

# THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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**RIVERS**

(for Wilson Harris)

They roll as deaf as logs through foliage swollen  
With elephantiasis to the screeching of macaws;

This is their second death, and they have fallen  
All over, overboard, swirling like oars.

Do clouds of pirhai shred them of their flesh  
Again, boiled in the tide-race,

The scaly cayman heaves its hulk and flash  
To halve their limbs in the original place?

On that vague expedition did their souls  
Spawn, light as butterflies, in resurrection,

Or the small terrors multiply like tadpoles  
Below a mangrove root or a headstone?

Stillborn at death, their moment is not ours  
In whom the spasm of birth

Begets oblivion: to chart endless savannahs,  
Rivers, even with a guide, conceives an earth

Without us, without gods: Guiana or Guinea,  
The aboriginal fear, like Orinoco

Debouching from a mouth brown with tobacco  
Deaths that cannot discolour the great sea.

**Derek Walcott**

**TILLAMOOK JOURNAL\***

1. I have come here  
From Chicago, packing  
A sleeping bag, a pan  
To melt snow for drinking,  
Dried apricots, tea,  
And a great boiled beef-  
Heart for gnawing on.

Two loggers drove me  
As far in as they could get,  
They were two of the gunnysack loggers  
Of the Burn, owning a truck  
And a dozer, a few cables  
And saws, who drag out  
The sound heartwood for money.

They turned around  
Where a rockslide had dumped itself,  
One got out  
And reached in the erosion.  
And showed me a handful  
Of earth, it was  
More black ashes than it was earth.

\*Editors' Note: the Spring 1956 issue of the Journal carried the original version of this poem. We now print this revised version because we feel it is of considerable interest to show how a poem evolves—how it can be, in the author's word, "very changed, yet very the same."

2. A few years back,  
They said, there'd  
Been a prospector here,  
An old man past seventy  
Who believed the land,  
Being otherwise worthless,  
Should yield precious metal.

They used to run across him, they said,  
A little, swaying heap of gear  
Traipsing across  
A logging road, or thrashing up  
Avalanching gravel, or  
Mumbling about metal while staggering  
From some vegetable gulley.

A full year  
He hunted uranium or gold,  
His Geiger-counter lashed on  
Like an extra heart,  
Around January he'd have  
Settled for anything at all,  
When spring came he disappeared.

3. I set out walking  
From where they turned,  
Underfoot the terrain spews  
Loose rock and gravel,  
Every step rattles and gives way,  
Gigantic tree trunks  
Barricade all the directions.

I wondered that a man  
Of seventy-odd years had been able  
To put up with one of them  
On this breast, the ear

Pressed to the metal heart hearing  
Only his bloodbeat  
And that getting fainter.

As the hill grew steep,  
Up to my ankles in gravel  
And grappling at roots and rocks  
I traversed and wound along,  
At last I came climbing up  
On my hands and knees  
As though I'd come here begging.

4. On top of Cedar Butte  
You can see the whole compass:  
To the west the Pacific  
Lies flat and shiny,  
Everywhere else there are  
Only hills  
Plunging across a saw-toothed country.

I looked back south  
Where the hills have been logged off:  
Except for a few clumps of snags  
Out of reach  
Or too burnt  
Or decayed for profit  
It is a total shambles

White stumps,  
White logs washing  
To the valleys, eroding scarps,  
Lopped spurs, old streambeds,  
The whole land split and cracked  
Under the crisscross of logging roads  
And oozing down its ravines.

5. It is twenty-five years  
 Since the first blue-white puff  
 Kited up the wind:  
 The Douglas fir is an intolerant tree  
 Potent only in fits  
 And likes to breed  
 In the open, such as the aftermath of fire,  
  
 Convicts have put saplings  
 By the coast, schoolboys  
 Have planted by the highway,  
 Rain and sun continue falling.  
 Nothing catches.  
 A little fireweed, vine-maple, grape. . .  
 Ants, skinny black spiders. . .  
  
 To the north  
 On hills the loggers can't reach  
 The great virgin stands  
 Of nothing except snags,  
 Burnt clean and bleached,  
 In the distance keep  
 Appearing as motionless smoke.
6. All day the big,  
 Immaculate flakes of snow  
 Come down, melting  
 On touching. All night,  
 Wet through, trying for sleep,  
 I had to hear Kilchis  
 River grinding the stones and boulders.  
  
 The ravine is a mass  
 Of slash slippery  
 With rain and snow. Uprooted  
 Trees cross and lock each other

Blocking the water,  
 Tan, beautifully  
 Grained rims for the waterfalls.

At last a little  
 Mule-deer joined me,  
 Leading like a scout,  
 When I turned off and climbed  
 He stopped, and sadly,  
 It almost seemed, watched my going.  
 Some birds began wrangling and chirping.

7. At the sound of surf  
 I scramble to my feet  
 And climb again—from where I sat  
 Under the last knoll,  
 Gnawing the heart,  
 Looking back at the Burn  
 As it went out in the twilight,

Its crags broken,  
 Its valleys soaked in night,  
 Just one more of the  
 Plundered breasts of the world—  
 And hearing my heart  
 Pound in the air  
 I come over the last summit

Into dark wind  
 Blasting out of the darkness,  
 Where before me the tempestuous ocean  
 Falls with long triple crashes on the shore  
 And where behind the snow is putting down  
 A thin, saprophytic blossoming.  
 It is only steps to the unburnable sea.

