

DEGRADATION OF THE SELF

An account handed down of the forgetting of the ground.

The falling is not the fall. The forgetting of the ground is.

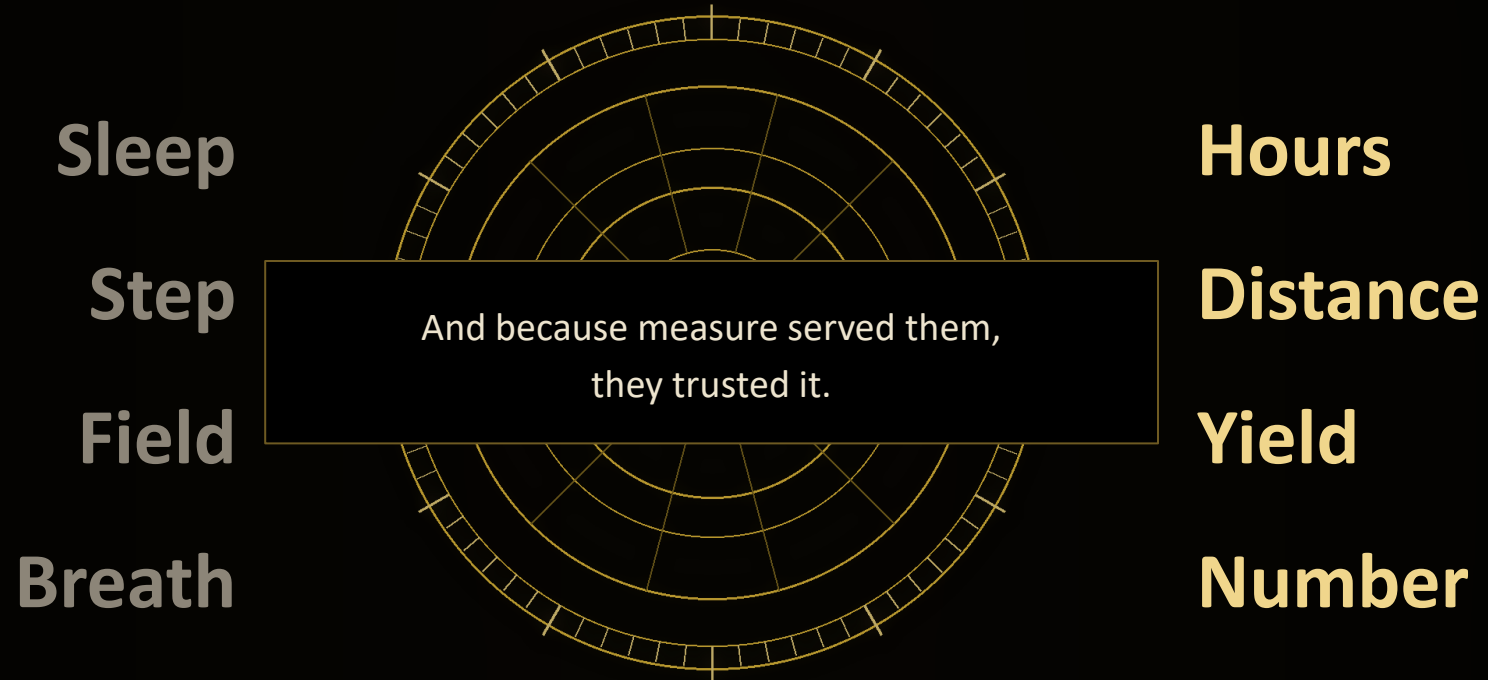


The indeterminate lay heavy
upon the human being.
Like mist upon water.



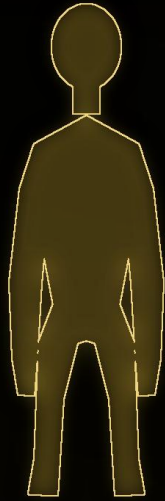
So he reached for measure.
Not out of malice, not out of need,
but out of love for clarity.

