

# THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

Volume 14 - Number 2      Winter 1963-64

---

## CONTENTS

- |    |                     |  |
|----|---------------------|--|
| 1  | JON ANDERSON        | <i>What It Is Like<br/>to Be God</i>                 |
| 2  | JOHN STEWART CARTER | <i>Firenze</i>                                       |
| 3  | K. P. A. TAYLOR     | <i>Chacun á Son</i>                                  |
| 4  | ROBERT SPIESS       | <i>Two Poems</i>                                     |
| 6  | GIL ORLOVITZ        | <i>Art of the Sonnet: 165</i>                        |
| 6  | JACK BOBBITT        | <i>Inequation</i>                                    |
| 7  | CARL LINDER         | <i>Two Poems</i>                                     |
| 8  | DOUGLAS FREELANDER  | <i>Late Shift</i>                                    |
| 9  | PETER LORDEN        | <i>The Peak of<br/>Abstraction</i>                   |
| 10 | E. SAN JUAN, JR.    | <i>Four Declarations</i>                             |
| 15 | JOHN NIST           | <i>Two Poems</i>                                     |
| 17 | RONALD B. RIBMAN    | <i>Variations on an<br/>Elizabethan<br/>Prologue</i> |
| 18 | ROBERT PAWLOWSKI    | <i>After All, Mother</i>                             |
| 19 | PREMENDRA MITRA     | <i>The Soul of Birds</i>                             |
| 20 | JEREMY INGALLS      | <i>Remembering John<br/>Fitzgerald Kennedy</i>       |
| 21 | SY KAHN             | <i>Each Ritual<br/>September</i>                     |
| 23 | MARJORIE WASHBURN   | <i>Three Poems</i>                                   |
| 26 | JACK CRAWFORD, JR.  | <i>Two Poems</i>                                     |
| 28 | LAURENCE LIEBERMAN  | <i>Two Poems</i>                                     |
| 30 | SUZANNE GROSS       | <i>Ozark Elegy 2</i>                                 |
| 31 | KEN TINDALL         | <i>The Language<br/>of Trees</i>                     |
| 33 | SAM BRADLEY         | <i>Beset</i>   |
| 34 | SUSAN EDWARDS       | <i>Lament</i>  |
| 35 | WILLIAM MATHES      | <i>The Beard</i>                                     |
| 36 | CAROLE CROSS        | <i>Rationality . . .</i>                             |
| 37 | MARGARET SECRIST    | <i>The Lost Ones</i>                                 |
| 39 |                     | <i>Books in Brief</i>                                |

# *THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL*

Volume 14 - Number 2      Winter 1963-64

---

## **WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE GOD**

The boy who is eight now willingly bends eyes below the bedroom lamp. He is not ashamed of love, is its small sponsor in the dark, wise beyond words, and the lamp circles him. Framed in light, his prayer is some small innocence spoken before sleep and someone listens, his logic says, or he would not be praying.

The father of the boy who is eight now stands behind his son and is untouched by light, unsure of love. In the darkness that he towers in, his hands cup nothing that the boy holds true, and nowhere can he find an answer to the voice which needs an answer there below him. His silence pleads for no prayers, and is a prayer to the boy praying.

Then the light and bed and boy all fold themselves to sleep, and the father is left alone, knowing that this is what it is like to be God, wordless in the pleading dark, the voices below growing always insistent, always louder in their love. And he forgives his God, Who he thinks not above forgiveness and Who, in His dark, may also be praying.

**Jon Anderson**

**FIRENZE**

There are expensive  
restaurants along  
    the bat-brown Arno  
which flows in bluer  
awninged light among  
    the goblets, knives  
gold-rimmed plates,  
silver wagons holding crimson,  
    vein-skinned plums,  
green, soft-haired figs,  
iced black grapes,  
    and rises then to wash  
the glint of lustres  
hung from ormolu  
    chiseled  
into gilded vines.  
Liquid there the flow  
    of Arno quivers  
(waiters bring us melons,  
wet-rose scampi,  
    topaz wine)  
in reflective, shimmered light  
of tourist afternoon  
    dissolving  
what is left from  
morning's black and grey  
    encounter with

the sculptured dead  
Medici quick within  
    their death-dimensioned tomb.

