

Psalm

by [Jeffrey Burghauser](#) (August 2025)



Self-Portrait in Front of a Mirror (Henri De Toulouse-Lautrec, 1880)

To God, a naïve, sŭpplĭcátŏřŷ prayer.

Relentlessly Vehement Kisser

Of Those who are Strangers to Kisses: declare

That nothing of silver, of Swiss her-

Mĭtáge semidarkness, of North or of South,

Shall forfeit my right to Your mouth.

O Bed of the Trustful: invite me to bed

While there is still time for some slumber—

While there is still time to commune with the dead

Appearing in topaz & umber.

O Dusty Proscenium's Floodlights: define

The *mise-en-scène's* évěřŷ line.

O Nonchalant Cóntrăctĭng Party to Whom,

Alone, the Unbreakable Contract

Is Legible: softly preserve me from doom

The dignified, elderly don tracked

From Genocide's sodden, voluminous ditch

To some neurological twitch

Or spell of abstraction experienced by

A half-shaven man at his mirror.

Preserve me from selling my soul for a sigh.

The Father of Lies, cavalier ĭr-

Rĭdéntist, considers with devious art

My mind, having taken my heart.

To God, a naïve, sŭpplĭcátŏřŷ verse.

Relentlessly Generous Tender

Of Those who are Strangers to Tenderness: nurse

With lullaby-whispers & slender,

Experienced fingers ideal as a ghost,

What, in me, might need it the most.

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Jeffrey Burghauser is a teacher in Columbus, Ohio. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo and the University of Leeds. He currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Appalachian Journal*, *Fearsome Critters*, *Iceview*, *Lehrhaus*, and *New English Review*. Jeffrey's book-length collections are available on [Amazon](#), and his website is www.jeffreyburghauser.com.

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