A Bridge for Ulysses

It is not too late to seek new worlds,
Though weary with the failures of an age,
To name the nameless freedom, and to forge
An order born of choosing, test, and change.

To strive, to seek a balance ever new
Between designs we plan and forms that rise
Unbidden from the marketplace of minds,
All disciplined by loss, and fact, and trial.

Come, let us call it freeorder, and turn
From dogmas propped by force, from systems closed,
To living networks, ventures that will learn
By daring much, and bearing their own cost.

There shall be forges, listening at the edge,
Where questioners and doers meet as one;
Learner-investors, scattering seeds of quest,
Each stake a guess, each failure kindling sight.

Not to sit idly telling what should be,
But to endow a thousand different hands
To try, refute, re-shape, and try once more,
While news of every outcome courses back.

And over all, a subtle pattern grows—
A hidden likeness binding scattered acts—
As stories, paintings, songs, and whispered hopes
Declare: “Some quiet good is taking form.”

States, feeling limits pressing from without,
Shall learn to yield and share their ancient claims,
Competing, thinly armed, to guard the peace
And sell their shifting crafts of law and rule.

So shall there rise a people long unchained,
Who find from youth to age a fitted path
From apprentice of adventure to its master,
Their labor tuned to loves they choose themselves.

This is our task: to labor, not to rest;
To knit the ventures, arts, and capitals
Into a living web of tested forms,
Till Emergence stands where chaos stood before.

Though much is lost, much abides; and though we are not now
That strength which built the empires of command,
We are one equal temper of bold minds,
Made strong by long reflection, loss, and hope.

To shape freeorder in this darkening time,
To light a way for lives of daring joy—
To strive, to seek, to find, and, finding, learn,
Not to yield the world to fear again.

⁂

This poem is a blend of Leif Smith's "Freeorder Bridge"

and "Ulysses" by Alfred Tennyson, made by Perplexity.ai