John Stewart Carter

### CHACUN A SON

Where his face was,  
sallow, distorted  
on the wood pillow  
and the bowing  
attendants  
doing nothing ominously:  
“This the dispatched  
bit,” one said, “tissue  
of first tissue  
lost with blood  
— to decorate now with lines  
of tendrils  
green tracings linear,  
the delicate ramifications  
*aux fines herbes.*”

K. P. A. Taylor

## TWO POEMS

## Ten Verses for Illustrations for a Primer

1 in eden an Apple  
red and dapple

hung on a Branch  
high out of reach

of lions Camels  
and other mammals

as Dugongs skunks  
and Elephants' trunks

2 a Female fair  
also was there

and a serpent who strode  
along the Ground

3 he lowered his Head  
some phrases said

and twining like Ivy  
the tree he quivered

4 the Jewel swayed  
and fell away

she gave it Kiss  
with parted Lips

and sought her Mate  
to bid him taste

5 then first they marked  
that they were Naked

and put leaves Over  
their Privates for cover

6 our parents Quaked  
for their mistake

and god made them habits  
from pelts of Rabbits

7 in Sorrow and pain  
would eve bear cain

and adam Toil  
in thorny soil

8 the lord put Under  
all beasts the adder

and Vowed both eve  
and adam must leave

9 in Woe they went  
to banishment

10 a cherub came  
with aXe of flame

and the eden Yard  
with Zeal he guarded

Robert Spiess

### Two Haiku

1. O rock that I tried  
to lift from this field, —O rock,  
you have pulled me down
2. Almost burdensome—  
this visiting my mother,  
mad these many years

Robert Spiess

**ART OF THE SONNET: 165**

When in the rise and fall of torsos in  
 the twilight-cruised torque I heard the sennet  
 of my hour, I said I had not posed  
 for ancient races or their deathless fetes;  
 I held no brevities to my garbled nose;  
 and I was impervious to my gaited skin.  
 With skull and limbs how shall I be pagan?  
 how shall I model, then, a century's turn  
 in the light bronze dusk to torsion's paradise?  
 For I am that finally civilised threat—  
 the fully clothed bearer of the letter  
 of credit, the total failure of nakedness.  
 I broke my trumpeted hour over my crutch,  
 that all crippled torsos might beg as much.

**Gil Orlovitz**

**INEQUATION:****CRAZY WOMAN CREEK, WYOMING**

It's twenty-one below and blowing on  
 This stretch. The ambulance, banshee on ice,  
 Has high-gear'd off, taking an arm and what  
 Attached to it. The blood remains, more black  
 Than red. A sign, knocked down, says, "Crazy Woman  
 Creek"; I tripped on it, after I loosened  
 Laces, swelling skirt and blouse, after  
 I saw the arm. Small worlds made cunningly  
 Can not endure such violence. Truck driver  
 Says, "I mean, it don't seem right, you know?"  
 I know: the part seems greater than the whole.

**Jack Bobbitt**

**TWO POEMS****Listening**

I hear a knocking treadle,  
a final treadle making fabric,  
I hear nothing,  
my ears are backwards,  
the sensitivity of lumber, nothing,  
the wheeze of noxia,  
and I hear waves,  
yet not waves,  
but I don't know,  
a mixture of white sound perhaps,  
a whooshing, a whizzing,  
I hear my cat scratch,  
I hear the characters in my book dance,  
now someone calls ;  
someone is mumbling a call,  
perhaps to a friend,  
together they mumble,  
something is broken,  
someone moves in the next room,  
a little bit to the left,  
now to the right,  
people blow excitedly on their horns,  
my cat pulls softly at a fly.

Carl Linder

**Emma Bovary**

She wept, exposed herself,  
pulled at her decaying ears,  
slept, mouth open, hungry,



tired of burning,  
she slept, knowing her death,  
she overlooked all that became life,  
a raw grating, a strange reconnaissance,  
a love of foreign love, of the eagle,  
and the crow, just love, merely love,  
tucked away love,  
a softening, tightening fervor,  
joy in the action, moving terribly,  
fisting the results, screaming,  
riding the horse, beating it,  
sweating, lathering her sides,  
ridden to death, tired,  
long overdue, her death,  
long anticipating her mouth.

Carl Linder

### LATE SHIFT

My wife is lonely and she sits alone  
in a lamplit room at night and listens for  
my footsteps or a neighbor's at the door.

It grows so quiet that she takes the moan  
of a cat in the cold street to be her own.  
And television is the biggest bore  
since she quit reading; she can read no more.

Her thoughts make an impossible monotone  
and hold her awake until I turn the key  
and greet her with a kiss at half-past-three.

Douglas Frelander

**THE PEAK OF ABSTRACTION**

Lungs labor there, moving the blood so slow  
our goggle-grim Philosopher becomes  
more absent-minded than he was below;  
he smiles on vacancy, greeting old chums

in every rock, and from a howling blast  
he'll conjure audiences everywhere—  
lecture the void, exhort the avalanche,  
be civil to a hundred miles of air—

till with a dry, preparatory cough  
and a vague nod to the neighboring peaks  
(as if they had come up to see him off)  
to emptiness his faint adieu he speaks . . .

O, the cold irony of Everest  
that keeps a Transcendentalist on ice!  
For toppling headlong down, our learned friend  
is locked forever in a snowy vise,

and he whose intellect so long pursued  
an exit from the flesh now has his clay  
immortalised! For at this altitude  
no worm can live—nor any man decay.

