

Sabbath of Sabbaths

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Moses said the seventh day was made for hands to cease,
For the Maker held creation in the labor of His peace.
But imagine heaven's Sabbath, when the Lord lays work aside,
And weeps above the silence where the Son of Man has died.

The world hangs like a torn coat in the clutches of the grave,
The temple lamps are trembling, and no one comes to save.
In the tomb a body shivers with thirty-nine red wounds,
While the moon forgets its office and the sun deserts the rooms.

It is Saturday of Saturdays, Sabbath folded deep,
When nobody is working and nobody can weep.
Only one below is restless, in the chambers under stone,
Azazel combs his black hair on his brass and bitter throne.

His watchmen hear a rumor at the rusted gates of Sheol,
Like bells from Cernica, drums from Agapia's soul,
Like troparia from Prislop leaping through the ground,
And chains begin to loosen at the first forbidden sound.

The dusty speaker crackles on the wall beneath the dead:
The clock stopped at three o'clock, the voice of static said.
The Frankfurt plane is missing in a cloud above the Rhine,
And the Ferentari streetcar has stopped upon the line.

All creation holds its breathing; no birth, no death, no cries,
No laughing and no loving under Sheol's iron skies.
Snowdrops sleep beneath the broom, the world forgets to move,
Till Bar Enosh wakes in glory with the keys no grave can prove.

Then Sabbath breaks its silence, and the old doors split apart,
And the dead hear morning ringing in the caverns of the heart.
Saturday of Saturdays, Sabbath of the Son,
The world was done with dying when the hidden work was done.