

## THE SPIRIT OF SERIOUSNESS

**The Spirit of Seriousness** (*deep voice, upright like a pillar*):

I am the solid ground beneath the trembling steps of a wandering humanity,  
the golden rule in the shifting darkness of the meditating mind.

I organize, I name, I measure and weigh. Bread is bread: must not man eat?

In the order of the world, everything has its place, one and unchangeable.

I fled madness as one flees the abyss; I was born of the refusal of anguish.

I am the varnish of fear, the politeness of the void.

**Madness** (*troubled voice, both gentle and stormy*):

And yet you falter, spirit of seriousness,

for your ground is but compacted dust.

You drank the ink of signs and forgot their light.

You weigh things, but ignore their song;

what matters is not the weight of things, but their density.

The bread bleeds, the star watches you,

and the brother weeps without your noticing.

But I dance, to the rhythm of the laughing god.

**The Spirit of Seriousness:**

You are dangerous. You make tremble the walls we built

so we would no longer need to scream.

You enter like a wind, wicked and ravaging, into well-ordered rooms;

you make stones and broken mirrors speak,

you know nothing of numbers.

You wish to dissolve all boundaries

but what remains when everything is but ash from your fire?

**Madness:**

What remains is man. Naked, free, trembling perhaps—but alive.

What remains is the fabric of mystery,  
the taste of a world never weighed, never measured.

What remains is the poet, who knows pain but is not trapped in it.  
I am that fissure through which the infinite breathes upon the world.

**The Spirit of Seriousness:**

I was born from the need for order,  
the quiet geometry of law that holds all things.  
In my voice echoes the obvious. Bread nourishes, work is noble:  
every task an accomplishment.  
Things are what they are, and man must bend to them.  
Nothing is more certain than obedience to what is laid down.

What you call symbol, I call detour.  
What you name mystery, I correct through measure.

**Madness:**

And I was born from the cry stifled in the throats of the living.  
I am the shiver at the edge of the everyday,  
the fracture in the broken bread,  
the blood that drips from a too-human crumb.

You say: "One must live." And you forget to love.  
You say: "One must understand." And you lock yourself away  
in numbers as vain as the void.

Have you seen the eyes of the sister,  
when madness bloomed on the brother's brow?  
Have you tasted that bread? The one that bleeds in silence?

**The Spirit of Seriousness:**

But you speak in riddles!

I build, I name, I draw lines, I raise walls against the anguish of death.

I have banished the gods to stop trembling,

I have cloistered the spirit in frames so it no longer burns.

You are fissure, contagion, the forgetting of norm's blessings.

You haunt the forests of language,

troubling the smooth surface of the world.

The sky I chart is precise, my stars have names,

my laws are landmarks.

**Madness:**

And yet they elude you.

Behind your sky imprisoned by calculations,

the ancient fire still watches.

You want to fix the star, but it dies the moment you name it.

You want to subdue the gods, but they withdraw into silence.

For you do not seek: you use, you subdue, you dominate,

you hoard in vain a dead knowledge.

You exhaust the heavens' forces,

and still you think you know.

But I know the poet: gratitude rises far higher than wisdom.

**The Spirit of Seriousness:**

Gratitude? For what? For vertigo? For the void where you dance?

You speak of freedom, but it is chaos.

You say presence, but know only decomposition.

The man you seduce is naked, alone,

wandering yellowed wheat fields,

haunted by the shadows of what he has lost.

**Madness:**

True. I do not lie.

But I open that field,  
so he might hear the lark's song,  
touch with his fingers the freshness of rain upon dark earth.

I promise nothing; I flee contentment.

I am the path without trickery, without arms,  
the open mouth waiting for a silent god.

And sometimes he returns, that god you banished.

He returns in the mouth of a child,  
in a lamp that flickers,  
in a poem never dared to finish.

You call me madness—but I am what remains  
when wisdom collapses and the soul is left with nothing but its nakedness.

**The Spirit of Seriousness:**

...You make me waver.

You unfold the flesh of words.

You darken the day.

And if I were to bend the knee—what would remain?

What lies at the end of your vertigo?

**Madness:**

There is a place.

Veiled in sacred night.

A place where man knows nothing, but still is.

There, bread is not ration, but offering.

There, name no longer imprisons, but calls.

There, the spirit, finally free, is silent... and listens.

The tension at last eases.

Darkness is no longer threat, but cradle.

The wind falls silent—or rather, becomes voice.

We are in the final act, where Madness does not destroy, but heals,  
where symbol becomes flesh again,  
where man, disarmed, finds his song.

**Madness:**

Have you seen the sister?

Have you seen madness break her crystal gaze and bloom on the brother's brow?

She no longer speaks with stones in her eyes.

She breathes.

The wax of her hands melts under the light that returns,  
no longer from lamps, but from within.

She breaks bread again, but it no longer bleeds.

It nourishes, it warms.

It is bread—and far more,

because she has forgotten why she was meant to suffer.

And in that forgetting, pure as a morning with no memory,  
she has found herself.

**The Spirit of Seriousness (*in retreat*):**

Is this then your victory?

A silence that demands nothing?

A fire without cause?

I forged rules,

I drew borders.

But she was beyond reach,

wisdom dead,

the sister gone.

And you... you returned her to herself without naming.

**Madness:**

I do not heal with hollow words, with soulless speech,  
with the drool of the spirit of seriousness.

I give back what your world stole:  
the sweetness of the without-why.

I give the brother what anguish took:  
the impulse.

He walks now, alone yes—but light.  
He no longer speaks. He listens.

*(The Brother enters slowly. He lifts his face to the sky. He no longer searches. He receives.)*

**The Brother:**

I have no name,  
and nothing awaits me that might tell who I am.  
I am the grass that grows and bends beneath the words of sages.  
And yet I am full,  
fuller than I have ever been.

Silence embraces me,  
and in that silence there is a song,  
a song in the sharing:  
of green branches,  
of the lark,  
of what was here long before me  
and which now, at last, I hear.

**Madness** *(softly)*:

He no longer fears me.  
He no longer calls me madness.  
He calls me: peace.

*(She places a hand on his brow. No fire burns. It is coolness.)*

**The Sister** (*standing still, transfigured*):

He has returned.

And I no longer watch the dead.

I watch life—this life,

naked, tender, fragile—begin again.

And on the white stage, where laws were once declared and then undone,

where bread once bled, now feeds body and soul,

where night once weighed heavy, then turned to lullaby,

nothing remains but the voice of the lark,

above, clear and light,

interwoven with the silence of the brother.