

Predestination

by [Lucius Falkland](#) (January 2024)



Christ in the Garden of Olives– Gustave Moreau, 1885-89,

Predestination

We don't look for spiritual love,
Like most people don't look for God.
It just turns up sometimes,
On a drizzly evening, as the sky greys,
And pulls you from the autumn shingle
Into the warmest, clearest waters:
A lagoon in which you're happy to drown
In the joy and eternal meaning that saturate you.

Like meat marinated in Merlot,
You change colour, you are renewed:
His voice echoing, "You know I'm real."
And He is not only real, He is in control of you;
A god who will not be defied:
You have no choice but to gaze into your own soul:
Blue fluorite eyes mirroring your colouring back at you,
To imbibe her familiar bouquet, inebriated with a
Sense of the deepest resonance:
You taste in each other all of the same
Flavours, aromas, depths and suppleness.

It's not your fault, you tell yourself,
As you recall the clockwork warmth
Of the mother of your children,
And imagine her eyes melting like milk chocolate
If she knew.
Spiritual love, like the Holy Ghost,
Is using you as His vessel.
Even if you wanted to, you couldn't disobey Him.

Wife Material

Deep down, we chaps all know this basic rule:
There's your other half and then there's wife material.
There's the passionate kiss beneath the waning moonlight

And there's waking up to boiled eggs and cereal.
If wife material was used to build a house
There'd be heated floors and triple-layered-glazing
The wires upstairs would need no electrician.
A post-War semi? Nothing too amazing.

But, let's face it: It's a house that's just not you;
Not the dwelling that reflects your poet's soul.
A nice converted loft, but no connection
To the spirits of English history. It leaves a hole
Deep within you that yearns for something ancient:
A sixteenth century manor with oak beams
And a priest hole and a library, secret stairways:
A book case that just isn't what it seems.
Then one night, lost while walking in the country,
You find that ideal home, it seems to boast
All that's you: Antique tables, Georgian portraits
And it's haunted by exactly the same ghosts
Such that seeing it's like looking in a mirror.
It's your double, feels the same, but there's a catch:
It's so like you it's made the same decisions.
It's stuck within somewhere semi-detached.
It goes against the Laws of Physics, surely,
Like a Danish king sat holding back the tide,
That two central-heated, red-brick post-War semis
Could have haunted Tudor mansions trapped inside.
Won't cracks begin to show in the foundations?
Won't the windows smash, the loft conversion fall?
But you know the semi's warm; it's wife material.
Could you really live in that sometimes freezing hall?

The Rosehip

Modest summer fruit

Nestled among the roses,
Fragrant Chanel suits
Of conventional, delicate petals.
The Country Garden spring:
Some Alba, white, cerise.
What draws me to this little thing?
The rosehip.

The rosehip isn't "plain."
Is it, somehow, unassuming?
I don't want my words to pain
Her, unpretentious beauty.
Like an Amish in her bonnet
Clipping past the knee-length skirts,
It's she who evokes the sonnet.
Winds blow away the buds.

The filaments, the sepal
Of this tiny "pseudo-carp"
Just seem, somehow, familiar
Like a memory of some grassland
Where you played when you were four,
Perhaps by some pub in Dorset:
You'd played there once before,
And everything made sense.

[Table of Contents](#)

Lucius Falkland is the *nom de plume* of a writer and academic from London.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)