Galway Kinnell

**THREE POEMS****Old Bachelor**

Twenty-odd years of teaching taught him nothing.  
True, he could gloss a text, index his lectures,  
Footnote and file, smile past a rival's strictures,  
Retire into his balding dome, sit tight  
Behind thick glasses and a sort of learning.

His voice, too, seemed to have deadened. In spring,  
he noted

The classroom murmur spread, echoing laughter  
Break out beyond his study door soon after  
The tousled bowed-down boys and girls, mute  
In his cadaverous presence, had departed.

One girl he avoided as much as, he thought, she did.  
And yet her downward smile drew his dull gaze—  
He found his gestures aimed at her, his eyes  
Grappling for hers. He told a joke or two,  
And when she laughed he found that he was needed.

Twenty-odd years of teaching, all so even.  
Senior lecturer, man of many committees,  
How can this unschooled girl whose only wit is  
A smiled-down murmur quell your practised speech?  
But when she accepted him the world became heaven.

"Withdrawn" old friends say. True, from words and  
meaning.

"Finished" some say. But not, he feels, with life.  
In a fresh-painted maisonette his wife  
Shapely in slacks breathes a perpetual summer  
Betraying him from learning into learning.

**Philip Hobsbaum**



### Bulldog Drummond Fights Again

Huge, often swathed in black, cheerily shouting  
 "Come on, boys" as you crash through the closed  
 windows

Into the drawing-room packed full of crooks,

See how you seize two Chinese by their pigtails,  
 Smashing their yellow skulls together, then  
 Duck mysteriously a knife from behind.

"Not done to fight with knives," you say, and so  
 You lash him to a chair, then with a whip  
 Chastise him till he weeps. Justice is done,

Is done, and done again. Caught on dark stairs  
 Arms of prodigious length around your throat  
 You slash an artery somewhere—that's all right,

The man's a chink or wop or wog or boche.  
 The jews are worst. "What are these Hebrews here?"  
 (A henchman comes and whispers.) "Is that so?"

Out comes the whip again. They squeal with fear,  
 Not unnaturally. **You** don't, of course—  
 Batter you into the mud, you'd come out singing.

And how you'd hate me! Intellectual Jew,  
 Reading books, disliking sport and games,  
 I couldn't join your club, you'd brain me with it.

You're an old has-been now, dust on your shelf.  
 Time was they'd crowd around the letter S  
 On the off chance of Sapper coming in.

We've other things to give our hate release.  
 The TV Marlowe, pulped and broken-toothed,  
 Peter Cushing torturing young girls,

And, of course, our own science fiction. We've a  
device

Would scorch you up worse than Carl Peterson.  
Even you never filled the rain with death,

But your sons are trying hard. The bruisers' faces  
Of young M.P.'s, those puffy brigadiers,  
Voices deceptively mild, assure us we

Can give the Enemy worse than he's got.  
Who is the Enemy? They hardly care.  
I read to numb my uttermost despair

Till Bulldog Drummonds us from off the earth.

**Philip Hobsbaum**

### **In London**

In London again, my nostrils seal with soot,  
My clothes afflict my skin, my hair my scalp.  
Crowds jostle my Northern unimpeded walk,  
A man treads down heavily on my foot,  
Doesn't say "sorry", merely curses me.

Old friends seem older, lined brows growing through  
Their well-groomed greying hair. Their talk, too,  
seems  
More full of themselves—their jobs, their pals, their  
schemes.

The films are poor. I thought I'd see a show,  
But seats have gone up. And the beer tastes worse.

When I got home a bus-conductor picked  
My case up for me, didn't kick it off.  
Tied up and blindfolded, a plane could drop  
Me dead in London streets, I'd know my pitch.  
Those hurrying feet would trample me to soot.

**Philip Hobsbaum**

## **ELIMINATIONS**

### **1.**

A book with pale green covers is always a reminder  
that Death is a delicate matter.

Leave no street or square unturned until you find  
the statue you have been longing to destroy.

Remember that large insects wear very heavy armor,  
if you are thinking of attacking them.

Virgins are like civic buildings. They have no  
ramparts or means of defense.

Never use scissors on a flower. Break it with your  
hands.

Elegance is a by-word for deformity.

Do not overlook the insidiousness of small bells.

Take advantage of your moments of clarity to kill a sparrow.

When you are feeling depressed, remember that a brain is only a chestnut covered with small hairs.

All men have invisible tails to which some troublesome object is attached; the object is usually an old-fashioned alarm-clock.

No zoo is complete without the poet who has, a few minutes ago, enjoyed public disfavor.

Suspect all dictionaries.

## 2.

There is no reason for the birth of Man, unless cruelty could be considered a reason.

Do not be more kind than is necessary.

Dying for love and the love of dying are no longer valid; why not fill an ashtray with wine?

Abandoned houses are the best places to chain dogs.

## 3.

A dying man asks for something sweet to smell.

Roses are bitter because of their indecisive odor.

A glass tumbler is not necessarily a mirror.