**Peter Lorden**

## FOUR DECLARATIONS

### Declaration of the Witness

Crawl and creep into the gallery  
Where she stands nude, armless,  
That you, proud beast, may embrace  
The wounds of her loveliness.

Like a ghost dug from dreams  
Where bones breathless blossomed,  
She stands on trial for a fabulous crime  
Grown from her marble bosom.

Unquenchable sting that feeds nightlong  
Till you wake—what bloodshed  
You commit! On crooked fingers  
Count the victims. Go, hide

And as you wander in shade and strand  
Her breast accuses you.  
Plunge to limbo's deeps; assuage  
Skulls with the grace of dew.

Here she lies plucked out, a shape  
Of disasters and ruins sown  
For the dogs! Your brain throbs, throbs—  
What four-legged form dims the dawn?

Share the agony and suffering  
 The Elect exalts. Let blood  
 Burst the shackles, limbs be torn  
 That her bruised caress may abide.

Ghost with glazed eyes, bronze smile;  
 Ivory look that burns, bears  
 Fire that dazzles and lights your guilt—  
 What scarecrow rides your nightmare?

Crawl, proud beast! From the dunghill  
 Claim your corpse. Doves rise  
 From suckling sleep, and the living yields  
 The palm and scent of praise.

### **Declaration of the Judge**

When the flood's edge rose to his teeth  
 Cursed our old gawky Emperor,  
 Spitting on the gall-tinged foam:  
 "Order, order the Executioner!"

Squat the blue-bellied Emperor  
 Weaving dry spider loins,  
 The acrobat Policeman up the tower's light  
 Cried: "Lo, our scaffolding gone!"

Hobnailed boots rout the gallery,  
 Plaza rebels kicked heels  
 Once they caught stars dazzling—  
 Like pearls ground by wheels.

In the Capitol's court the trial  
 Swung with fire and smoke,  
 Blasted the engine: "Torture—  
 Hang all dynasts to the rack!"

Quick the accusers hawked hurrah,

Pawned his gold-teeth to the butchers;  
 The mystery of the sower's cudgel  
 Stamped with blood the newspapers.

When the powerhouse broke the crooks  
 Croaked hell to the Tarpeian cliff  
 Their bankbook innocence; phantom shades  
 Shed temper to the knife.

The Executioner hurls the horned dice  
 Down deep the oyster's guts;  
 In combat gathering spins  
 And shrieks: "Guilty to the heart!"

Now our Emperor sweeps the pail-pot  
 Till the hinds of the ape;  
 Long will he dream the apocalypse,  
 Never his ghost grow meat-ripe.

### **Declaration of the Executioner**

In the gallery of rogues  
 The dreamer's pulsebeat bore  
 Alarm until bastards ripped  
 The veiled boudoir, shrieked: "Murder!"

The Judge, flexing his snout, giggles  
 Over exhibits of the camera-eye;  
 The Madame foams with wax-grin:  
 "With grace tonight this dog will lie. . . ."

Dawn spoiled her alibi  
 For suckers plucked with dope;  
 The Law Unto Herself, the Madame  
 Slings round the lover's neck the rope.

Owl's snore, rat's witching gabble:  
 Let the toes swing forever—

Ululations of next-of-kin  
Strike our senses as bizarre!

This dumbshow Mistress licks with spice  
Her transgression; in the holocaust  
She shows the nude twist of a smile  
As the corpse pawed its ghost.

Aghast the public burnt her image  
At virgin-bride's spitting distance;  
The killjoy martyr of ordeals  
Croaked: "Joy to our Spawn!"

Beloved Boss whose wisdom's the highest  
Vowed to kill her with a kick;  
Trials of loins when she was hired  
Made her squeal a bit.

Tracked at her trade he pitched the fork  
Behind the scaffold; at cockcrow  
She leaped from the roof—  
Who can love a shrunken head?

### Declaration of the Assassins

When we dead awaken from our sleep  
We'll strike a peacock dance,  
Plume our bosoms with fire and roses  
As lovers kiss in a trance.

Hear the shriek from the slaughter-house—  
What scandal gathers breath?  
"Toll the bell, ghost of my bitch mother,  
My accusers are awake."

The scaffold cracks at the beastly roar,  
Vultures in furor spring  
On our skulls, we poor clod—

They blast what the dawn brings.  
Armed with fork and knife  
The priest screams command  
From the pulpit; the police  
Rattle their teeth on the round.  
Someone (they whisper) poisoned the stoup,  
Devoured the loaf of god!  
Alas, drunkards with bloodshot eyes  
Squeezed the wine into their guts.  
Someone with cadaverous mug  
Kicked from the tomb, struck  
Our darling with balance and sword:  
The System decrees burning the sweatshop.  
With sanguinary laugh the Exploiter  
Pushes the pawns to gutter's edge;  
"Behold the man of destiny!" he claims—  
A scarecrow on the rampage.  
When we dead awaken the axe will hurl  
Edge of vengeance on the neck  
That even we bones may sacrifice  
Our dreams, so the living wake.

