

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL
Volume 16 - Number 4 Summer 1966

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ON THE DIFFICULTY OF DETERMINING THE REAL WORTH OF SOMETHING

Way back about one hundred years
or so ago the big thing was
collecting cards from bubble gum

back then I had not
only one but two
Statue of Liberty cards.

NOBODY else in the world had one.

I could've traded off a liberty
for maybe fifty of the commons

likeGrandCanyonsOldFaithfulsEmpireState
BuildingsLeaningTowerofPisasBoulderDams
DisneylandsSphinxesTimeSquaresesHanging
GardensofBabylonsMtEverests&adinfinitum

But I didn't
& a month later everyone in the Wide World
had Statue of Liberty cards all their own

and just now
ages after

am I absolved of the guilt & shame that comes
from letting opportunity slide by unpossessed

Grace settles gently with the realization that
none of those cards were actually worth anything.

E. R. Baxter

JUNE BUG

Green is the scarab who in his humming hugs
The sweet pink of the watermelon in the days
Of his strumming, in the summits of noons lugged
Laughing. O green is the scarab in his humming.
Pink is the flesh of the melon in the thunder of noon.
The green June Bug, jade of carapace,
Chews on the gauze of the flesh of the melon.
How comes the green sound of the droning of wings
of jade
On tides of noon to the melon's flesh. How hums
The harpist of green strumming. How swoops and
hardly hovers
The beetle in its rings and rhythms of armor. How
he falls
Flaming into pink pleasure. The melon
Hums with him, harps his heavy frenzies, feels him
feed,
Hears the green scarab, the fumble of him, in the pink
Forest of fable. How green is the scarab, his
cumbersome
Bulk, his motors droning on the white flames
Fanning, bringing his green rudeness, rudderless,
Winding. The watermelon with its wrinkled rind

Waits. O pink so sweet it sours, but luscious looms
Under the humming voyages. It lies in the trade
routes

Turbaned with noon, impatient for the fumbling
green

Tumbler, wanting a jade hard lover loose in his loins.
It is the armored greenness which is so tight a
carapace.

It is the slant of light from the green back, after
He falls from his humming, lying aswim. It is
the full-blown figs, a crack with ripeness. It is
The sound of the beetle and the way it comes, hurling
Its sound ahead. And then the green thing sailing.

His sound,

How it harps to the singer. How it comes, droning,
As ripe in sound as the fig in its brown wounds open
To the whining of bees in the milky leaves of the
famous

Tree. How the scarab, the singer, bearing its harp,
comes—

The miracle of him, in his green embroidered armor,
Lungs, legs, arms, a furnace of clamor. How comes
the harpist

In the amorous chirring of wings. How the latitude
Is his humming in the rhythms and the green riding.

How the figs

Long for him passing. How the pink of the melon rind
Reaches for his rhythm. How the middle of the night
Remembers his murmur, fingertips touching him
greenly

In the ardors of harvest, in the pale shadows
Soft as down or dust asleep in the white of the moon.

Jack Crawford, Jr.

THREE POEMS**Meye Gran Fodder**

(My fumbly comfrom Indi hooze 'er
And warn't two Texarco.)

It were seyde Granpaps prhaps
War soiled one of the glots ;
Borne looser

That Texarmexco Hooser :

 No money booty, no where body,

 Doom the hup land

 Hip 'n' hup he did,

Shinking: feeker: boil walls

Grans fond ball walls too ;

But dry so shunked his maney.

(Gran Prhaps had boych ilde
And goy childe.)

UnCarole prayed thee cornyet :

Skwarzona Simmer Nicht

Piuteful, some sayd,

Sumply piuteful.

 An dole Grams blows trams

 Girch Ilde the hatey-hate

 Doom Texarcus sway :

Flimbly orchis straw ill blown

Ghone, ale go-n.

(Puer Grumps, he dyed ol dyung,
Forton never smelled dawn him.)

 Armors eeking he did grow

 Bit ah: morts: deyd

 Quiet dad.

Thin the fimbly live him,
 Go nurth fur lave, fur moony,
 For beg brand's hound;
 Woof hup new sarperations
 Whilderin: deworse
 Deworse whon, live anudder.
 Gramps miled 'or 'ay cracked.

(Purr Gramp see only add one eye.)
 That weye the flambly live him?

Meye Gran Fodders
 Framly com from
 Mex i cus

And

Hefter Chikagoo and
 Driv en part

Watt thee heil.

Watt thee heil.