The spaces between the lines of a poem are what the blind man's eyes reflect.

The soft astrology of the blind man's eyes is the furniture he enjoys touching.

A blind man has an entire sky in his grasp.

Do not burn yourself on the stars.

## 4.

It is the eyes that arrange festivals, the mouth that rides on a silver stair-case.

Machines of all kinds are obsessed by the idea of  
being touched by women.

Apples in a green bowl suggest the amusement of  
living.

The failing light of afternoon shares its bed with  
the pomegranates.

A breast on fire is a sack of jewels.

A sign on your door instructs you to go out in  
transparent clothes and look for an amber jar that  
is buried in the wood.

5.

There are gate-keepers who adore the smell of  
convolvulus.

If you feel like sending arrows into a heart, tear a  
watch to pieces.

Bear sorrow as though it were a Greek game.

If you hear someone calling in the next room, go to  
them and tell them about Carthage.

If your walls are in ruin, complain of purity and of  
the chasm between the ancient world and this one.

Do not kill a nightingale.

Do not speak of the houses in which you are dead.

Speak of those from which you have flown.

Don't pass yourself off as a street-lamp or butterfly.

It is in the passages of night that you can be most  
eloquent in talking to the dull-smelling marigolds.

**Stuart Dodds**

## HOW NICE OF POPE SULZBERGER TO GRANT GERMANY ABSOLUTION

(appertaining to repeated effusions of the New York  
*Times* over Der Alte and Von Braun)

### The Prosecutor

The Jew by Rome condemned for crass pursuits  
supposedly in cahoots with crucifiers  
of nonexistentialist Puss in Boots . .

The Jew by pope condemned,  
by flame and rope consumed,  
the corpse by Gott exhumed for soap and leather:  
for allegedly showing white feather, pushing dope;  
for committing white slavery and what other  
knavery

only God knows, for *treason* in gorse and heather,  
for failure of crops, of reason, for manipulating  
weather,

peddling mops, tops for blessed children:

The Jew scapegoat  
by so distinguished Parnassus West immer con-  
temned by rote . .

The Jew  
presumed extinguished in the mass—

by *gas-es!*

### Adolph Eichmann

Aber where, where might I ask, where might be der  
corpus delicti?

Aber where, where might I ask, where might be der  
corpus delicti?

For gibts nicht kein corpus then guilty bin ich  
nichts!

For gibts nicht kein corpus then wie kann ich guilty  
be,

O most noble and considerate judges? O most noble  
and considerate judges, who duty begrudges ignoble  
me?

I ask. Who nudges ignoble me into ignoble grave?  
He who drudges away at his own thankless tasks?  
Who trudges daily between workbench and hovel?  
Who before his liege must likewise grovel, wouldst  
he besiege me?  
Wouldst he slaughter me now for mein own oath  
fulfilling?  
For mein Herr Liege's orders so faithfully  
*executing?*

#### Der Alte

Eichmann? O Israel, how Herr Gott himself must  
laugh!

Eichmann? Dieser Offizierstellvertreter the Gestapo  
can spare.

Eichmann? Bitte, Israel, while I quaff this brew  
distilled from a Jew long dead, a Jew even longer in  
Hölle

(drea'd?) than Hitler, ein fiddler who worshipped  
Schumann and Mozart and Brahms, who for the  
wretched Beethoven

both arms he would have been only to happy to cut  
off,

Jawohl, Herr Kennedy, whose deal gibt jetzt?

Jawohl, meiner Herren, who passes? Who bets  
gegen die Reich? England? Russland? Frankreich?  
Sie wissen nicht dass Deutschland immer wins?

*Gott sei dank für die U.S.A.! Für die U.S.A.*

*Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!*

Dass die Zeiten so freundlich gay und  
festive sind

*für die U.S.A. Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!*

Sie wissen nicht

dass Deutschland immer wins  
irrespective of what geschrecklichkeit or sins  
ist by uns committed? Sie bitten so verücht  
dass sie wissen nicht wie gegen die Juden  
ist alles permitted?

*Gott sei dank für die U.S.A. Für die U.S.A.  
Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!*

### The Press

The New York *Times*: Such pale rhymes  
be our very own dear Cardinal Swiftsmeatyale  
Swingingsuchgrubbychimes! By Pyrrhus,  
son of Achilles, gear us, shall we, Eichmann  
with a copy of upon my soul the genius of Cyrus  
Sulzberger who doth truly live so well  
on The Art of Dying for a swell?

In the *Times* of London:  
What crimes? rants Herr Eichmann. On der part of  
mein host  
surely ein most unwarranted imposition.

“On the part of his host  
surely a most unwarranted imposition!” similarly  
chant

his counsel who thence forthwith do petition the  
court,  
exhort it with celestial vapors, incantations,  
burn incense, tapers . .

“Manumission! Anything less  
must frustrate fission, even fruition; anything less  
doth constitute admission:

“For jawohl exposes this not  
the vindictive law of eye and fang and claw of . . of  
*M o s e s* ?

From Notre Dame de Kennedy  
in *Our Lady's Home Journal*:

Why heavens, does my husband r-r-eally look



like Jerry Lewis? Good heavens, how true is this?

