// SAND RIVER JOURNAL

Welcome to Sand River Journal. Our goal is to provide a dignified setting for some of the better poetry in the newsgroup rec.arts.poems. Contributions are solicited from poems posted to r.a.p (not excluding works by fellow editors), and we vote to determine the final content. The Journal is posted quasi-monthly in ascii and TEX formats to r.a.p and related newsgroups, and is archived for public access at gopher.cic.net/11/e-serials/alphabetic/s and at etext.archive.umich.edu/pub/Poetry. These archives include PostScript versions which feature publication-quality formatting.

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♀ ☾ ♂

Feathers

When the Green man
                    began to hum
The mockingbirds complained and flew.
But then he screamed,

          "You've hurt me and I am undone!"

And they thanked him for a song they knew.
He's quite certain now,
                    he'll never understand.
Spends his time meandering ...
Green man pandering ...
Rearranging rented cubicles
And puzzling scraps of paper
                    into different fitful views.

"No, that's not the way it was ..."

          "How was it then ... more twisted?"

"God knows! I don't ... nor do I know why
Those mockers keep on squawking."

          "Stay! Stay!
          On the ground little hummingbird,
                    You're much too small to fly!"

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Abelard

They took the wrong parts of me, my love.
Oh, the Canon knew what he wanted: a boring revenge,
very quid pro quo and Biblical of your uncle,
to take from me what had offended:
not quite the mote in his eye, but it served.

But he could not take my heart, my mind or memory:
and those live still. The blood flows into them
because it has no other destination:
and it is still your blood, flowing
through me now in lux perpetua, in memoriam.

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At Grandma's

Terrible terrible terror terribly terrorized terror
horrible horror horribly awful terrifying terrorized terror
the depth of african violets purple in grandma's apartment
on the windowsill where the paint opens cracks of enamel flowers
her hirsute lips parting in a voice of tears
she says my name and it is like a disease
and I feel guilty that it is my fault
that she is like this
perhaps it is because of me
when she calls my name
and I do not know what she wants
but I do not have it
as she takes in the form of giving
as if the tasteless food placed on the table in cracked dishes
moved by the frail hands
were a display of her poverty rather than of a good heart
and I think to myself that she must be an actress
but I do not know the play
so stumble along in my role as best
as worst as I can.

Ralph Cherubini
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The Aviary: Midnight

A desire wakens me. Sounds —
something like rain dying out — rise
from the aviary beneath the bedroom.
I hear the birds' dulling chatter.
The brazilian cardinals and purple finches,
aroused, sing to calm themselves. Impotent,
I have know the immunities of darkness,
its coolness like the rain that relieves
a fevered world. My lover remains sleeping.
The birds are calling me back
to their own listless flight of sleep.
My back touches her back; my ankle
rests upon her calf. If I turn to her,
it is because a second world calls me.

Jim Brock
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# of lovers leaving

it only rains like this in august when the perseids
are falling. when another year is disappearing.
you were born in the month of lovers leaving.
the month when the sky takes its steroids
and pushes up and pulls up and chins up and in the end
pummels you with all the force of all the tears
he wouldn't cry for you. this is august.
it only rains like this in august.

in september he is gone. leaves
swing down from the trees
skitter down the pavement.
the rain puddles down to them and
smooths them to the sidewalk.

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Twilight Dancer

Time
Loosens her laces
          unties her bindings
Toys with her shoe

She stirs
A night flower burgeon
          opening in the twilight
She sheds her veils secretly
          in the intimate
                    and sustaining darkness
The smell of her
          fresh and raw

Timid and pink
She blushes...
In full bloom
          with the Dawn

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like a kite

washed against
a beach of clouds

tight hold tight
against the wind

just a bit longer
higher

then run
dig those toes in

stop sit breathe
you've done well

now more string

Michael McNeilley
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rectangle, square

dear marjorie i am full
of hope these busses stop
at all the right stops my night
is round is without hunger
pleasure clean sheets stop

i wish i could tell
you how much i miss
you relate my wonder
at lights along the plaza
wisdom delight continue

dear with you a converse
is always true, always honest
always giving. once burning
only coal i now take most things
to be fuel without question

you've made a good habit
of being just as old
as you need to be even
when the needle dropped
from full down to mortal

you die more slowly
than anyone else i know
i thought of you as the last
panes of glass were placed
in the windows of the building

across the street.

