

# Libretto by Euan Tait

## Part 1: 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.

### 2. 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,  
all of you, know well: it sounds  
with the agonised cry  
of our wounded seas,  
while our minds reel  
with broken desire.  
O sweet sister sea,  
O damaged one,  
O harm in ourselves,  
We, children of Mammon.

### 3. 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  
from the rich soils  
our naked feet touch  
comes the same  
terrible high cry  
like a bird caught in flight  
by the white heat  
of 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.

### 4. 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  
slowly 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.

### 5. The Cry of the Sea (Instrumental)

### 6. Interlude 1

Spirit, help us to hear  
their cries like a coming storm  
surging across the waters,  
from boats packed with fear.

## Part 2: The Cries of Exile

### 7. Song of Sea Exile

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?

### 8. 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.

### 9. 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.

### 10. 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?

### 11. Interlude 2

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

### 12. 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 are helplessly singing,

and seeking whatever in us we cannot stop,  
the song ceaseless, leaping, our utter yes.

### 13. 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  
to a deep and fragile  
peace.

### 14. 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 the Tromsø 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.

### 15. Epilogue

Spirit, the cry has erupted  
and now falls away  
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.

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