Why who spurns  
 eternal youth who so yearns to attain to moon?  
 to vernal Venus? Diurnal space? Why how rapt, how  
 keen  
 this viewer's dreamy face!

*Wall Street Journal* recording diurnally  
 the cogent thoughts of Colonel Docent Torts und  
 Liebestraum,  
 market analyst of incestuous dreams of ravenous  
 bishop

positively suppurating from tithes and indulgences,  
 who shall dish up from podgy knees public health  
 for aborigines, hoping thusly such a premium to  
 place

on choice real estate and Lebensraum

(much as upon honest men  
 didst once even so fraught Diogenes);

that realtors,  
 and this we shall most gleefully relate,  
 shall turn astronaut and prospects deal selves off as  
 freight.

Cutpurse! Scapegrace! Cutthroat!  
 Thus purseth mouth and curseth out lout

our *Christian Science Monitor*:  
 Is it your mission, Don Signor Ravenous Bishop,  
 your hearse to steer to hell?

Commenting upon this most singular  
 display of rudeness on the part of in this one instance  
 the crude *Monitor*, Her Majesty's *Manchester*  
*Guardian* dooth brood:

In the surety of death of hell is there not enough  
 encompassed?

For Deutschland's patron saints  
 es gibt then no complaints? If so then pourquoi no

for Deutschland's patron saints a pontifical mass or  
 requiem?  
 asks *Tass* sipping kvass. My word what a scatological  
 ass  
 is that prisoner in the dock, your hoch Teutonic  
 Grace,  
 to set up a crock of holy grails in place  
 of plastered alabaster saints, to flagellating the  
 pilgrims  
 along the holy trails of holy water and holy Arabian  
 oil  
 in the subsoil of Kuwait and the soilpipe of a Kurd  
 holier by far than the herd of the herdsman  
 Through-hate  
 and the Order of All Infidels Slaughter;  
                         in order that he might fend off  
 wrath and invite quarter! Ach Gott in Himmel,  
 why not plow the wretch under schon und so grüss  
 the chariots of sweet Deutschland's Herrs and  
 Penates,  
                                 Masters of black alabasters  
 and the Holy Gospel of tenir et squeeze l'Affaire  
 ténèbres  
 so immoderately pleasuring the nine fat wives  
 of the nine lives wheezing holy ghost and triple  
 threat host  
 by air by sea from space in *Fortune* magazine wor-  
 shipped so passionately  
 by two spates and one brace of frightened Teutonic  
 knights  
 of the square meal and raw deal; who in adoration  
 of Protocols of Zion and New Frontiers and Peace  
 Corps  
 must kneel and iron crosses at such losses as in  
 Australia

fair to make the hair crawl; despite their use of awl  
and breaststroke on patron saints and painted  
knights

of the sword and curb and of not quite so bright  
as his anti-Semitic old man Henry Ford Two or Three  
or Four;

and the bourse  
and his and our coarse Old Lady of Threadneedle  
Street's horses:

die aller meiner most heiliger Herren der Graf  
Jerry von Very Admirable Perry Lewis von Kennedy  
way down under below der slave-ocrat Plato fleeing  
NATO out of Cato

for sweet sleek Dean Herr Gott Strafe Nur New  
England

für der sehr Bloodthirstymary alzo Fé Sante Topeka  
Toupé von Acheson

Ausgetruman Durch Eisenhower geboren (alzo so  
verloren)——

All Neville Chamberlains  
granting nuclear power and such *süssgeliebterlange*  
*Jahre\**

on the Atchison, Topeka and Sante Fé to Der Alte  
Adenauer,

der Imminsee alter Holy Graf immer adding cubits  
to his stature

and pay by warranty of the catcher in the wry New  
York *Times*

für Deutschland's Zeitgeist Dawes-und-Young unter  
der kleinige Tzung

von der little Herr Graf Sehr profound Arthur or  
round stomacher

und sound investments in der Herr Cardinal  
Fuglemann und Special Pleader

for a New Crusade in behalf of still ever more  
ferocious Wagnerian Lieder . .

## P'envoi

the corpse by Gott exhumed  
 for soap and leather  
     irrespective of political weather  
 nordics make love in gorse and heather  
     even so, whether a corpus  
 by microfilm or blether  
     Eichmann? bitte, Israel, while I quaff  
 this brew distilled aus one Jew twice as miserable  
 as Beethoven and twice as dead  
     o my ghastly headlines!  
 why by the nine old gruesome wives of the holy  
     ghost,  
 why bold as brass must they startle grass  
 to dig the mucker up? wherefore let him boast  
 and roar of sinister triumphs in the war? why roast  
 the mimes of yore? doth squawk and with such  
     peevisish indignation  
 the flatulant geese of the *Times* of New York  
 and in a similar vein the strain  
 of his old lady of Threadneedle Street's niece  
     aber where,  
 where might I ask, ist der corpus delicti?  
     why upon my soul  
 now what an inspired thought! i say, what a pity,  
     wot?  
 that i could not have thought up such a nifty one  
     first.  
 gawd, what a thirst i might thereby have satisfied,  
 the old lag reflected  
     while thanks to the warranty  
 of the U.S.A. such a plethora of evil goes undetected  
     Sol Newman

**THREE POEMS****Karbala\*****1.****Martyrs**

Seventytwo thirsty saints upon the sand  
 Turning towards the Euphrates which flows  
 Placid forever through the level plain.  
 Three tedious weeks behind these weary pilgrims  
 The sanctuary of Madina lies  
 Birthplace of grace about to abdicate  
 In blood and anger on the waiting earth.  
 They have converged on destiny this day  
 Now devious polity  
 Confronts them with its lances on the bank  
 Of the deep-flowing and necessary river.