Kerry
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madversity

Go away. She is weary.
She cannot be disturbed.
Simone has nearly perished from pleasure.
She really meant no harm, yet
she drove him toward a difficult bargain.
Can't you see it broke him? He claims to be numb.
Why must you flinch at the first hint of madness?

Please pose your questions carefully,
or he will disappear.
He seems to be strong – yet defenseless.

Dennis Snow
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Despair 1991

The soft wildflower scented air
mingles with his tobacco and old urine.
Panic, panic, panic beats my heart, a
poisoning the beauty of the day.

His tongue, an old gray slug
licks away at my innocence. Though he
is old and feeble, and I am young and
strong, I am paralyzed.

Guilt, guilt, guilt surges through my being
stealing away that microscopic shred of too flat-out
self respect that I had tucked away.

In a burst of despair, I pull free and
run, run, run up the hill, through the
buttercups and poppies, begging the air
and the sunshine to wash away the disgust
that my stopped up, locked in tears cannot.

I sit on a sun baked rock and dangle my
toes in the liquid silver song of the creek.
Light dances across the surface, lulling me,
hypnotizing me, mercifully taking me away
from my horrifying new discovery.
I know now that it will never matter how big
grow, something in me will not let me
protect myself. My body belongs
to everyone Very effective ending.
but me.

Sherry Van Dyke
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I Would for Thee Alone

I would for thee alone this temple raise
Of animate muscle, hot blood and bone.
You'll wander through its ancient walls and ways;
Take rest awhile and lay upon its gentle stone.

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Central Park, February 1861: An American Portrait

1.

It is a fetid skating pond.
Frederick Olmstead's imperial vision sits beneath tissue
on his workroom vellum, his budget frozen
like the brackish ice before the promise of impending war.
Squatters and beggars will fuel the Republic's salvation.
Uprooted like the peat of Ireland,
they rut with their animals in cholera shanties
that surge and sway like drunken ramparts
on the heights behind the awful pond.

In Brooklyn, Walt Whitman, a newspaperman possessed
by the demons of poetry and contradiction,
lures home boys and girls who excite the nighttime streets
with their squeals of release. His verses
are the scandal of the age, condemned from the pulpits,
recited by his cabal of admirers: married women
locked in weekly estrus with their husbands' butlers
amid the fallen fortress of whalebone hoops.

2.

On an overcast February afternoon,
too late and gray to catch the best of the light,
the photographer comes to the pond from the wrought-iron fronts
of lower Broadway to test a new lens.
He has seen 100 frowning virgin brides this past six months,
a genteel stew of copulants taught that they must never move;
and too often has been called in an epidemic summer
to an undertaker's parlor to photograph the sorrow
of another infant's corpse.
Now he will gladly breathe the cold,
find it bracing after the smothering reek of a City
he dreams as an endless abattoir where dead babies
cry and dangle from velvet-covered meat hooks.

3.

The pond is a sensorium undreamt of
even in ancient Rome: a common sewer and shitheap
where the smell of squatters permeates the light;
and, amidst raucous giggling, the wild motion
of windblown scarves, hats and bonnets
desperately grabbed for in the air, slipping bodies,
and the razor scrape of iron on the ice.

But for him today, the stench is the fragrance of forgetfulness,
inhaled to the heart from a frozen dumping-pond.
Erecting his tripod, he sees a young man
openly clutching the breast — ample even beneath her winter cloak—
of his lady-love, who laughs and squeals aloud,
"Can'cha woyt anither hour, boyo!"
It is a place without the artifice of gentility or conquest,
only the energies of desire, of passions that burn through the cold.

