age unwinding
peloponnesian footage to make a fetish from air
a lineage of dancing girls mad to taste the god

Death walks up to each in turn but who eyes wide
from verbal concoctions immanence transcendence
still visible on their palms has seen the perpetual spring
murmuring into his desiccated chamber?

Barleycorn up and down, loansharks behind each tree
indulgence hawkers and confidence men working the girls
hicks and honest sailors out on leave
looking for a good time on their way to the trade fair