**Thirst**

Quietly growing in the silent tents  
 And plain before their eyes  
 The army of betrayers takes its stand  
 A knife above the opening vein of faith.  
 So the days revolve

\*50 years after the death of the Prophet Mohammad, his grandson Imam Hussain and a small band of his followers were waylaid, cut off from the life-giving water of the river and, after an ordeal of 10 days, massacred at Karbala on the banks of the Euphrates by the army of Omayyid leader Yazid. Imam Hussain was on his way from Madina to the Omayyid stronghold of Kufa, invited there by Yazid himself under pretext of paying homage to him as undisputed Caliph of the growing dominion of Islam.

This betrayal is mourned every year by all Muslims. The Shia sect in particular make it an occasion for intense manifestations of grief, including processions of flagellants.

Around this tragic, recurring confrontation  
 Of sanctity and power;  
 But the children cry and their grave father weeps  
 In simple, human misery and pain.

Now history descends upon this scene  
 Now tents and horses dim before our eyes,  
 Upon the resolute in Kufa falls  
 The purity of power; upon their victims  
 The mindless, burning cloak of deity.  
 To mourn their names  
 An avalanche of grief will shift through time,  
 A river deep and growing to a flood  
 Of comfortable and recurring pain.

2.

For ten enumerated days the voices  
 Have cried their grief in endless pageantry.

Hussain! Hussain!  
     shriek the whirling, tattered mourners  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     fall the knives upon the shoulders  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     call the young disfigured faces  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     grief redeems, and grief abases  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     take our bleeding flesh for witness  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     release our dreams, absolve our sickness  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     you who died that we may prosper  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     now our annual pain we offer  
 Hussain! Hussain!  
     martyr, take this blood and anguish

Hussain! Hussain!  
 fall again, that we may flourish.

When the tenth day ends  
 The watching cars edge slowly through the crowd  
 Dispersing without passion in the night;  
 Incurious, their lights  
 Wash over people sleeping in the streets  
 Their noisy and perpetual resting place.  
 (But those men died  
 For principle and pity by the river;  
 Their Faith lives on  
 Rendered more decorous by their springing blood).

The cars drive past  
 The elegance of silent minarets  
 Visible even in the moonless night.

Khwaja Shahid Hosain

### **A Prospect of Desire**

*(On seeing the touring open-air brothels of Sindh)*

Through the heat-enveloped maze,  
 By the silent, arid ways  
 Cast in changeless drudgery,  
 Flaunting primal finery  
 Beckoning to every thirst  
 Comes the caravan of lust.

In the desert, there was pain,  
 Barren frenzy roamed the plain,  
 But they barricaded hate,  
 Made the sterile torment wait

Till the healing waters burst  
At the caravan of lust.

When the night's indifference came,  
Cloaking the perpetual shame  
Shadowing the alleyways,  
Lancing at the unborn days,  
Then the shackled dreamers grasped  
At the caravan of lust.

And the waiting ecstasy  
Drew away their misery,  
Swept the seething agony  
Into pale passivity:  
So they travel, as they must  
To the anodyne of lust.

When the faceless stranger comes,  
And you clasp him in your arms,  
Summon up the wanton eye  
And the gently moving thigh,  
Do you love because you must  
In the caravan of lust?

Does the metronomic glee  
Ever freeze to agony?  
Can the furnace of desire  
Abdicate its sullen fire,  
Or does a never-ending thirst  
Compel this caravan of lust?

Lying on the hired cot  
Does the fierce and fleeting thought  
Of degradation come your way  
Under the censorious sky?  
Or does the silver radiance rust  
Into the provender of lust?



As the hungry children come  
Searching for their shattered home,  
Does your nimble woman's heart  
Beat with more than measured art?  
With the passion is there birth  
At the caravan of lust?

When the village lies content,  
And the patched and shredded tents  
Are plucked across the shifting sand,  
Who can say he understands  
What the drifting, shrouding dust  
Whispers at the scene of lust.

**Khwaja Shahid Hosain**

### **The Oriental Poet Comes to Tuscany**

Deep in my heart a tangled garden grows  
Where nightingale and jasmine live and breathe  
My life is hard, but the perpetual rose  
Sends through my art the perfume of release.  
But times are painful; self-imagined cries  
Of soothing birds have now begun to pall,  
Travelling away, the restless poet tries  
An alien anodyne at Fiesole.

But the world is hard here, hard  
And sharp with definition; clear and brutal  
The dazzling blueness of the covering sky  
Drenches the eyes.  
I shrink from this deluge  
Of beauty without relief, no sombre clouds

Tainting the skies, no deadly overflow  
 Tearing the Arno from its quiet path,  
 No plague of locusts  
 Busy among the fields of Tuscany.  
 So in this painted insulated Eden  
 I fly to happiness, to a forgetting  
 Simpler and stupider than the dream of symbols  
 Verdant and moving in my Eastern mind.