And then there are the two boys:
accidents beyond the accidental swirl of bodies
and the pigfarmer shanties on the heights behind:
emerging from the maze and motion, the pair stop still,
watch him at work, voices shouting
"Hey, mister! you here for us, mister? make our tintypes, mister!"

These are not dead, nor sacrificial.
Through his lens, for 10 motionless seconds,
the boys become part of the light,
frozen on the plate, for him an image of his City,
immutably young, forever taken out of Time.

When the photographer dies in 1894,
the skating pond where he stood
has long since vanished, filled in and landscaped
as a path for English-saddle riders and broughams.
Clearing out his studio and workshop,
his wife and daughters find the image of the boys.
They are still smiling: they have never stopped,
and the wife and daughters smile back.
They could not have known:
one of the boys had died in 1881
in a Bandit's Roost knife fight over a woman.
The other lives to a great age, dies in 1932,
having forgotten everything
even as he forgot the photographer
as soon as he turned and skated off.

4.

The motion continues, something convulsive at the heart,
beyond the power of the lens: a terrible orgasm
and overturning of the earth,
the immolation and self-consuming resurrection
contained in the seismic motions of the City itself,
at every moment crushing, sweeping outward
toward its merciless, unfinishable destiny.

It rises and it writhes.
Self-proclaimed Confederate spies camp in Prince Street saloons,
buy drinks for Union officers invalided home after Antietam,
proclaim Darwin a prophet, and pray aloud in his name
for the death of the ape in the White House.

Flags of the Grand Army of the Republic fly from City Hall
while immigrant Irish mobs, driven from their land
by chattelage and starvation decreed by Victoria's ministers,
riot against conscription to the Civil War,
and burn the living body of a free Negro.

Whitman flees to the Capital, wanders the hospitals, dazed,
hears the crackbrained gibbers and cackles of gangrenous amputees:
bathes their bodies, dresses their wounds,
writes down their final letters home,
and returns after Appomattox to a minor sinecure

extended by a grateful Federal government.
When the Calamus poems reveal his amatory tendencies,
he is summarily dismissed, only to fade, disappointingly,
into Respectability, the special hell of Sages.

Olmstead receives the budget to build his Tuileries.
His workmen, recruited from the shanties, plow under their homes,
drive 14-year-old girls to stand in crimson silk under the gaslight.
A drunken laborer drowns in concrete and Carrara marble
when the foundation of Bethesda fountain is laid,
and rests where he used to keep his pigsty.

5.

The Park built, the City grows northward to devour it.
The squatters' shanties are replaced and replaced again:
mansions and museums rise where squatters
bred the shoulders of the building City.
The Plaza Hotel comes to rest on the New York palimpsest:
legend says that the first guests of the great house in 1907
flee in horror and dismay because they can hear
the ghostly copulations of the displaced squatters.
Far downtown, beneath towers rising to entomb the past,
the common graves of nameless Negro slaves
undermine the Stock Exchange.

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God is Dead

god is dead
she said

we buried him
on that hill
long ago
in wormy earth

and since then
everywhere
flowers bloom
without
shame

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by the river of swirling eddies

how were we
two small people
looking at the river yangtze
pointing to yellow water
and floating mandarins
clapping our hands with glee

how are we
      two lonely people
looking at the old river
from opposite banks
      of a yellow ribbon

like reading an ancient scroll
pictographs of man's flailing
against the eddies
of recycling histories

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ProLion

Gregory, Gregory
Shedding your skin like summer night
Under the orchard
Lions like the morning sky
Just as they like
To nestle their heads in fair maiden's
Lap, sweet of earth and blessing.

Lions like the rye that brushes them,
Taking bloom, taking bloom
Gregory that once was,
Will always be, circle to circle,
Pressed farther down,
Gregory that holds all to night.

It has been a year, unmet.