E. San Juan, Jr.

## TWO POEMS

## Love Can See

Blind, you say? No, love can see.  
When Venus met the Christ,  
She changed her name to Magdalen.  
And on her day when darkness  
Fell at noon,  
She led sweet Cupid to the cross.  
And when the hot blood spattered on his eyes,  
The dimpled cherub suddenly saw the face  
Of God and love gazed upon Love.  
And on that morning when the world began again  
Forever, then a boy with the dazzling look of sunrise  
Said to his grieving mother, *You will find Him  
Walking in the garden by the tomb.*  
And she ran and found and knelt and said, *Rabboni!*  
**John Nist**

## I Wake To The Sweet Jabber Of The Birds

I wake to the sweet jabber of the birds  
And the breath of God is on the morning air,  
All night I have fasted on the absence of my love  
And now I dine upon the memory of her everywhere:  
In the lilac mirror of the vast Pacific  
And the lyric eye of light to which I prayed  
When war churned the dark to shooting stars



And all the noise of bravery said it was afraid.

In the death sighs of a palmtree in the Philippines  
When Heinen looked goodbye—candle flicker of a  
ghost—

And in the suffocating sorrow when I thought of him  
At mass and couldn't open my mouth to take the host.

In the outstretched arms of Christ on Corcovado  
When the Southern Cross was a dagger at my eyes  
Because the burning pearls of Rio had rinsed my heart  
With the incense of their passion: *Suffering sanctifies.*

In the shudder-sucking vomits of my father drunk  
And in the scalding tears of penance on his sober face,  
In everything once branded with the flame of being  
human

That all the wounds of sin may be the scars of grace.

All night I have fasted on the absence of my love  
And now I dine upon the memory of her everywhere,  
For I wake to the sweet jabber of the birds  
And the breath of God is on the morning air.

**John Nist**

**VARIATIONS ON AN ELIZABETHAN  
PROLOGUE FOR BUBONIC KNIGHT**

Staged where the verge of suns pour  
Over the wide field of the universe,  
A drama: two such: the Ebony No-Man,  
(A javelin whittled out of time and space),  
And I. And this is the theme:

That we would never meet,  
That he would never greet  
Me at the corners of the universe.

Dressed in the tragedy I entertain conjecture  
Of a time when . . .  
When I stood in the tavern's roister  
And pulled a long bow through a green summer.

Straight the field shifts, gentles all,  
Down the crusades and the Arabic; raised  
Jerusalem: two such: Jesu fresh from death,  
Fluttering on the pennon like a red rash,  
And I. In malice certain

That we would never meet,  
That he would never greet  
Me at the corners of the continent.  
Glib in the prologue I entertain conjecture  
Of a time when . . .  
When I turned with a yellow thought  
And rattled the angry pages of a plaguey bill.

Within the circle O  
I sat me down and saw bubonic fish  
Puckered oval: two such: clownish on the brown  
bank,  
With our scales and skins in a medieval  
Sloughing. And this was the acting:

That we would never meet,  
That he would never greet  
Me at the corners of my generation.

Dressed in the comedy I entertain conjecture  
Of a time when . . .  
When I heard horns on the horizon  
And shook a gillyflower in a temporary season.

**Ronald B. Ribman**

### **AFTER ALL, MOTHER**

After all, mother, who will talk?  
What's more discreet than grave  
Objections to the designs of grass?  
What sweeter prince whispers a surer sigh  
That this cold stone love will never die?  
You're safe now, mom, in the arms of such a lover;  
The granite's long finger will strangle every blade.  
It's the real thing: scotch on the rocks,  
A.T.&T., seconal, and that jeweled hand  
You waved good-bye with;  
In days to come you'll never know  
What hit you.  
So this is just the job, gal;  
An earnest endeavor in the green.

**Robert Pawlowski**

**THE SOUL OF BIRDS**

Roaming the lonely wilds  
I may chance upon the soul of birds

No longer the mere pastures,  
Neither the grains  
Nor the bare burden only.  
Now, the shining sweep,  
The rebellious flout  
    That defies the world's puny pull.

In the fields and fen  
They still peck at their feed  
And evade nothing.  
Yet their heart-blood is warm  
With the bluest of sky-blue oaths.

All the qualms and clamours  
In the turns and twists of life  
Lodged deep in the heart  
    Like bullets from the hunter's gun,

Dissolve and disappear  
In that holy heat.  
Only the brave sharp swift wings  
    Set no limits to the horizon.

If ever this heart be utterly alone,  
I may attain the soul of birds  
Conscious only of another sun.