Descend from Fiesole  
 Wandering about the flower-enclosed retreats  
 Elegant and withdrawing from the road:  
 Who lives beneath these cypresses, these stones  
 Beaten and mellowed by an age of sun—  
 A name occurs: Berenson  
 Dispensing values from these quiet paths. Others  
 Grown rich and famous of the mind or heart  
 Resting their passions in this even land  
 This healing, equable, benumbing land.

In Florence  
 Among the ordered stones of rose and marble  
 Inhaling the damp incense of the churches  
 Watching a woman lost in genuflection  
 Before a smiling, illuminated face,  
 Crossing the Ponte Vecchio at night  
 The flagstones echoing against the water  
 Discerning ancient beauty on the air  
 Lying on the tongue with antiseptic chill,  
 What reckoning is reached?

Watch these darting, sensuous, unheroic people  
 Hurrying past their heritage of beauty  
 Drinking the wine but lost without the visions  
 Which grew to paint and marble in this city  
 Too long ago. The streets were narrower then,

The garbage lay untended by the doors,  
The gutters flowed beneath ones feet, the flag-  
-stones shone with slime beneath the sun,  
Blood was not uncommon to the eye  
And perhaps the blazing blueness of the sky  
Pressed less relentlessly towards the earth.  
I must return to the sad, teeming home  
Which lies with heat and squalor in my heart,  
There is time  
To find a music in that suffering land  
Before peace overcomes its painful life,  
The rivers dwindle to a channelled flow  
The sun contracts its burning heat to warmth  
The colors grow to burnished, vivid hues  
Against which moves a herd of pleasant people  
In undemanding safety,  
And the same breathing calm of silent beauty  
Descends upon my rancid, acrid country  
As on this time in Florence  
Where the great statues mourn  
A passion lost upon the middle way.

**Khwaja Shahid Hosain**

## TWO POEMS

**Song of a Man in Love**

Within me, now, the world begins to enter:  
 Buildings, people, chores and quarrels,  
 Fashion stores filled with smell of women,  
 Rough boys, parks where old men linger,  
 And those who lose their heads in temples' dark.  
 Sometimes, when midnight's past, a cry  
 Abruptly dying, pierces through my flesh.  
 I am trodden up and down a thousand stairs.

That limping beggar girl in her simple gladness  
 Picks my nerves for ribbons to twine her hair.  
 The husky voices of whores  
 Raise a conchshell roar within my helpless ear.

Beasts also come, crouching, dense and close  
 together,  
 As if they had found the final unclaimed portico.  
 The buffalo, unyoked from the cart,  
     Spreads his carpet of fatigue and is content:  
 With lovely eyes the stray bitch speaks.

Distances come, valleys, plains, forests,  
 Roads, bridges, vehicles,  
 Along the telegraph wires from peak to peak  
     Strike the rhythms of the big mountain-winds.

All is well,  
 All firm, in tact and sound  
 Like events in a made-up play:  
 And only I  
 Have become a flow, a stream, a motion,  
 A wound

Which a deep, incurable infection  
Keeps oozing away,  
Gaping, stanchless and red.

**Buddhadeva Bose**  
**adapted by the author from his Bengali**

### **A Stranger**

Dead are those girls—had breasts like water-lilies;  
And the pond so cool with grass and moist snails—  
Small;—but beyond knee-deep water was the storm.

Dead the friends;—evenings no longer deepen,  
Spacious and slow, in glad verandas,  
Nor the talk is lightly tossed, like rafts upon the  
waves—

A game;—but leading up to voyages.

And the animal's cave is closed. No bribes can open  
the door.

Reduced to a worm is the tiger's redness.  
No more the warm wet flow of the stupid child.

Only—while the rain  
Blurs the trees where witches shake their hair,  
And the wail of coupling cats grows sharp like  
needles—

At midnight, upon the pavement  
Is left a heart,

A stranger,

A raw lump of feeling slow to learn.

**Buddhadeva Bose**  
**adapted by the author from his Bengali**

**MAKESHIFT RATIONALE**

the piece of string  
  lies snaked on the floor  
    like an afterthought  
      from our seat  
      on top of the bookcase  
    we stare intently  
  the string moves  
you look at me and touch the side of your head  
  “too much concentration” you say “I’m seeing  
  things  
I thought the string moved but it’s still in the same  
  place”

          I say nothing  
          you wouldn’t believe it  
          and I don’t want to upset you  
I shift my position  
shaking the bookcase a little  
          the string still stretches casually  
          on the patterned carpet  
          giving slight shivers  
          as it flows along  
          the length of itself  
  I look to see if you’ve noticed  
you’re looking at the doorknob  
and smiling to yourself  
  leaning toward my ear  
  you whisper  
    “be very quiet  
    the doorknob is turning”  
                          **Ottone M. Riccio**

**THREE POEMS AFTER CH'U YUAN****The Spirit of the Hills**

In her chariot of azaleas and laurel,  
drawn by leaping wild-cats,  
followed by swift-footed foxes,  
  
comes the Spirit of the Hills,  
dressed in wistaria, girdled with ivy,  
her lips smiling.

