

Μα. 2:12 ουδέποτε οὕτως εἶδόμεν!

cf. 822 ff
1046 ff

C.M.
Ceryll W. Jones

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The Country of the Blind

Hard light bathed them -- a whole nation of eyeless men,
Dark bipeds not aware how they were maimed. A long
Process, clearly, a slow curse,
Drained through centuries, left them thus.

At some transitional stage, then, a luckless few,
No doubt, must have had eyes after the up-to-date,
Normal type had achieved snug
Darkness, safe from the guns of heav'n;

Whose blind mouths would abuse words that belonged to their
Great-grandfathers, unabashed, talking of light in some
Eunuch'd, etiolated,
Fungoid sense, as a symbol of

Abstract thoughts. If a man, one that had eyes, a poor
Misfit, spoke of the grey dawn or the stars or green-
Sloped sea waves, or admired how
Warm tints change in a lady's cheek,

None complained he had used words from an alien tongue,
None question'd. It was worse. All would agree. 'Of course,'
Came their answer. 'We've all felt
Just like that.' They were wrong. And he

Knew too much to be clear, could not explain. The words --
Sold, raped, flung to the dogs -- now could avail no more;
Hence silence. But the mouldwarps,
With glib confidence, easily

Showed how tricks of the phrase, sheer metaphors could set
Fools concocting a myth, taking the words for things.
Do you think this a far-fetched
Picture? Go then about among

Men now famous; attempt speech on the truths that once,
Opaque, carved in divine forms, irremovable,
Dread but dear as a mountain-
Mass, stood plain to the inward eye.

- C. S. Lewis

From: Lewis, C. S. Poems. Ed. Walter Hooper. New York:
Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965, pp. 33-4.