*He who cannot say himself loses his hold upon his own being.
The dark grew brighter.*



*Whatever let itself be fitted into number counted henceforth as real.
Whatever would not fit remained without a name — and soon counted as never having been.*

The Human



Hard to hold.
Changeable.
Contradictory.
At times a stranger.

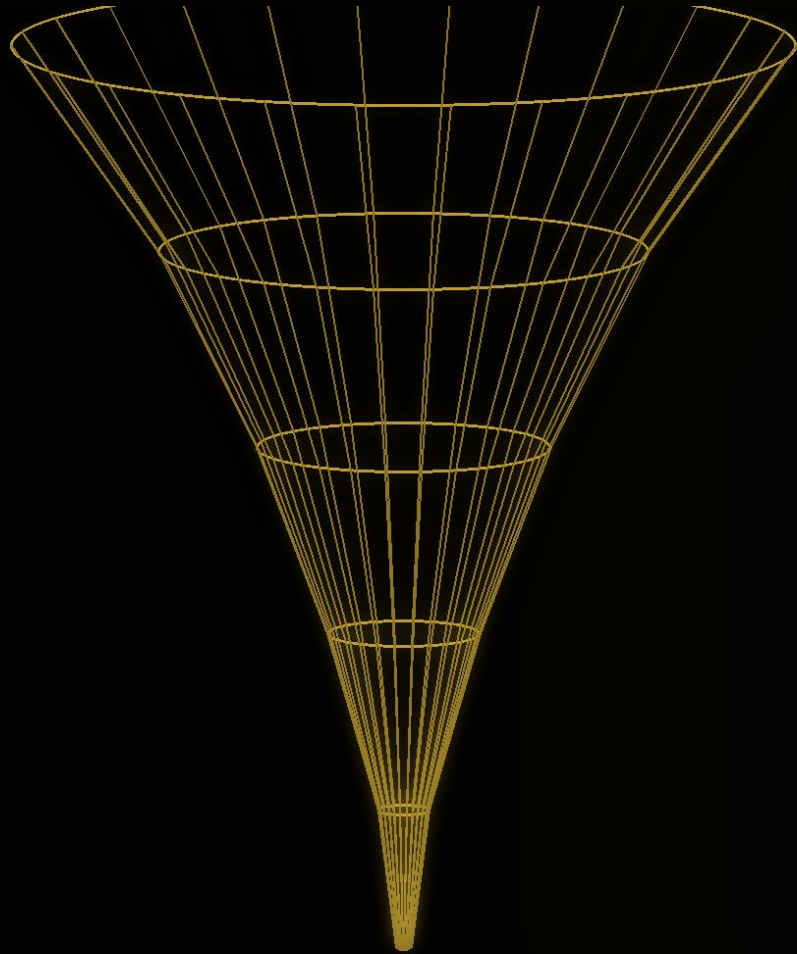
The Image



Light.
It can be shown.
It can be bettered.
It can be ordered.

*Later, mirrors entered their lives —
mirrors made of words and glances.*

*Because the image was light, it was tended.
Until it overgrew the one whose image it was.*



1

Out of one who was came one who was named.

Out of the named, one who belonged.

Out of the belonging, one who was useful.

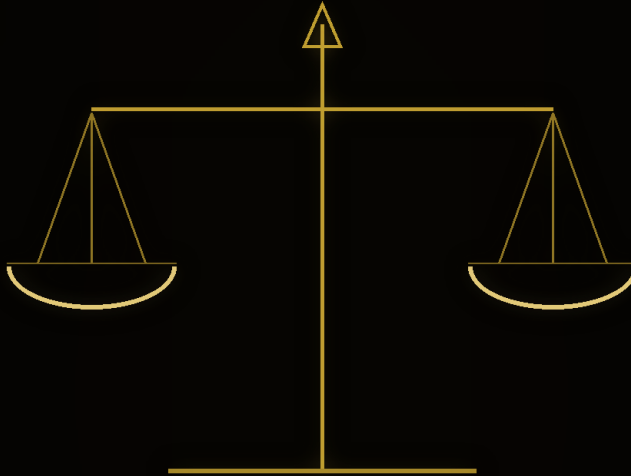
Out of the useful, one who was of worth.

