

LAZARUS LAZULI is a smart, small-town dandy of 22 years.

#1 (Michael has just pronounced his grief over the boredom of life and sadness that no one can understand him.)

LAZARUS

(Putting his hand on Michael's shoulder after a long pause, looking up and nodding, Michael turning to face Lazarus) Ah, but as it was in the beginning, my dear, it is now, and ever shall be.

MICHAEL

Lazarus?

LAZARUS

(still looking up, unmoved) Yes, yes, hello Michael. You've just got me thinking. I just don't know why you say that.

MICHAEL

Say what, Lazarus?

LAZARUS

You see, my dearest friend, you, like all of us, were given a choice. Before you were born, you had to choose. Before, you reclined with cherubim and were so contented – as we all were, no doubt.

MICHAEL

Lazarus–

LAZARUS

BUT fatal glance! Unhappy, holy chance! You looked upon the world and so loved it that you learned of love and hungered for it and the world and your own desire. And so He warned you, Michael: He told you there would be pain and suffering, and wailing at birth, and the gnashing of teeth with the stroke of death.

MICHAEL

Lazarus!

LAZARUS

(turning to him now) YOU had to choose, Michael, to go or to stay – and you went, like we all do. But now that you have gone, why are you in such a rush to go, goodfellow?

MICHAEL

Lazarus, what on earth are you talking about?

LAZARUS

(hugging him aggressively) Michael it is so good to see you. I cannot tell you how very good it is. How have you been?

MICHAEL

Wait, Lazarus Lazuli! Lazarus! Let go! *(Lazarus lets go)* What in the world were you saying before?

LAZARUS

Before? Ah yes, Michael. *(absent-minded and sadly)* I have always been a little mad. *(meeting Michael's eyes)*. And you?

MICHAEL

(a bit confused, but not keen to show it) I'm fine, thanks.
(Pauses) Are you the same Lazarus Lazuli I knew, the same friend I knew from four years ago?

LAZARUS

No, definitely not, definitely not. I believe I am much improved.

#2A (Observing Botticelli's *Annunciation*, Lazarus accurately and colorfully describes the painting, all while thinking it's a Titian.)

LAZARUS

You see the backward turn, the fingers spread
The open palm as if she saw the world
Of pain that was to come...Her mantle red
The gleaming flowers white, their petals curled
In some symbolic gesture full of grace
She heard the angel speak and heard his voice,
Uncertain in the autumn air; his face
She shuddered at, she looked away, no choice.
Then all at once the kindly eyes, the lips
That seemed to kiss her ears, the whispered word
So that she turned and saw the emerald tips
Of emerald wings, and knew it was the lord
Who sent this vibrant angel: so did Titian
Render this moment, with his lofty vision.

#2B (Lazarus delivers the closing monologue.)

LAZARUS

Well we've turned suddenly serious it seems,
And I suppose I too must have a turn.
I've bought and printed comedy in reams
(Forgive a newsies final joke; I earn
The pennies that I spend with pain), but dreams
Which boil in the blood and nightly burn
The brain, must in the end go up in steam;
My hope is gone, which I cannot redeem.

You came in from the cold to spend the time
In this warm black box, your face in shadow free
To laugh or weep, to think our play a crime
Against the art-form or (I hope) to see
That we attempted something flawed but fine,
To lift your cares from you to help you flee
That hopeless loneliness that comes to all
That fear which standing things feel for the fall.

But now, and in our play, it's Fall: Today
May be the day, tonight may be the night;
When hope returns, and doubt will fade away.
But in that ignorance itself a bright
And certain star must light our way,
A chance, a feeling of "perhaps, just might..."
And all the things we've acted out above,
Have been -- for you, for us -- the love of love.