Gerard Manley Hopkins’s “God’s Grandeur” (1877; 1918)

The world is charged with the grandeur of God,

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod; 5

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things; 10

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Romans 1:20 / “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” (NIV)
Gerard Manley Hopkins’s “As Kingfisher’s Catch Fire” (1877; 1918)

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;

As tumbled over rim in roundy wells

Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell’s

Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;

Each mortal thing does one thing and the same: 5

Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;

Selves!—goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,

Crying What I do is me: for that I came.

I say more: the just man justices;

Keeps gráce: thát keeps all his goings graces; 10

Acts in God’s eye what in God’s eye he is—

Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,

Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his

To the Father through the features of men’s faces.

Luke 6:45 (ESV) / “The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasures produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.
Gerard Manley Hopkins’s “[Carrion Comfort]” (1885; 1918)

Not, I’ll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee,

Not untwist—slack they may be—these last strands of man

In me ór, most weary, cry I can no more. I can;

Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.

But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on me

Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb against me? scan

With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones? and fan,

O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to avoid thee and flee?

Why? That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer and clear.

Nay in all that toil, that coil, since (seems) I kissed the rod,

Hand rather, my heart lo! lapped strength, stole joy, would laugh, chéer.

Cheer whom though? The Hero whose heaven-handling flung me, fóot tród

Me? or me that fought him? O which one? Is it each one? That night, that year

Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my God!) my God.

Genesis 32:24-32 / So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” 27 The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. 28 Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” 29 Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there. 30 So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.” 31 The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon.
Gerard Manley Hopkins’s “No worst, there is none” (1885; 1918)

No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.
Comforter, where, where is your comforting?
Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?

My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief-
Woe, world-sorrow; on an age-old anvil wince and sing--
Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked “No lingers! Let me be fell: force I must be brief.”

O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
May who ne’er hung there. Nor does long our small
Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,
Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all
Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.
Gerard Manley Hopkins’s “Thou art indeed just, Lord” (1889; 1918)

Justus quidem tu es, Domine, si disputem tecum; verumtamen justa
Loquar ad te: Quare via impiorum prosperatur? &c.

Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
With thee: but, sir, so what I plead is just.
Why do sinners’ ways prosper? and why must
Disappointment all I endeavour end?

Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend, 5
How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost,

Defeat, thwart me? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust
Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,
Sir, life upon thy cause. See, banks and brakes
Now, leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again
With pretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes

Them; birds build—but not I build; no, but strain,

Time’s eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.

Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

Wort thou my enemy, O thou my friend.

_translation of epigraph: “Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?” (Jeremiah 12.1) The Latin was Hopkins’s title._