

**The sun rises over a distant jungle**

Ryan Woods

The sun rises over a distant jungle;  
A child cries in the dead of night;  
A tree falls in a distant forest, killing the only man who could have heard it;  
*Does it make a sound?*  
The sands of time whip around in the wind, across the ruins of ages;  
The annals of the world are destroyed when a river overflows its banks;  
The gnomon falls;  
Pick it up again and set it down;  
*But it was set down wrong!*  
A mechanical clock falls backward through the ages and makes its argument;  
(Time is not an argument);  
A man and a woman make love,  
But their child miscarries;  
A lion wraps its jaws around a city, and the city burns;  
Atlantis sinks into the sea;  
Aristotle, Plato, Socrates,  
Drown.  
A leopard leaps upon an infant;  
(The leopard was starving; what else could it do?)  
The infant is torn to shreds; a simple meal on a simple day,  
A simple life that has *gone away*...  
Two giants step upon the Earth and kill millions;  
In Eden, Adam steps on an ant;  
Many thousand voices cry out in an instant,  
Many thousand eyes light up with flames;  
(Many thousand are not even aware),  
Many thousand are, in an instant,  
O b l i t e r a t e d  
In a moment, the Earth is scoured and poisoned;  
In a longer time: the same;  
Death hangs over the jungle for half a century,  
(Some places for even longer);  
Malignant cells overwhelm their own body, and it perishes;

A worker slips and falls  
twenty-  
five  
feet  
off  
a  
bridge;  
In a distant nation, a child dies from diarrhea;  
Another, not so far away, is terminated in the womb;  
The soul as an idea dies;  
God dies in the intellectual mind -  
(Perhaps He has risen again?)  
An anxious man sees his dreams alongside him, but never holds their hand;  
In a long life a man can even live: *not at all*;  
Childhood ends (before it began);  
Childhood ends (as it must);  
Life ends (and what next?);  
Is it Hell that lives on Earth?  
Or is Hell, indeed, much worse?