

The Latest Freed Man

By Wallace Stevens

Tired of the old descriptions of the world,
The latest freed man rose at six and sat
On the edge of his bed. He said,

*"I suppose there is a doctrine to this landscape.
Yet, having just escaped from the truth,
the morning is color and mist, which is enough:
The moment's rain and sea,
The moment's sun
(the strong man vaguely seen),
Overtaking the doctrine of this landscape.
Of him and of his works, I am sure.
He bathes in the mist like a man without a doctrine.
The light he gives—
It is how he gives his light.
It is how he shines,
Rising upon the doctors* in their beds
And on their beds... ."*

And so the freed man said.

It was how the sun came shining into his room:
To be without a description of *to be*,
For a moment on rising, at the edge of the bed, *to be*,
To have the ant of the self changed to an ox
With its organic boomings,
To be changed from a doctor into an ox, before standing up,
To know that the change and that the ox-like struggle

Come from the strength that is the strength of the sun,
Whether it comes directly or from the sun.

It was how he was free.

It was how his freedom came.

It was *being* without description, being an ox.

It was the importance of the trees outdoors,

The freshness of the oak-leaves, not so much

That they were oak-leaves, as the way they looked.

It was everything being more real,

Himself at the center of reality, seeing it.

It was everything bulging and blazing and big in itself,

The blue of the rug, the portrait of Vidal,

*Qui fait fi des jolinesses banales**, the chairs.

*doctors of doctrines

*who can ignore the banal prettiness