***Reading Nietzsche in the Afterlife***

*As Gide recommended … I am struck by one*

*of the aphorisms in* Beyond Good and Evil.

Seldom are advocates *artist*

 Enough to turn the beautiful horror

 Of, say, the murder of a whore, or

♫

A lover, poisoned with a twist

Of lemon, irony and fate,

 To the advantage of their clients.

 For our Newtonian moral science

Is heavy-handed, overweight,

And cannot keep up with life’s nimble

 Complexities and gravity-

 Defying, cosmic flippancy,

Of which the criminal is symbol.

You’d think he had been reading, ‘Pen,

 Pencil, and Poison’ and was thinking

 Of Wainwright! Psychic interlinking

Exists between like spirits, then?

 *Enter Nietzsche.*

*We seem to plagiarise each other!*

 *Who should sue whom, and in what court?*

To steal saves time, for life is short

And art is long, and work’s a bother.

\*

*What is God? Nothing real or firm.*

 *A name for namelessness. A place-*

 *Holder, an X.* As Arnold says,

‘God is a literary term’—

*An inconceivability*

 *Impersonating a concept Is he plagiarising Lichtenberg?*

 *That in its ghostly grasp has kept*

*The mind from setting itself free.*

Reports of God’s demise are highly

 Exaggerated. He may slink

 Into your conscience, and ghost-think

Your thoughts, even now. The dead are wily.

*The hand releasing must be steady.*

 *The Buddha’s shadow lingered on*

 *The wall long after he was gone*

*And will not leave till it is ready.*

**\*

Didn’t I, too, like Hallam, though

 Otherwise a far different type,

 Appear before the time was ripe?

You pay a price if you outgrow

Your own contemporaries. Fate

 In the mask of society

 Punishes prematurity.

Too early we are born, too late

Appreciated for our good.

 *Some of us are born posthumously,*

 *Herr Wilde. Our ‘type’ is doomed to be*

*Heard loudly and faintly understood,*



*Because we are not types at all,*

 *But the exceptions to the rules,*

 *Including those of any ‘Schools.’*

*We stand for the Atypical.*

*In us all ‘types’ come to an end.*

 *A population that consists*

 *Purely of individualists:*

*Of this we are the omens, friend,*

A world of artists who fulfill

 Themselves at every moment! With

 Each thought and deed they make the myth

Of themselves. *Only such can will*

*Their own return eternally.*

 *The Will is powerless* not *to will.*

 *The Nihilist, willing Nothing, still*

*Is* willing, *willing* not *to be.*

*The Lion in the desert roars In* Thus Spake Zarathustra.

 *I WILL. The Dragon says, THOU SHALT.*

 *Here even Lion spirits halt.*

*The Child is the renewing force.*

*We are born old, we Moderns, sinning*

 *Against LIFE. This was my demand:*

 *‘Grow young again!’ Let ‘the Child’ stand*

*For innocence always beginning.*