

# Beatrice, To My Son, Labyrinths, & When Once I Strode

by [Andrew Thornton-Norris](#) (July 2019)



*Children in a Room*, Edouard Vuillard, 1909

Beatrice

Standing on the headlands of the waters  
Watching the days desert us  
In green-brown pastures of repair  
The landscape formed by prayer  
With so much waiting and so much wanting  
Coming to completion in contemplation  
In memory of all the suffering  
And now it's here, concluding all  
The hoping, it's you, my darling daughter



*Portrait of a Young Boy, Antonio Mancini*

## To My Son

In the middle of the night my son  
Returning to me is just wanting to  
Be with his father once again and I  
Just finishing my prayers have been with  
My Father once again in heavenly grace



*La Porte Saint Martin, Eugene Galien-Laloue*

## Labyrinths

The theological labyrinth of

Modernity, like metropolitan  
Transportation or travelling  
Of any kind, requires a map or guide.

He who said the Eucharist is  
A double miracle, it changes but  
It looks and tastes the same, so summing up  
The whole of beauty, good and truth in one.

Labyrinthine city, and the snow  
Is on the ground, labyrinthine channels of  
The brain, inside the maze, inhabiting  
Complexity, the minotaur of the mind.



*Untitled*, Edward Mitchell Bannister, 1882

## When Once I Strode

When once I strode in England's fields and woods

There dreaming of what might become of me

In fear the world enclosed me with its woes

And with what it forbode though I was far away

Without protection and exposed I sought

The answers to explain to me the state

That I was in and contemplated all

That people said and wrote but nothing could

Contain more than the truth that I was loved

And cared for if I turned away from what

Was harmful to me seeking only what

Would bring me back to where I was again

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**Andrew Thornton-Norris** is the author of *The Spiritual History of English*, described by *The London Times* as “an enjoyable, erudite and cohesive journey through the history and philosophy of English literature in 150 pithily written pages.” He is also an accomplished poet, described by the *University Bookman* as “refreshingly direct, in contrast to contemporary poets whose poems are like hearing half of a telephone conversation in their elusive allusions, or the poems that are really fragments of prose surrounded by ellipses...[his are] like a Renaissance painting of the Crucifixion falling off a museum wall onto a viewer.” His website is at