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burial rite

searching for a path from birth
unfamiliar grass

gives way beneath my feet,
stands tall as each stride
    moves onward.

old scents return at the center of the park,
approaching the sod
and stretching a finger to feel the chilly skin
that nurtured our undoing,
to caress limbs woodenly as she

aside ambrosia
a rainbow shudders
under a grimacing half-smile,
its head
silken with scales
reaches down to determine
if I've learned any answers. did I
come with weapons or
    bearing memorial flowers?
and sprouts legs and arms anew.

in a grove beyond the coils, a plot of land
set aside long ago where crosses stare
marked with brief titles.
yes, I remember
    wild idol, she murmured,
even in death you'll cling to symbols.

to place a pear atop the grave before I turn away.
if only I had bothered to plant the seed
than leave the barren core in view
again. the tree holds itself upright,
from its fingers dangle tattered ribbons.

we should get out of this graveyard.

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Girl at the Hotel Exile

These Sundays I watch Father practice on the tennis court; it is
an indulgence of his I humor. I like it anyway: the red, Hawaiian
clay,

the yellow balls, the white shorts, and the brown skin are movie
colors. I drink Cokes. Life, I tell my father, is full of hotels.

Mother takes the defeat hard, and she stays indoors, still cursing
the effete generals and the communist students. Now that I

want to be an American, now that I wear make-up even though
I am but thirteen, I buy sexy novels. I read my family's story

in The National Enquirer. What I could tell would sell
big: how Mother dances through the kitchen naked

and drunk; how Father has taken to situation-comedies;
how they embraced me after we arrived, after I had broken

open my doll's head, revealing the tiny diamonds I had smuggled
from the palace, Mother crying, "My Jewel, my Jewel."

The story I know is something else. That my parents no longer love
is nothing. Me, I am only watching them in this warm, American

paradise. We are wealthy. I am not so young. I know a boy
at the swimming pool: his skin is browner than mine.

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thank you for

being a dear a female dear and close
friend i send you my sincerest thank you
and desire that

you may offer onto someone else that which you have given me
i see neither gain nor goodness in spinning acrimony
there is no fellowship in felony my dear and close
thank-you recipient i now put this note to a cleansing end

as once you put a friendship to a messy tangled me
now my once friend once my dear and close friend

for which i thank you

Marek Lugowski
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yesterday there was balancing

yesterday there was the beginning of a poem
like the beginning of an i love you
forming on the tips of unpracticed lips.

it was there while lying flat.
the grass on my back. the fire ants
biting the sun biting too.
this poem bloomed yellowly.
growing then falling. and falling away.
the edge of the i love you stayed.
balanced precariously
on itself. it balanced all day yesterday.
there was balancing today.

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The Honors Scholar

Every day he sleeps from dawn
To dusk. Night shifts from day,
And there he is, expecting a bullet
Behind the counter of a deli.
It's happened before on the night shift,
But it's all right, he tells me,
I don't plan on dying
Though I worry when I tell them
To put out the cigarettes.

There the folk in this backwater town
(Backwater because none
Could see him for what he was
Even if he shed skin and bone
And blinded them all)
Order without noticing
That the young blonde man
Cutting the bread
Has the soul of genius;
The cool light of perception
Intensifies his grey-blue eyes.
No, they're just waiting for the food
Served from the fingers of a poet.

He would have been best
As a British pilot during the
Big War. At dawn,

After some dangerous mission
He'd be sitting at a rough wooden
Table, drinking coffee
While watching the sun begin
To ease over the horizon.
He'd hold his warm cup with
Strong poet's fingers,
Golden light catching
On his unshaven face.

After cleaning the grill,
When things are quiet
At the end of the shift,
He mixes syrup, and milk
Into his coffee.
He drinks that while
The light begins to slide
Over the land. You know, he says,
I hate coffee.
I just like to watch the dawn
With the heat between my fingers.