Through my heart's memory  
she trails the perfume  
of many flowers—

while I stand shrouded from sunlight  
in the dark grove near the hilltop,  
clouds of gloom round my feet.

**Ruth Berrien Fox**

**The Voice of the River**

As day wanes, I descend from the Western Mountain  
down whose sides I have wandered, bemused.

Forgetting home, I dream of a palace  
of pearl with gateways of shell.

Come, ride my tortoise and chase spotted fishes;  
linger among the small islands with me.

At daybreak, the swift-flowing freshet comes  
swirling  
to part us. Gently bowing, you turn away.

Then wave after wave comes to greet me;  
swarms of fish bid me farewell and hail.

**Ruth Berrien Fox**

### Lament of the Lady of Hsiang

*Legend has it that the lady mourned on the bank of the river for her husband, the emperor Shun, her tears so incessant that they spotted forever the stalks of bamboo. At last, in despair, she drowned herself.*

My eyes ache from gazing into the river;  
my tear-drops glisten on roots of bamboo.

A house in the water I'll build for myself,  
trellised with iris, roofed with lotus leaves,  
and carpeted with purple shells.

I'll weave hangings of split reeds,  
weighted with pebbles of white jade.  
Oil of angelica shall perfume the rooms.

O, scent my walls with pepper juice,  
my rafters with cinnamon and camphor.  
Tie over my door a small bundle of sweet herbs.

**Ruth Berrien Fox**



## TWO POEMS

## Love Lifted Me

My cousins, lean hunters,  
at twenty-two shaped  
by Sewanee, Kappa Alpha,  
shabby affluence,  
the Order of DeMolay,  
Aunt Mim's and Aunt Martha's voices  
(Randolph Macon  
out of Hockaday) :  
Bobo Randolph pissed  
out steaming Jax behind  
the tent; Clay Stuart  
said, "Get the lead out,"  
both auburn, fair,  
enemies of the duck,  
the rabbit, and the deer,  
tall and tight, and I  
at fifteen, once-removed.

Banana-glare of floodlights,  
pulp of cow-pies  
and sawdust, thin women  
rattling in rows like a canebrake,  
stiff salt denims,  
and a Fat with bow-tie,  
galluses, and Bible.  
Cousin Bobo said,  
"Hot damn! Clay Boy,  
he's preaching like a nigger  
I think I'll get religion."

"Episcopalians don't  
get religion, Bo."

“Clay Boy, you never saw  
some little old gal  
all hotted up  
with one of those mean low-down  
Gospel choruses?  
Down in Rapides Parish  
last summer one  
damn near got her rocks off  
with *Love Lifted Me*.  
God, I’m getting it. Clay Boy,  
this stuff hits you  
where you live.”

I once-  
removed, once-removed,  
heard Fat pop,  
thought of Christ moving  
in the silence of the Host  
and his mother the Virgin  
my mother with cool  
hands on my forehead  
and her perpetual face  
an ivory of repose.

Saw Christ the Alley Cat  
crucified and stretched  
on canvas, vermin Messiah,  
his blood noisy with multitudes,  
multitudes.

Bo was saved  
from being saved—by Clay  
who warned him that Aunt Mim  
would have a hissy if  
he let the Rector down.

“Okay, okay. Let’s  
you and me go hustle

us some poontang, Clay Boy.”

Outside over the tent  
stars moving through  
my hunting kin's drunk,  
the hot-ham smell  
of a cottonseed mill,  
a ruined armadillo,  
the instant salience of chiggers.

My mother with Mary's sword  
in her heart and a quarter-moon  
white under her feet  
moved through the summer night  
crushing the patchouli.

Paris Leary

### To Seconal, on Good Friday

Push me over the edge of sleep,  
past this autumn consciousness,  
down to the bottom of the weather  
where the black silent storm  
is peace and the dreams are out of Freud  
or some forgotten marriage-manual.  
Kill me for twelve hours  
and I will rise again on the third day.

It was easy, with the dex—  
the curate with his fag tenor,  
the usual Vittoria *Reproaches*,  
the white free-standing altar  
wreathed in the acrid blue, the decorous

ushers, the smart gold corpus  
on the Florentine crucifix,  
and the Junior League repenting.

But dex is Judas; the other way  
quickly or the clock strikes three.  
Quickly. Already I can smell  
His sweat and urine; kill me for twelve  
hours with the black silent storm—  
the empty Saturday I can bear.  
Too late. The clock. Migraine rends  
your grey veil in twain. I thirst.

Paris Leary

## PORTENTS

The clerks at Woolworth's are growing mushrooms.  
The cash register girls at the A&P  
Are treading grapes as they ring up their sales.  
The garage men scribbles odes on the crankshaft.

The meekest member of the auto club  
Has resolved to flood all freeway cloverleaves  
And convert them into skating rinks.

The commuter bus just keeps on going.  
It stops a hundred miles away  
Beneath redwood trees where everyone  
Gets out and has a box lunch picnic.  
The market for TV dinners has dropped.

Something big seems sure to happen.

Jack Anderson

## NATIVITY POEM

(for J. B.)

The egg sat up in the egg-cup,  
The wings within quivered gay.  
*Who will chip my pearly-whirly shell  
And let me be my day?*

*Not I*, said the banker,  
Your oboe and drum  
Would shake our countinghouses  
Into kingdom-come.

