

2001: Finger Painting

Looking down as I type or play piano,
I wonder how it is I am able to
think thoughts separate from what my fingers do.
Am I like water, able to divide myself into smaller parts?

Fingers tapping on the keyboard;
How do you remember?
Nails so hard and shiny –
Palms so soft and smooth –
Did you forget you dance for love
and love to feel your youth?

Ten little fingers,
winners every one,
are you having fun?

Fingers have you betrayed me?
Did you trade life for illusion?
Do these ten legs flee in haste,
or are you having fun?

Are my hands soiled with obligation?
Are my fingers clean every one?
'Cause when one hand's washed with one hand stained
dirt's handed dad to son.

These ten ways to observe myself
as I strut upon life's keys
can be a clue to parts of me
that I've been reticent to see.

I tap on ivory, black and white,
questions linger in midair.
Do I hate you, pinky finger?
Do I tell you to beware?

I see ten little fingers
running all the time,
docile and devoted,
stop this silly mime.

Touch your fingers, finger.
Feel your honesty.
Don't let worry linger,
so you can learn more of me.

Thumbs down to convention.
I'll break the cuffs I wear.
When I see myself as whole
Life's beautiful and rare.

Eyes that peer in candor
are eyes that love to see.
And eyes enjoined in rapture
will lead hands to work for free.

Ten little fingers,
hungry for some fun,
you walk along the keyboard
seeking songs unsung.
Wake up little fingers.
Stop and stretch and clasp.
You'll do nicely hand in hand –
Truth, your greatest task.

You'll not be here so very long.
Don't falsify your song.
Live in harmony and calm,
in tandem with your palms.