

# A DICE THROW

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# AT ANY TIME

EVEN WHEN CAST IN  
EVERLASTING CIRCUMSTANCES

FROM THE DEPTH OF A SHIPWRECK

WHETHER

the

Chasm

whitish

fulltide

frenzied

down a declivity

desperately glides

on a wing

its own

in

advance fallen back from a failure to guide its flight  
and covering all the outspurts  
cutting off all the surges

far far within recalls

the shadow buried in the deep veiled by this variant sail

to the point of matching  
the span

with its gaping trough like the shell

of a ship

listing to this side or that

## THE MASTER

risen  
inferring

from this conflagration

that there

as you threaten

the one and only Number that cannot

hesitates  
a corpse cut off

rather  
than play  
the game  
like a hoary maniac  
in the name of the waves

one

direct shipwreck

gone beyond the old reckonings  
helmsmanship now forgotten with age

he used to grip the helm

at his feet  
of the united horizon

is in preparation  
tossed and blended  
in the fist that seeks to grasp it  
some destiny and also the winds

be any other

Spirit  
in order to cast it  
into the blast  
closing the division and passing proudly on

by its arm from the secret it withholds

surges over his head  
spills down as a submissive beard

of man this

with no vessel  
no matter  
where vain

ancestrally not to open his hand  
                                   which is clenched  
                                   far beyond his useless head

a bequest on his disappearance

                                  to someone  
   ambiguous

                                  the ulterior immemorial demon

having

                  from non-lands

                                  led

the old man toward this ultimate conjunction with probability

                                  he

  his puerile shadow

caressed and polished and restored and washed

                                  softened by the waves and set free

                                  from the hard bones lost amid the timbers

                                  born

  from a frolic

the sea attempting via the old man or the latter versus the sea

                                  an idle chance

Nuptials

whose

                  veil of illusion being splashed back their obsession

                  along with the wraith of a gesture

                                  will falter

                                  and fall

                                  sheer folly



**NEVER WILL ABOLISH**

*AS IF*

*A simple  
in the silence*

*in some imminent*

*hovers*

*insinuation*

*inrolled ironically*

*or*

*the mystery*

*hurled down*

*howled out*

*swirl of hilarity and horror*

*on the brink of the abyss*

*without sprinkling it*

*or escaping*

*and draws from it the soothing virgin sign*

*AS IF*

*an utterly lost and lonely quill*

*except*

*that a cap of midnight abuts it or grazes it  
 and fixes  
 on the velvet crumpled by a dark burst of laughter*

*this rigid whiteness*

*ridiculous*

*opposed to the sky  
 too vividly  
 not to mark  
 in miniature detail  
 whoever*

*a bitter prince of the reef*

*caps himself with it heroically  
 irresistible but restrained  
 by his limited reason manly*

*in a flash of lightning*

*anxious*

*expiatory and pubescent*

*mule*

*The lucid and lordly plume  
on the invisible brow  
shimmers  
then overshadows  
a dim and dainty form  
in her siren sinuosity*

*with forked and impatient terminal*

*laughter*

*that*

***IF***

*of vertigo*

*erect*

*long enough*

*to slap*

*scales*

*some rock*

*a false mansion*

*suddenly*

*dispelled in mists*

*which laid*

*a limit on the infinite*

*IT WAS*

*a product of the stars*

*IT WOULD BE*

*no*

*worse*

*neither more nor less*

*but as much indifferently as*



## THE NUMBER

### MIGHT HAVE EXISTED

except as the fragmentary hallucination of some death throe

### MIGHT HAVE BEGUN AND ENDED

sceping out though denied and enclosed when manifest

eventually

outspread with a certain profusion in a rare state

### MIGHT HAVE BEEN RECKONED

evidence of the total sum however scant

### MIGHT HAVE ENLIGHTENED

## CHANCE

*Down falls*

*the quill*

*a rhythmic suspension of disaster*

*to bury itself*

*in the primordial spray*

*whose frenzy formerly leapt from there to a peak*

*that is blasted*

*in the constant neutrality of the abyss*

NOTHING

of the unforgettable crisis  
or else  
the deed

might have been achieved keeping in view every result that is non  
 human

WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE  
 a commonplace upsurge is shedding absence

OTHER THAN THE PLACE  
 a lowly splashing of some kind as if to scatter the vacuous action  
 at once which otherwise  
 by its deceit  
 would have established  
 the loss

in these indefinite regions  
 of the swell  
 where all reality is dissolved

EXCEPT

on high

PERHAPS

as far away as a place

merges with the beyond

outside any interest  
 assigned to it  
 in a general way  
 by a certain obliquity in a certain declivity  
 of flames

toward  
 what must be  
 Septentrion as well as North

#### A CONSTELLATION

cold with neglect and disuse  
 not so much  
 that it fails to number  
 on some vacant and higher surface  
 the successive impact  
 starrily  
 of a full reckoning in the making

keeping watch  
 wondering  
 rolling on  
 shining and pondering

before finally halting  
 at some last point that sanctifies it

Every Thought emits a Dice Throw

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STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

*Collected Poems and  
Other Verse*



*Translated with Notes by*

E. H. and A. M. BLACKMORE

*With an Introduction by*

ELIZABETH McCOMBIE

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