**Premendra Mitra**

**REMEMBERING JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY****A Penitential Office**

Medgar Evers there beyond the stars  
And children in their choir robes reach their hands  
To him, the latest sacrifice. He bears,  
This earth's bequest, their still familiar scars,  
The wounds which hate prepares for all who love.  
John and Medgar and the children move  
With Lincoln, nearer Abraham, beyond  
Assassins' arrogance, secure beyond  
Mere death and local starlight. With the Christ,  
His sibling and inheritors, their cup  
Is His — and our hard cost. The expiation  
Still is ours to make, still our redemption,  
The cost of venom in the shriveled soul.  
May God have mercy, mercy on us all.

**An Office of Atonement**

Now the sound of hooves, of rolling wheels  
Reverberating: may their echoes be  
No Ragnarok nor yet Apocalypse.  
May the soul of this young man bestow  
Beyond all bitterness a grace that heals  
The grudging heart, absolves the hand that dips  
Its gunsight in the scald of enmity.  
May hatred drain and every road wash clean.  
May this late martyr to our mortal shame  
Beyond the nave and altar here endow  
A strength to summon now the lagging will  
Toward those near neighborhoods whose patience still  
Waits fair welcome. He may so receive  
Better than catafalque and hillside grave.

**Jeremy Ingalls**

**EACH RITUAL SEPTEMBER**

Today the young men emerge  
From their television caves  
As did their ironbrowed fathers  
Shaggy from their stone homes,  
And they blink in the sunlight of the real world  
After the deceptive fireimages on their walls.

No Plato has uncaved them,  
No apostle has saved them.  
The wisdom of the tribe  
Has prodded or bribed them  
To walk blithely into the light  
Because: "Even the driver of a truck  
Is stuck without a college degree."

And the young women come too,  
Mostly camp followers, or, if  
Losers, grammar school teachers,  
To study the young cavemen  
And club them down  
In the arena of the sorority.

I, of course, am the witch doctor,  
With my symbols and incantations,  
My logic and lamentations.  
I shake the bones of the dead  
For my bread,  
Wed the new mind to the past,

Seeking a few shamans among  
This scheming, shaming, shamming tribe:  
A boy who will dare to stare  
Straight into the sun.

Each ritual September they arrive,  
Lounging against the door jambs,  
Bland eyes scanning girls  
And skimming books, cigarets like fangs  
In the corners of mouths,  
Cool, composed,  
But at center confused,  
And often already spoiled,  
Their heads oiled with cliches,  
Their square eyes flickering  
With simple images, fresh from the caves.

The light offends them, rends them.  
Some will do, eventually, to mend a shoe,  
Replace a tube and lubricate  
Our machinery. They will  
Wive soon, return to their fathers' cave,  
Crave fireimages, and later,  
Spawn in the dark.

But once in each ritual September  
As the members of the tribe  
Matriculate to masticate the hard  
Bones of the past, there appears  
A boy, a rattle of poems in his hand,  
A battle of songs in his head,  
His eyes nervous but clear,  
His ear hearing the creep of roots,  
The echo of lutes, and who stares at the sun.  
Then I, weary, and almost undone  
Begin to chant, joyful that there is one.

Sy Kahn

**THREE POEMS****Humor in Love Here**

Humor in love here is like clean water  
In blazing sands where grey bones are scattered,  
And stinking corpses stare with jellied eyes  
And grinning teeth into the white furnace of the sun.  
There are some crawling along,  
Gibberish pours from their swollen blackened lips;  
They will die in convulsions,  
Blackened fingers clutching for clean water.  
We see the clean, neat, brisk new adventurers start-  
ing out,  
Their laughter sparkles like fountains  
On the shimmering, waving mirror of the air.  
But they will get swollen and black and will fall.  
We take out our clean water and hold it to each  
other's lips.  
But how long will it last?  
Will you stare in horror and shriek until you fall  
beside me  
In the blazing, merciless, endless sands?

**Marjorie Washburn**

**To Seize the Key**

Once I schemed  
To seize the key  
Of this dark dream  
And cry, "I'm free."  
  
I broke glass  
And glued fragments.



The bright shape passed,  
The image went.

How the bells  
Shrieked, "You are caught."  
The feathers fell  
Where gold beasts fought.

I sought wind  
And blown faces.  
But white snow ends  
All frail traces.

Now I bang  
On doors of mist  
Where wild bells sang  
Of what I missed.

Cold silence  
You seep and fill.  
And knives intense  
Hold me quite still.

Marjorie Washburn

### **The Cowardly Bullfighter**

I am the cowardly bullfighter  
Who pretended to understand  
The beautiful simple motions  
They told me would slay the bull.  
I, I, to slay the bull.  
I make delaying and intricate gestures  
With my voice, and their reasoning sun  
Blots out the helpless lie that I am.  
They see two blurs in their blinding light  
And think they see me, the pursuer.