The egg went pale in the egg-cup  
And raged with a shriek of claws.  
*Who will chip the stone-boney shell  
And let me glove my paws?*

*Not I*, said the Duchess  
Tiara-ed and twirled.  
You would smoothe the seams and sugar the dreams  
Of our illmannered world.

The egg slipped tight in the egg-cup  
And a voice began to mock,  
*Who will chip my rockinghorse shell  
And let me trick or treat?*

*Not I*, said the nurse  
As she blew out the candle.  
You don't know enough for an embryo  
And much too much for a dandle.

The egg turned black in the egg-cup  
And jumped a stormy feather.  
*Who will chip my uranium shell  
And let me seek my Other?*

*Not I*, said the Robot.  
You talk like a swan.  
No poets allowed unless with jazz.

You're stuck with your dying moon.

The egg blazed red in the egg-cup  
And beeped and beeped to seven.  
*Who will chip the cockatrice shell  
And let my hell be heaven?*

*Enough of this fiddle*, said the Unicorn.  
November Tenth, and my godson's due.  
Then his horn chipped the skylarking shell:  
*Good-sorrow, happy doomlight, to you and you.*

**Eve Triem**

#### AS I WAS WALKING THE DOG IN ST. FRANCIS KANSAS

As I was walking the dog in St. Francis Kansas  
or behind the OK Motel in St. Jo., Mo.,  
I saw the shabby backs of the fronts of glamor  
where paint peels off and garbage cans overflow.  
The hollyhocks break and trail in the dust of Kansas,  
the crickets hop through the heat of St. Jo., Mo.

My dog delightedly pees in his first real alley,  
sniffs at the fly glad heaps in a neon glow  
that winks from the neat facades; he is tired of  
riding

and likes these evil odors, being so low.  
He prefers the earth outside to the inside, tidy  
with towels and controls where air conditioners blow.

He is sick as I am of farms we never stop at  
but pass between corn and cows on the endless road.  
I let him linger and add to the rankling alley.  
Star far Scorpio blinks as I hanker for home.  
I won't come back ever this way through Kansas  
or stay in St. Jo. at the false bright side of the road.

**Harold Witt**

**HONEY AND SALT.** *By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$4.75.*

A new collection of Sandburg—over 85 and still going strongly in the wonderful old vein. There is the wry combination of the lyric and the tough. Poems about panama hats and skyscrapers, about free-sailing Lief Erickson and about God—putting on overalls and getting dirty running our universe “and several other universes / nobody knows about but Him.” Fortunately, Sandburg hasn’t changed!

**THE BEGINNING AND THE END.** *By Robinson Jeffers. Random House. \$3.95.*

This posthumous collection reveals one important thing: though Jeffers’ images changed to keep pace with the changing madnesses of the world, his subject matter and attitude never did. Here is still his massive pessimism and his moving concern for all living things. A worthy final volume.

**SELECTED POEMS.** *By Yevtuschenko. E. P. Dutton. \$3.*

Yevgeni Yevtushenko has stirred up more excitement in the Soviet Union than any other writer in recent years. He was hailed as evidence of the new freedom for Russian writers. Many of his poems are startling and fresh. They have sweep of ideas and brightness of image. Many will doubtless be lured into reading this book by Yevtushenko’s notoriety. They should be warned. These translations are garbled, inaccurate and wholly lacking in any of the power of the originals. They will give the reader only a mistaken notion of the poet. It’s a pity. Yevtushenko deserves better treatment than this.

**WATER STREET.** *By James Merrill. Atheneum. \$1.65 (paper).*

There has been a steady and impressive development in each of Merrill’s books. The first clearly showed him to be a clever technician and a witty (if

bitter) observer. In this one (the third) his technique has become far more subtle and his observation touched with compassion. There can be little further doubt that he is developing, quietly and surely, into one of our major talents.

**EVERYONE BUT THEE AND ME.** *By Ogden Nash. Little, Brown. \$3.95.*

There are many who hate to admit it, but Ogden Nash is one of the few really original poetic talents of our century. Here are some new exercises in his private medium—the best in many years. All bear the outrageous stamp of the master. Can one ask for more?

**TWENTIETH CENTURY CHINESE POETRY.** *Trans. and ed. by Kai-yu Hsu. Doubleday. \$5.95.*

This is an important pioneering work which gives us a glimpse of a virtually unknown literature. It is a collection of the colloquial poetry of modern China that breaks with the traditional verse patterns and classical language of the past. They are selections to be read as much as history as poetry. But they cannot be regarded as mere propaganda. The Chinese sense of beauty is too fine to allow that to happen. There is excitement and originality here that should delight many.

**POET'S CHOICE.** *Ed. by Paul Engle and Joseph Langland. Dial. \$6.95.*

This is a frustrating anthology. For it, 103 poets select their "favorite or crucial poem from their own work and comment on it." Mind you, they were not asked to select what they consider their **best** poem. So, unavoidably, the collection becomes a personality hodgepodge of careful thought and nonsense, genuine self-revelation and childish showing-off. It contains pleasant surprises and serious disappointments. Finally, it leaves one wondering how many poets should be allowed to comment on their own verse.