

[♫](http://inmemoriamc33.com/faure_nocturne2.mp3)

[](http://inmemoriamc33.com/faure_nocturne2.mp3)***L’Appel du Silence***

Paris is in my blood, in the air!

It draws me by remembrance of

Things past, and sweet, and gone. Above

The Channel I fly, and I am there.

In the Hôtel Voltaire (‘twas when *Summer of 1874. Oscar’s*

I had just won my Demyship) *mother accompanied him*

I let *The Sphinx* begin to slip *to London, Geneva, and Paris.*

Into existence through my pen. —[Mr V]

Was it for this I came, to see

Myself write the first draft of my

Fatality? No. I think that I

Have some quite *other* place to be.

I walk in a distracted mood

And ask a man the time of day.

He looks right through me on his way.

*Must* these Parisians be so rude?

I should have asked directions—where?

The Pont Royal… Now, as once then,

It carries me across the Seine.

The Quai du Louvre… Where from here?

Along the Quais I go until,

At Boulevard Henri IV, I

Turn left. I do not know the why.

But my feet know the way. And still

Northeast I press, past roundabout,

Up boulevard and avenue,

Until at last I reach the Rue

Du Repos, and I do not doubt

The place on my right is the last

Place where so many are to be found,

To which I all along was bound:

The future that is now my past.

I walk into a haunted city

Of trees and statues and allées.

They have built here in Père Lachaise

Such monuments to useless pity,

One weeps with pity for such waste

 Of beauty on the shores of death!

Children of stone, who hold no breath!

Oblivion honoured, grieved and graced.



Here lie among the poplar trees,

And have lain for some thousand years,

The pair whose tale still wakens tears,

Poor Abélard and Héloïse.

Propped on one elbow, Gericault

Lies on his tomb in his beret

With brush and easel, as if to say,

*I stay; let others come and go.*

A child is standing all alone,

Her face behind a chiselled veil.

I weep, for she is small and pale,

I weep, for she is made of stone.

A woman sits, resting her head

 Upon her husband’s knees. She will

Not leave him, though the years pass, still

She grieves, though she is long-since dead.

With finger to his lips, a man

 Appears perplexed in the extreme

That life should be a fleeting dream

And death of an eternal span.

I turn left at an intersection

And stop short, for look! Just around

The corner, thrust up from the ground,

Two hands grope for the Resurrection.

And left now into Avenue

 Carette, where, crammed in side-by-side

Like row-houses, yet dignified,

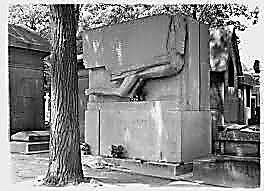
Tombs weather the endless tourist’s view.

My trepidation beckons me

Hesitantly towards a tomb

Of special mortuary gloom.

An angel guards it vigilantly.

He is so familiar I weep

And so uncanny I am afraid.

The statuary is well made,

Solemn, and worthy of its keep,

Assyrian, hieratic, cold.

His eyes are closed, his mouth is shut.

He guards a secret, yes, but what?

*ÆNIGMA* is his name. How old

Is he, who hoards his message so?

One could grow old, counting the years.

Does the Angel of Pity shed no tears?

Riddle to which I do not know

The answer, could it be there is

No answer? Yes: it is ‘The Sphinx’.

The crossroads of all broken links.

*Who are you*?Cunning beast, is this

Your question? ‘Alien tears will fill

For him / Pity’s long broken urn.’

Who wrote that? Memories return

To me, return against my will.

The lines are so familiar.

And now I notice what I had

Not noticed, since it was too sad.

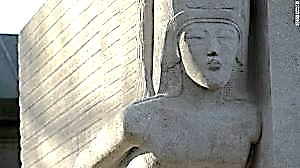
And says he: *This is where you are*.

*But what are you?* I am a child.

I am a man. I am an aging

Man, in my brain the fever’s raging—

I am dead. And I am Oscar Wilde.



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