Oh, compassionate sanity, they throw me roses and  
life,  
And cannot see that I want to stare  
This bull straight in the eyes  
And say to it, "You win, you have won from the  
start,"  
And that I want it to smash and break me with its  
black hoofs.  
That I wish to hear the jeers of the crowd,  
I invite it to despise me,  
That I wish to look at them from the unreachable  
distance  
And hear them say,  
"Coward, we meant that you should slay the bull.  
We leave you to your doom you have done."  
They do not know that I know this bull  
Better than self I have not,  
And I treat it with honesty, it is all I have.  
It knows I am its willing victim,  
And would slay cleanly and quickly.  
None of this slow bloody trailing of entrails,  
Poking them back into the enormous gap  
And saying over and over again  
Like a mechanical doll,  
"I hope."

**Marjorie Washburn**

## TWO POEMS

## Strawberries

I am going into the beds to pick strawberries.  
The sand is hot; I will take off my shoes.  
The white light shines. I go  
On my knees in the burning grains.  
I see the berries; they are red; they rose  
To form; they are firm.  
The white light burns. The leaves  
Trail green shadows; a windmill turns.  
Beyond the rise, below, a herd  
Of cows goes; the earth sounds  
With torn blades. The death of grass  
Is milk. In the *Odyssey* cows were  
The knock-kneed kine. They are.  
But let me speak of strawberries. The glow  
Of their vermilion sheds  
Pink against the sand. Pick one.  
Grains cling. Brush them off. Take care.  
It bleeds drops. Fingers feel  
Red moisture. Let  
No rain fall on this dry day. The white  
Shirt is loose, open; the air  
Goes in and out; the sleeves hang. Let me  
Be this day in beds of strawberries!  
Let me lay them in my hand, one by one.  
Bejeweled, luminous. Their colors glow.  
And when I turn to leave I can, but do not  
(O tenderly!) want to go.

Jack Crawford, Jr.

**The Red Tricycle**

Runs the child headlong to ride. The red  
Tricycle: three wheels; spokes  
Of glitters; rings of shine; silver, red;  
Curve of arms, white chrome; grips of rubber  
At the handle ends. Its stillness hums.  
It waits; it is not restless; its patience  
Is ancient. Its pedals provoke.  
Eyes glisten to see its shine; its cycles;  
Its red circles of rims.  
Who can stay the foot? Who can hold  
Back from the wind? Who can tear  
Arms from their sockets? Who can clasp  
This little girl? who back her down?  
Who break, who stop her headlong hurl?  
Children shout to see  
The red tricycle. Their ecstasy  
Shrieks with the plumage of birds.  
White leopards spring to kill; or curl  
Asleep; white whales sunder seas with shoulders.  
The little girl is golden; her eyes are blue;  
Her small face flies! her hair is free; she flings  
Her legs about the leather; and shouts,  
Turning her bright head back; the red  
Rims spin; shadows flash; the wheels  
Move with a marvelous velocity.

**Jack Crawford, Jr.**

**TWO POEMS****A Waking**

Last week I discovered the middle of the night.  
There were hours of moments.  
And I breathed  
with more than lungs.  
It was like  
taking a ride all the way up  
or being in love  
with more than people or animals or plants  
or life.

In less than half a life,  
Time I have never asked that.  
Bruises, setbacks, a few promises  
to break my neck (broken  
promises) taught me  
not to ask for that, only to take  
what you get.  
And wait.

Which I did.  
But I dreamed something.  
Last week.  
In the middle of the night.  
And even before my eyes opened I knew  
something had happened.  
Something like a rabbit's radar.  
Or a mole's lower knowing.  
Something happened.  
Happens.

**Laurence Lieberman**

**Lunch**

I sit cross-legged on the edge of the lake  
and fling stale breadcrumbs to birds.  
I am wide open in the giving.  
Each crumbled breadcrumb is myself  
and is good to eat.  
Good!

As I feed myself to birds I grow inside.  
My eyes dance.  
How I can swallow!  
The air crackles with wings, beaks, feathers . . .  
and I breathe air-pockets  
of downy wind-draft,  
my tongue a wing-tip,  
my fingers upturned claws—  
bent twigs or glued matchsticks.

I see the lake shrink.  
The lake is no match for me.  
It sinks like water in a bathtub.  
As I grow it shrinks to a pool or a puddle.  
I am generous. I wet my toes.  
I release a few birds.  
I leave an inch of universe free to fare for itself.  
No greedy squanderer.

Laurence Lieberman

**OZARK ELEGY 2**

Troy is asleep in the woods. Ashes are sifting the  
bones,  
fires that he set for the dead, honoring men he had  
been.

What shall the town and his son say of a man in the  
earth:

seventy acres for sale: heifers: a Guernsey, a black;  
hayrake and harrow, a plow, harnesses rotting on  
nails,  
bottom and hill and the son's pines in the scrub where  
he chokes,

widow's sacrifice. She, living in town with the man  
made between her and the dead, waits for the sale  
and for Sunday.

Radio's her recompense. Salvation's in the banjo and  
the word.

Sister, come out and enjoy Jesus your savior from  
hell.

Sister, we always have good times in the Lord, yes  
indeed.