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untitled

what goes around silently
visions empty
a mirror

The complexion is simple
tooth and dimple
a face

Lip inflated and blue
a womb renewed
deadend

what encircles the standstill
pop-culture landfill
truth?

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Melvyl

1.

I wrote you a poem.
I walked up to the pub this afternoon
Complaining about my emptiness,
How I had nothing inside of me.

When I remembered
Watching 'Eugene Onegin' from Glyndebourne
And Lensky going to his fatal duel,
And how I had then used Melvyl

In far-off California
To determine your presence, while
Sitting in Bath at my computer.
So I wrote you a poem.

I only write love poems.
This one has to be circumspect.
Something between Rabbie Burns
And 'The Ball of Kirriemuir'.

I wrote you a long letter.
You have all my news.
And all my books.
Here is your poem:

2.

I looked your family name up in Melvyl,
the University of California Library Catalogue,
seven million volumes.

and there was your grandfather's dissertation
from Leyden, 1911,
title in unreadable Dutch.

your father's and your mother's books,
your cousin's novels in Holland.

And finally your own little set of publications.
I have only one book in California.

Now I know you are back in London.
Working away as ever with the children round you.

It is good for you to be home.
You must visit.
There are twenty years and a dozen books to discuss.

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Sunflower

The massive head, swollen with seeds,
yields to the hungry beaks of chickadees.
Wings brush the papery fringe of yellow
as I would have them brush my face.
Small black eyes watch me carefully.
The sunflower lolls its head in the August heat
and the spiral seems to rotate, grow heavier,
ripening as the minutes pass.
I have grown heavy too, giving birth,
and had that moment when I had to yield.
Followed by emptiness and relief.

Nancy Boyle Vickers
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Jennifer

Twilight brings you here to me.
Between the satin sheets of day and night
We lay embraced, reality
Forsaken.

Hidden from the sunlight's burst,
You trust desire to overcome our odds.
And no one bleeds, and no one hurts
Tomorrow?

Jennifer, I'll leave you now,
Untouched this once before again I fall
Without recourse, into your well
Of pleasure.

Brandt
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192 Miles

The 192 miles that separate us
are connected
by a single piece of blacktop.

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Hyde Park, Chicago: Winter 1991

Lonely crinkle of glass on
the street
Slick of ice, winter licks
the pavement
Trickle of slush in the sewer.

Buzz of city lamplight
Hum and growl of cars with
tired suspension and cracked,
dried skin.

Metered hissing, thumping,
quiet roar of music, voices.

Cold wind, chapped lips,
salty, watery nose.

Key slides in, skipping over the
tumblers – turn, push
Creaking stairs and solitary
handrails

Open, slumping
swivel chair blues,
curling smoke and dry,
dry martinis

Droop the eyelids drop
and wintry air sneaks its
way in cracks,
open lightbulbs
stare at cobwebs, corners
dusty-bugs and water drips
in sinks.

Divide, conquer the sheets
and crown the pillow –
the kingdom slumbers,
the army sleeps.

Eric J. Blommel
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High Tide at Midnight

The island pines stood silent on the night
The moonless summer tide surpassed its height.
We slipped the tippy dinghy from the dock
And rowed across the stars' reflected light
With quiet slurp of oar and clunk of lock
To see the glassy blackness gulp the rock.

How shrunken, unfamiliar, was the shore!
Submerged were ledges lichen-dry before;
On foreign floating room our boat could pass
Down newly-liquid inlets, to explore
The shallow drowning of the roots and grass
By fingerlets of inky moving mass.

The world was full, suspended at the flood,
Convex, dark-bellied, an unbidden bud
Of fathom-vast unflowered force profound;
All nature seemed to sense it in the blood
And, trepidatious, uttered not a sound.
The crystal sky seemed closer to the ground.

I'd never known a higher tidal rise,
Nor seen such fascination in your eyes,
As if the moon, your sympathetic mate,
Had flexed its gravity, to your surprise,
Let slip a glimpse that made you contemplate
The pull of interplanetary weight.