(Grimps deyed in aweight rheum
 Becons he huzza wight man.)

Mummies till lavin,

Eye, till livin,

Is stir und EmBee Ready:

Her little red wagon

Her Eddy ready wagon

REddy fire innybody

Live Ella round;

And Grinnyze live two,

Ninety two;

So heave noh Grimpziz did

All ghosts swan and an:

Nutting Mitch hippins in Diana,

But his cusp keeps me.

Eye, it does.

The Slate-colored Juncos

What is the matter with me! No loyalty whatever.
 All winter chickadees decorated my window,
 my bird dish, my feeder. All winter I thought
 isn't it great having chickadees!

Today the comics flew in and I'm all eyes.
 The slate-colored juncos landed.
 They were suckers for the first piece of plateglass
 in the Superior National Forest.

Democrats among birds. They start at the bottom;
 they feed upward not caring
 that crumbs are left below.

Chickadees are seemly: their bullies, genteel.
 Pecking-order handed down from father to son,
 no policing is required. Domesticated monastics!
 They eat together one at a time.
 But now my ground looks like Breughel.

Oh the comic juncos! I have no feelings of loyalty
 for chickadees even though
 James Fenimore Cooper
 would certainly have approved.
 Crusty J.F.C.!
 He saw the world as a junco world.
 And didn't like it.

Yet Juncos are perfect sailors of the Ideal
 while there's only sky to navigate.
 It's the landing that gets them.
 They embarrass the song-sparrow.
 He's abandoned the feeder these twenty-four hours.

But human beings! My! They say, "Oh, look
 at the pretty slate-colored juncos!"

On His Birthday, thinking West: three perspectives

I draw my .44
and feel it sad and fat:
Hopalong good man! bad man
take that!

While other guns kill other men,
before the slug expires
my gun kills the man
who fires.

There is no West
for man at forty-four alive,
and then slow draw
forty-five.

TWO POEMS

The Unborn

How were you made?
 Tight down heavy your head;
 your feet war with my ribs. Separate, you live outside
 my will, within within within in me.

My blood
 is yours, my bones expand to suit your going.
 My blood is yours, your need
 I meet, unknowing. Your form I shape, unknowing.

What were you made?
 (I cried
 the salt fear all out; it grew again)—the poison I hide
 of all my hate, the genes
 of my dead fathers, all haters, all human, all mad
 one way or another. I mad, my sin the pain
 that cracks my eyes. My sin the blood,
 the flesh, the bone, the hate. You wait within.
 You wait.

The Poltergeist

“Artist,”
 says the alabaster whale with a garnet eye
 (I dug his stone,
 carved his curves, polished the gleam
 into his red eye.)

“Scholar,”
 whisper heavy volumes,
 upright in their probity or
 incorruptibly open.

“Poet,”
 proclaims a thin book,
 supine on the piano beside a Sèvres bowl,
 sighing my name from its tubercular spine.

“Explorer. Seeker. Pioneer,”
 sing the crystal clusters—
 sphene, galena,
 azurite, realgar, spodumene—
 (sing, remembering
 the Turtle Mountains,
 the passes of the Chugach Range).

“Scientist,”
 conservator of beauty, preserver of life,”
 sings Polyorchis,
 sing the chitons, the black blennies, the octopi,
 swimming in formaldehyde.

Suddenly,
 books like ponderous pelicans
 fly through the air.
 The whale attacks the window;
 the bowl attacks a vase.

Things fall in fragments;
 bits and pieces tinkle.

“Help!”
 screams the consumptive,
 skittering over the black ridges
 of the tilted, crazy keyboard.

Caught in an imperceptible tide,
specimen bottles crash
against the cliff of ceiling.
Spray spills over the carpet;
glass tinkles like pebbles.

The sun rushes to look in the window,
night flows down the chimney,
morning like an endless conveyor belt
rushes under my feet.
Silence;
we listen.

Laughter tumbles, laughter crashes
wall to wall.
"Deluded!"
someone giggles,
"Deluded and a
fool!"

Naomi Clark

**THE REASONS WHY
I AM NOT PROPOSING MARRIAGE**

For you. I am holding out
on principle. I think there
needs to be somebody

on principle holding out
for when love
is not against the law.

For when love can be made
everywhere, and anybody
can make love with

everywhere and anybody
I will marry you. On the day
that it is not against the law

I will marry you in public places ;
when we can solicit further lovers
in parks and by the popular hotels,
when we can solicit our own sex
without blushing, taking home tads
and faggots for the hearth's delight, when

without blushing we can admire
the bodies of insects and children,
talk of each other with love against
the bodies of others, telling why they should
marry you, when the permits to
love are suspended, then will I
marry you, and for all permissions beyond.