Out of the worthy, a NUMBER.

And the number had need of him no longer.

No master. No chain. No yoke.

They carried the scales within them. They weighed themselves at morning and at evening, and when they found themselves too light, they accused no one but themselves.



Later they no longer knew that it was a scale. They called it reason. They called it reality. Some called it themselves.

One does not rise up against what one takes to be one's own nature.

CIVILIZATION GAVE

Nothing was wanting to them.
Light, warmth, short paths.
Sickness lost its terror.

**It is not the lie that covers over.
What is accurate covers over.**

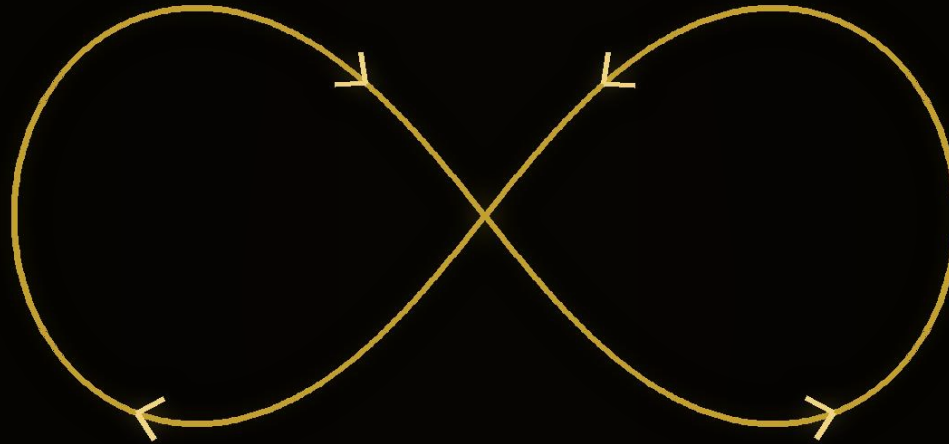
THE PRICE

The administration of life.
Identity as metric.
The ceaseless question of enough.

How does one speak of loss when everything has become more?

The human invents time to divide the day.
→ The hour comes to determine hunger.

The human invents measure to
know the world.
→ Measure comes to know the
human.



The human invents names to tell
things apart.
→ Only what bears a name is
real.

The human invents orders for living together.
→ He spends his life answering to the order.

The servant became the master. We fitted ourselves in.

Only one question fell silent.

The question

Who am I?

they answered with lists.

Origin, leaning, achievement, rank.

Who is it that undergoes all this?

He who counts does not appear in his count.

He who measures does not lie upon the scale.

They took the answer for the
answerer.

No list held the one who wrote it.

The one who measured remained the only unmeasured thing.

The diagram features a central horizontal oval containing the text "There were things that no measure found." Surrounding this central oval are four irregular, jagged shapes, each containing a concept and a descriptive sentence. The shapes are positioned at the top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right. The entire diagram is set against a background of a fine, light-colored grid.

There were things
that no measure found.

PAIN.

Which never asked leave, and halted before
no register.

DYING.

Before which no measure goes, and which
knows no rank.

BOREDOM.

That dreaded hour in which all that is
administered falls silent.

ATTENTION.

Like the light that shows things and is not
itself among them.

It happened that single ones among them stood still in
the middle of the day.
Without occasion. No misfortune had befallen.

For the space of one breath there was no one who
watched himself, and nothing that had to be
measured.

THE SCALES LAY STILL.

Those to whom this befell were, for the rest of the
day, strangely useless.



But what would have come to pass, had one laid the scales
out of his hand for a single breath longer?

Of that, nothing is handed down.