We sculled the cove, cliff-lifted from the clay
That sucked our tar-pit footprints yesterday;
Our flash-light — mirrored, filtered, dimly downed —
Diminished inconclusively to grey,
Then, gloaming-deep, the mooring-buoy found,
To surface yearning but to bottom bound.

Spin-drifting, whispering, wondering on the grand,
We rocked — oh, how I pressed your pretty hand! —
Then pulled against the Proteanic tide
For cozy cottage, on our circled land,
As, vortex in the void to either side,
Galactic phosphorescence whirled and died.

Matt Waller
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Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

The drunk, on Seventh Avenue South, sways,
eyes searching for the focus with damaged sensors,
looks at us, slurring "Tha's
a beautiful girl you got there... sir":
"sir" my sure barometer of the life still to come
because the word slashes me open in lieu of a razor;
and leans forward, extends his hands
in supplication, lowers his head at her,
staring cuntward, and begins to loudly croon
"Embraaaaaaace me, my sweet embraaaaaaaaaceable you"
in a whiskey-and-testosterone basso cantante
to make Melvin Franklin sound like Marlene Dietrich,
transfixing with bloodshot lab rat-eyes
and the message: not of Dom Perignon in fluted glasses,
drained at Twilight Time in the Afterglow of Love
by dignifiedly spent lovers,
but of the beast made with two backs
in a garbage dump beneath a yellow moon,
of willfully drowning in the Sea of Love.

Kenneth Wolman
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Jethzabel

The leaf, the star, the lighted moon and me,
Connected by the strings we cannot see.

A bird, a plume, the pen with which I write –
Her feather puts my thoughts down for the night.

A warm breath atomized by winter's frost
In individuality is lost.

Erik Asphaug
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the threefold music

1.

breath on me, cricket-whispers!
gesturing in summer's heavy air — at dusk
in slow crescendo... evidence of brisk wind's song
on water. Weird whip-poor-wills repeating,
winding through the constant
bleat of small frogs.
A Symphony.

2.

The sweet laughter mingling with lilted, echoed
phrases: politics & philosophy in Portuguese.
the swirling sound of foreign voices —
small benchmarks of recognition punctuate
strong flows of words between three friends:
praise, disdain, solemn vows & contemplation.
A Melody.

3.

rough-strewn epithets in English
amidst a backdrop of crackling glass. Bottles
on rocks: a thick 'poP' to end the conversation.
A few young mouths, loud radios. Murmuring
beneath the exchange, the solid throb of engines.
A Cacophony.

John Adam Kaune
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. . . .

no words
even less thoughts
as for the feelings...
I've lost those a while ago
just a cigarette
fuck everything
I don't want this anymore
no, nothing's wrong
I'm just sick of it
goodbye

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Sunday

a black squirrel
slices through the leaves
of my front yard

he carries
a green spiny thing
hurrying away from me

here in my white bedroom
I have nothing to eat
but no one to hide it from

grey cars slide by
they sound like rain
on a distant wind

Michael McNeilley
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untitled

shallow heart & mind
I shouldn't mind
he shines alright

. . .
. . .
in the deep dark
ness faint light and
glimpses of the making
of the universe
of perfect cruel love
. . .

so I don't mind
that shallow mind

Wlodzimierz Holsztynski
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Dirige Domine (A Funeral Sonnet)

Quomodo sedet sola civitas!
Quenched are the eyes that lightened every street,
silenced her step, her salutation sweet –
gone is the city's glory, our gold all dross.
Now comes the winter of our bitter cross.
To us bereaved remains but to repeat
cold litanies, and slow with mournful feet
measure the vast vague outlines of our loss.

O child, did I not too taste bitter death?
My flesh, which you and she shared and adored,
lay once in earth – ah, I am rich with pity!
Yes, mourn your loss, grieve deep, but know God's breath
breathes where it will, and all shall be restored –
I swear it, by my death! – in spring's fair city.

