

FROM THE PAPERS OF ONE STILL LIVING

Søren pseudonymous, haunted by lambs.
Hans Christian Anderson love-shy in his golden age.
Europe as iambs of revolution at barricades.
The two men so at such a time a tale of two
transformations. Faith a tallow candle.
Once I was young, polemical, & I wore out
the idea of history like a boot's old sole.
Now I would never try to cobble its riddle.
At Penn Station, night eats me. Memory stirs me.
I WAS A STREETCORNER LOAFER, AN IDLER, Søren said,
A FRIVOLOUS BIRD. Saw likewise wit without
earnestness in Anderson's tales, the acrid,
ironic heartsickness of Thumbelina's swallow
or the steadfast tin soldier, his ballerina's burned
spangle. If I fear, I fear I'm the last outcast
in the yarn of New York, a talking, disentangled rat
that thinks (as man might) a name might
be some talisman working against harm.
I VIEW EVERYTHING AETERNO MODO, Søren writes.
So suppose I were a *KIERKEGAARD*, meaning *CHURCH FARM*.
Then I'd die in something that belonged to my fäTHər.
Suppose that I'd died a child. He might've carried me,
dug his shallow furrow in an ø, & planted me there,
whispering something overhead that only I could hear.
Ø suppose my fäTHər were alive to hear me now.
In midtown, melting into the legs of a lead crowd,
I am constantly *aeterno modo*. For God's sake,
look at the hideousness of the swans in Central Park
or the beautiful childishness of tourists craning
their necks to see rooflines scrub the white doll
skin of heaven, skein of a thought with my name.

EITHER^{OR}/
OR^{EITHER}