

I dreamed I was a writer

I dreamed I was a writer.

I dreamed I was a actor; and I was.
I acted out the fantasies of childhood
and all the wishes of adulthood.

I dreamed I was a fireman; and I was.
I searched my yard and those of my neighbors
for flames that I could squash.

I dreamed I was an astronaut; and I was.
Everyday I did my pushups and jogged a mile
and I studied all about spaceflight.

I dreamed I was a lot of things and every time I did,
I was.
An actor with no audience:
A fireman with no flame:
An astronaut with no training,
no launchpad,
no spaceship.

I dreamed I was a writer; and I was.

I dreamed I was a carpenter; and I was.
I dreamed that I was good:
But still,
I could not make the wood behave.

I dreamed I was a giant; and I was.
But my friends didn't notice.

I dreamed I was a gunfighter; and I was.
I dreamed that I was fast; and I wasn't.

I dreamed I was a writer; and I was.

Yes,
I dreamed I was a writer; and I was.
I dreamed that I got paid for it; and I didn't.

I dreamed I wrote some things that were nice to read;
Things that meant things; and I did.

I dreamed all the people understood; and they didn't.
I dreamed I was the most famous writer in the whole world;
and I wasn't.
I dreamed I could be famous; and I could.

I dreamed that what is real is real
and what is dreams is dreams.

And I knew,
that the stuff of dreams is real:
But,
not all the stuff of real is dreams.

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Commentary

The subject work by Roberts is a rather succinct comment on reality and the way people can define it. Much of the thought for this work was stimulated by Bach's short book *Illusions* which deals with the same subject. Roberts states that a man can actually become an actor etc. by dreaming that he is. This is opposed to the more commonly stated desire "I want to be an actor." Being an actor or a carpenter is a state of mind and of purpose. The transformation is immediate and of the "stuff of dreams" but very real.

It is also real that the actor may be working - temporarily of course - as a dishwasher. It is this point that Bach fails to note. His Messiah character imagines that he can do many things which are normally considered to be impossible. They are impossible because all the other people present are imagining that he can't do them just as hard as he is imagining that he can.

This is why Roberts includes all the qualifying lines following the "...and I was..." line. Note, however, that there is no qualifying line after the line "I Dreamed I was a writer; and I was." What the reader is looking at, at that very instant is a writing of Roberts. Thus both the writer and the reader are suffering from the very real illusion that Sebastian Roberts is a writer.