Fr. John Woolley
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Surrender

the rains have come
to stay this season
streetlights swim upstream
struggling in the current
that gushes through
the iron grates

a bird shivers alone
black against
the bruised sky
but i have
turned my face
to the smothering sun
finding warmth
in my surrender

Jody Upshaw
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untitled

Carelessly tossed aside
an orchid wilting.
A not-quite-scarlet shoe
with a very pointed heel
in my way.

Tight arms.
Slight charms. Too slight,
but tonight,
mine.

Vaguely fading,
hazy waking,
softly dreaming
still.

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the kaz

we sat with saki and sushi
swapping sex theories and fantasies
then we toasted tired debauchery
as i listened to my friends – and i
listened carefully because they were buying the saki
and pouring it too
but my main concern of the moment was
getting my sufficient share of that seaweed paper
                              and green horseradish
– oh how i love the dainty trinket food – wrapped up so
neatly and organized like the
clockwork and conformity of mitsubishi factory workers

when the last little ceramic flask of saki
                              was finished – plates cleared –
we agreed that sharon had very nice thighs
and that i had a very attractive nose
and that pat looked better without his mustache
then we made a tentative agreement with our last cup of saki
that sex between us three that evening might be a
pleasant bonding experience
we paid our meek polite and always happy waitress
then left

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Transience

You never knew
        or so I used to tell myself
how little I really slept
most nights I slept with you.

And as the morning blues
        so similarly the sky
        where I am now
                so many miles away

I feel the same impatience
with lightening blue.
        Lying then, while the sun
                stole again

another good evening,
        watching, all the more
        closely you
                sleep

I'd stretch the minutes
with concentration
                and feel the same
        as then, here now

against the morning sky
that ticks, to me
        insistently away
        night and dreams,

if not sleep,
to the inevitable
                harsh
                alarm.

Michael McNeilley
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Him

In my mind's eye, I see
a flower, opening
its petals black
with dust and wind
a hummingbird
a whistling blur
darts in to suck the nectar
of sweet chaos, startling
the timid soul within.

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White Autumn, Bare Autumn

Let us return,
and hope to discern
the concern that you showed to me
when the branches were bare
as we lay in the grass
and let the sky shadows pass
over us and all that was there

Let us revisit the falling of the ashes
and the quiet turn of your lashes
which you held closed over your eyes
when the fire between us burned
through the loneliness of the dark
and the twisted passages of the heart
until one of us put flame to what we had learned

Let us reconsider the reason
why that warm season
seemed much more deserved
to the starving who dare
to change the conventions of passion
and consume the vagaries of fashion
which now seems a little more fair

Summer for us lay down and slept
and through the silence of August the two of us crept
onto the pale skin of Autumn, as it breathed and awoke
and all over the land it extended its cloak
Shrouding us in snow, and stealing our worth
and the weight of our stillness finally driving us to earth

White autumn, bare autumn
The snows have moved us apart, now

And now it's winter
and I understand nothing.

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three tenors

1.

but when, you asked
yet when will when be?
you see. it is like this – i
listened to three tenors
three magnificent magnificent
magnificent vibrations from living chords
which should be for what

why three warm apples
in the sun - i like cold fruit
fresh from a pile of ice shavings
crisp cool juice slowly dripping
down my face   my breast
slowly   mixing with my hot-sun sweat

2.

i cannot deal with neapolitan ice cream
too much too much flavor
give me placido   lento vanilla
pavarotti   como chocolate'
and carreras of fresh strawberries

3

often i dream i am a silversword
on the slopes of kilauea – just me
a solitary silhouette in a field of sharp stones
i listen to the cymbals of comets
crashing on jupiter – i am
a nebula   blue shifted   red shifted

i walk on a balance beam
i am high cheekbones
ojos negros   piel canela
in my veins run the blood of tenors
asian - iberian - european
singing the arias
of a nebula

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