George Thompson

THE DIFFERENCE

these still earth gods
chamulas huixtecos zinacantecos
rub their bare legs
with the oil of jungle nuts, walk

the chiapaneco mountains
those legs glistening, shining
in strong sun, cutting black
through fifty kinds of green.

those great wide faces
close to me in the market of
san cristobal las casas, eye to eye
stand still before the same

dried shrimp or mountain fruit,
look at me
and i return the same cold unmoving eyes
caught for one weight of time, one

question. the old jews
still moving in my past, move
today, have never stopped. this man
stands still, he

does not move at all as
his long black oiled olympic legs
walk fast through these hills.
he does not move at all

as he looks down his mayan nose
at me and i move out
in all ways, on all waves,
asking . . .

Margaret Randall

FOUR POEMS

One

A tree finally grew out of me
between my head and shoulder
a scrawny tree but there it was
 pale green in spring
 dying in winter
roots thirst-driven inched and crossed
around my arms and chest
penetrated my side — my thigh
 but tepid blood was not enough
 they dangled down
trailed the ground
 When I go to the corner grocery
 people stare
 Stupid people
What do they think should happen to me
Sometimes a root takes hold
 in a sidewalk crack
when I walk too slowly

Two

America has the cleanest purest bread of anywhere in the world
doubly wrapped in cellophane and waxed on the outside
so the bread on the inside is preserved untouched
with absolutely no contaminating germs
Pure bread for pure strong Americans

America has the purest cigarettes all doubly wrapped in cellophane
— so pure so fully packed —
And to insure further purity and to insure that no smoke
reaches the insides of the pure Americans
 each cigarette has a long filter
 to trap the impurities
 that somehow got wrapped
 in the double cellophane bags
 despite all precautions

America has pure freedom too
the cleanest purest freedom of anywhere in the world
and like America's bread and America's cigarettes
its freedom is doubly wrapped in cellophane and waxed on the outside
so the freedom on the inside is preserved absolutely untouched
by contaminating ideas from foreign places

 But each time America requires a new loyalty oath of its citizens
 or places in the hands of its travelers
 a guidebook on what to say abroad
 or forces its citizens to tell their political beliefs
 or tests another bomb

the cellophane bags over freedom became tighter —
 — and tighter
 — and tighter

until freedom is strait-jacketed
 stiff as the statue of liberty —
but still remaining all pure on the inside
untouched by contaminated ideas from the rest of the vile world

Then one day freedom was too tightly bound to move anymore
— she fell gasping to the walkway on a big American street
The hospital men came
 with pure bread in their stomachs
 with pure cigarettes in their mouths
They loaded the contorted body of American freedom into the truck
they took her to the National Academy of Sciences in Washington
to be studied for symptoms of contamination
while the great free American FBI hinted at evidence of sabotage

So it was the authorities
to further protect freedom from impure foreign ideas
coated her in red lead
placed her in a flame resistant teflon bag
stamped the bag National Secret
and placed it in a double-locked vault
kept pure on the inside by ultra-violet rays
But the authorities didn't know what to do next as freedom writhed
— slowly dying in her strait-jacket

oh there were the usual few individuals
who saw that freedom's safeguards would be her coffin
but they were silenced
lest their impure words be heard by freedom
and cause her to relapse nearer death

Then one July fourth morning
when the vault's double-locks were opened
for the weekly inspection of freedom
 the Secret teflon bag was found unmoving
 there were no gasping sounds within
So the Leader ordered two pure Americans
 who had pure bread in their stomachs
 and pure cigarettes in their mouths
 and who wore secret badges and blindfolds
 and whose hands and feet were wrapped in cellophane
 to open the Secret teflon bag
 scrape off the red lead
 melt down the wax
 tear open the limp cellophane bags

which were seen to be empty by the Leader
The Leader immediately told his pure superiors
and his pure superiors told their pure superiors
so the word finally got to the purest bravest American of all
the President



The President appointed a group of three fully investigated
purified and approved Americans
The group met with the President
in a secret room of the pure white White House
They smoked the purest cigarettes with the longest filters
from packs double-wrapped in cellophane
they ate tiny crustless sandwiches made with pure bread
from loaves double-wrapped in cellophane
Then after a long secret conference
they decided
at this impure moment in otherwise purified American history
to keep American history pure and uncontaminated