Son, you were out until late morning. Cursed in the  
town,

cursed, cries the reverend brown mouth of the box,  
in the land.

Mother, the agency says no one has looked at the  
place.

Cursed in thy basket and store, yes, and thy sons  
shall be made

eunuchs in Babylon. God speaks in his prophets, my  
friends.

Son, do you hear what he says? Seventy acres for  
sale,  
close to the highway and town, bargain, a widow's  
sacrifice.

**Suzanne Gross**

### **THE LANGUAGE OF TREES**

My woman on the hill this  
Time of year likes jackdaws  
On the brown that was her hair;  
Jackdaws walking on the ground  
Around her, laughing, for  
She'll soon turn green. My  
Woman is the oak tree on the hill,



In attitude of ecstasy and agony.  
I watched her grow that way since  
Love first cracked her crotch and  
Crannied her all over with ardor.  
The lightning made her to a  
Ship of bees. She's deep,  
And strong and sweet  
As Easter beer.

It must take something  
For a man to cry.  
I've seen him stand with heaven's  
Tears in his beard and hair all  
Summer by the river; favored more  
By rats than birds all summer  
Til it all goes over winds to  
Under snows. Then call him pured of  
Rage or grief or understanding.  
I'd like to think he wept  
For love of me.  
My love.  
He is a willow tree  
Down where our waters play.  
He's slim and soft and tough  
Withes writhing in and out  
The years of nights.

**Ken Tindall**

**BESET**

A hand-me-down angel, no passover, comes.

Window is — void. Day's glaze  
is wanting of substance, even of  
    come-through blaze  
of seraphs, assurances, that preordain  
    order . . .

“I waste,” cries the sleeper. “I waste again.”

Out of prodigal years,  
an angel of man's — or God's — hidden pain.  
What more terrible, returning?

I look down on the sleeper, fleshed in my night.  
He tosses on a pillow of the understood.  
Against his cheek brushes bright hair — hysteria?  
With fear of a firebrand once plucked from burning—  
    O terror of light! —  
— saved! something really saved? —  
    he curses balelight.

Just now, his cry. Or was it cried  
from a prodigal ashen past of pride?  
    O he meets as best he can  
        frenzy that drags down scales of night  
till there's nothing between them.  
There is nothing, nothing, and in him the angel is  
    crouched,  
contemptuous of salvation, inexorable in turning  
    back to the void.

    A terror of light!

Prayer becomes darkness, a dread of light.  
And strength becomes ashes. Such is the burning.

No angel uplifts me. I waste again.

Sam Bradley

**LAMENT**

His hair is a black lake  
rippling ;  
running to a waterfall  
which arches on his forehead.

His eyes are blue-green agates,  
glittering ;  
silent in the setting of his face.

And lips . . . brands to singe ;  
burn  
flesh beneath their iron pressure,  
with a tongue to fan the flame.

His hands are tender as fawn's eyes,  
inquisitive ;  
with fingers made of butterflies  
which glide across the open flower of a breast.

Curse the power that cloaks him in the sea!!

**Susan Edwards**

**THE BEARD**

I pass a mirror, stop, and wait for an introduction  
 or an explanation; now dandruff on my chin and  
 sleeping face down is sleeping on a new wool rug;  
 kissing is always funny; soup sizzles as it sips as  
 it drips where it hides for days: Cream-of-Tomato  
 follows me all the days of my life; pimples  
     camouflaged  
 like cannon explode unseen. Who are you? GBS? Che  
     Guevara?  
 Darwin? a Smith Brother? Peter Ustinov? a non-  
     conformist?  
 or a young Brooklyn Jew playing an old Russian Jew  
     playing  
 Tolstoi? children look up and screw up their faces:  
 "Is it dirty, Mother?" druggists have become hostile;  
 in other places of business business men continue  
     doing  
 business: they know I'm no threat; but matrons look  
     away  
 with pursed lips; their daughters entertain semi-  
     obscene  
 thoughts of being tickled here and there by candle  
     light,  
 wine, etc.; dogs pass me on the street and do not  
     notice,  
 except for a Great Dane who made a pass and a  
     Schnauzer  
 who wanted to fight because he "didn't like my looks"  
 but it turns out that I'm a pacifist with a lot of time  
 to shave or not to shave, to think about all manner of  
 things as many times as I please, if I want to—and I  
     do.

**William Mathes**

**RATIONALITY IN THE MORNING WHEN THE  
MILKMAN IS TARDY AND THERE'S NO CREAM  
FOR THE . . .**

and padding softly out the kitchen door  
 into the heated morn to catch the milk before coffee  
 I found the world amiss and not the boor  
 it always was for me        it sprang at first all upside  
       cocked:  
 from swollen skies yes ice blue trees hung down  
 and on the liquid ground a million leaves of grey  
       grass rocked  
 around with there a cloud and here a cloud  
 around my foot / like hell it wasn't / all the houses  
       still  
 stood still but nature flipped her top and shroud,  
 her bottom too I mused        then stood upon my  
       mind and saw  
 that nature was okay that way as it  
 had always been        that man had just designed  
       another flaw  
 by building houses upsidedown:        he had  
 to use his mind again for feet and use his feet for  
       mind  
 and finding that another chore  
 and finding world another bore  
 I clumped into the house but couldn't anywhere now  
       find  
 coffee        so pogoed off to bed quite raving loudly  
       mad

**Carole Cross**

**THE LOST ONES**

*"Education elevates trouble to a higher level."* Frost

These lost ones, contemptuous, tread  
the corridors of our best intention  
as outlaws skulk on western TV,  
their brush handles protruding like guns  
from right rear pocket of too tight pants,  
their hands crammed into small front slits  
as they stalk their imagined enemy.

There they sit, these black-coated lads,  
black browed, black-thoughted in class  
without any paper or pen or book or hope,  
pulling iron curtains against our words.  
They get attention with interruption.  
Disapproval is better than not being heard.

They wait for that vacuum-time  
when no foe compels them to school.  
Then jobless, they return in rustry wrecks  
with mufflers of tubercular tin  
to machine-gun and thumb-nose our air.  
They hang about the kicked, hated doors  
and wait for friends still imprisoned there,  
wait for some winning number, some give-away prize.

They must wear black for early decay  
like plums that rot before ripening,  
blasted and bitter on the unpruned tree.

**Margaret Secrist**

**SELECTED POEMS.** *By Gwendolyn Brooks. Harper and Row. \$3.95.*

The verse here snaps and crackles with the sad humor of the streets. It bursts with the fierce life of Bronzeville. It identifies with all who suffer injustice. But it is, in essence, *poetry*. This is a distillation of Brooks' previous volumes with additions—and immensely impressive.

**THE MODERN POETS.** *Ed. by John Malcolm Brinnin and Bill Read. McGraw-Hill. \$6.75.*

This is as interesting an anthology as has come along in quite a while. It concentrates on the credible and comprehensible and cross-sections a good portion of the contemporary scene. The names included and omitted will stir debate. But what collection won't? Rollie McKenna's portraits are often as revealing as the poets' own words.

**TO MIX WITH TIME.** *By May Swenson. Scribner's. \$3.50.*

This is Swenson's third book and an excellent way to make her acquaintance if you don't already know her work. The best of the two previous books is mixed with new verses. She is pointed, questioning, clever without being contrived. And often enough in the book she strikes fire. She is clearly on her way to real importance.

**STAND UP, FRIEND, WITH ME.** *By Edward Field. Grove Press. \$2.50.*

This is a haunting book: bitter, urban, witty in a wry manner, and thoroughly chatty. Mostly it is about the author. He stands revealed here, wholly involved in his own verse. He writes from passion and, though this presents dangers that Field does not always overcome, when he *does* he produces poems that lodge deeply in the memory.

**COMPLETE POEMS AND SELECTED LETTERS OF MICHELANGELO.** *Random House. \$5.95.*

Michelangelo is better known as an artist than as a poet. This is understandable but unfortunate. He wrote some of the most compressed, sensual and moving poems in the Italian language. Creighton

Gilbert has here translated and annotated these fine pieces into an important collection, the first that is close to complete. One might question some details of scholarship or translation, but the over-all effect is an important new look at a great artist.

**NOTES FROM A BOTTLE FOUND ON THE BEACH AT CARMEL.** *By E. S. Connell, Viking. \$6.*

This is a huge, rambling, fascinating, aggravating, perplexing, intriguing monologue. It touches on a hundred differing subjects, related and disjointed. But it holds one's interest and is a worthwhile experiment in personal verse, occasionally reminiscent of Pound—often just as confusing and rewarding.

**SILENCE IN THE SNOWY FIELDS.** *By Robert Bly. Wesleyan Univ. Press. \$1.45.*

Simplicity can be a contrived thing. Most of the poems in this collection are deceptively simple but few seem contrived. Bly has pared his images (most of them stemming from a life close to natural phenomena) down to the bone and used them with charm and ingenuousness. The result is a first book that suggests reserves for growth and expansion—both philosophical and visual.

**THE NEXT ROOM OF THE DREAM.** *By Howard Nemerov. Univ. of Chicago. \$5.*

Nemerov is prolific. This is his sixth volume. He writes on a tremendous range of topics, in many forms, and now even presents two solid verse plays. All of this is handled with impressive skill, wit, imagination, and, above all, a luminous use of language. Each succeeding book is better than the previous one. Can he maintain the climb? One devoutly hopes so!

**NOTE:** We call your attention to two books by Journal editors: "The Center of the Circle" by Bink Noll (Harcourt, Brace & World—\$3.95) and "The Psalm of Christ" by Chad Walsh (Westminster—\$2.95). Mr. Noll's book, issued in late 1962, has enjoyed excellent notices. Mr. Walsh's volume is just off the press.