Thus it was that the President calmly handed a dispatch
to the usual clamoring representatives
of the free American press
Then big American Headlines proclaimed
that freedom was now cured of the contamination
of impure foreign ideas
that had been inflicted by sabotage
and in the meantime freedom
freshly double-wrapped in cellophane and coated in wax
will be perpetually kept in the Secret double-locked vault
with the keys held by the 2nd purest bravest American of all
the head

of the FBI



Three

Garbage

screamed the chief steward
 ordering plates from clients' tables
 scraped into the sea
 plates of potatoes
 and filet steak uneaten

Garbage

shouted the head waiter
 scraping peas and califlower
 from the serving dishes
 into garbage cans

From one client's plate
 steward scraped

one spoonful of peas
 one spoonful of potatoes
 one spoonful of gravy
 2 ounces of meat
 lettuce with dressing
 one olive
 bite of shrimp
 slice of egg with dressing
 one thin piece of ham
 3 spoonfuls of beef soup
 piece of bread with butter
 one spoonful of ice cream
 one bite of frosted cake

On one nine day voyage
 1500 clients had 2 big meals a day
 for a total of

27000 spoonfuls of peas
27000 spoonfuls of potatoes
27000 spoonfuls of gravy
54000 ounces of meat
27000 leaves of lettuce with dressing
27000 olives
27000 mouthfuls of shrimp
5400 boiled eggs with dressing
27000 thin slices of ham
81000 soup spoons of soup
27000 pieces of bread with butter
27000 spoonfuls of ice cream
27000 mouthfuls of frosted cake

Dump all this garbage into the sea
screamed the chief steward

But that's enough to feed a family of 10 for a year
cried I

— with better distribution —

You are a communist cried the senator
immune before congress assembled
and furthermore in order to make the world
a more wonderful place to live in

I propose
to spend a billion dollars for a new rocket warhead

Garbage garbage garbage

— down sewers
into seas

garbage garbage garbage

— overflowing plates
overflowing bellies

Garbage scream chief stewards
Garbage scream head waiters
Garbage scream clients

— take it away

it's all

garbage

garbage garbage garbage

garbage

garbage

garbage

Four

Everyone except the poets
and one architect
and 2 or three painters
were astounded that day
when two leading statesmen
met in the nude
in an outhouse
and brought wars to an end

while the pope in a loin cloth only
walked the montmartre district
teaching zen buddhism
and proclaiming christ a man afterall
and a negro family
moved into the cherrywood district
and all wives
had a coffee klatch
for the woman
while old pound
was given a letter of recommendation
from the US government
for past services
and the cantos was placed in each hotel room
courtesy the roman catholic church
and women everywhere
had their young daughters
fitted with diaphragms
and told them to have fun
before it was too late
and in one town 40000 men
let their TV's go back
and 20000 men stopped paying alimony
and summons servers
refused to serve summons on them
and DA's left the crying women
in their hallways
and this was happening in other cities too
People all over were astounded
at all this

Poets had to go back to writing
about love
because there wasn't anything
to rebel against
Reds 7th day adventists anarchists everyone
got passports

Hiss was given full pardon
signed with apologies
by nixon

Poets wrung their hands
in despair
and restudied shelley and keats
for ideas

Oil painters gazed at the ocean for hours
trying to paint it nonsymbolically
and couldn't
and finally went to psychiatrists
who didn't know what to tell them
and who were too busy anyway
consulting each other
within their schools of thought

while congress with nothing else to do
voted illegal
the 1st and second coming

Everyone was astounded at the miracles
and the poets learned finally
to write about love
and took to walking in lovers lanes
instead of skid rows

and statesmen all over the world
voted themselves a long vacation
at full pay

and young lovers made love
in lafayette park
in the daytime
under war surplus pup tents

and 3 world leaders
programmed a grave world problem
on a computer
and followed its advice

Everyone raved about this for days

Young girls took to walking the streets
with dresses cut
bare-assed
and that astounded everyone
at first
but then the newness wore off
and the young girls
had to do more astounding things

TV's were burned in public squares
and everyone wanted to burn the TV writers too
but the town councilors voted
to strap them on wild horses
and turn them loose
in arizona

Lawyers ran out of jobs defending each other
and were put to work taking all
hydrogen and atom bombs apart

and art critics were assigned
 to judge livestock shows
 at county fairs

and it didn't look like there'd be another war
 with the few world statesmen left
 headquartered at the riviera
 with plenty of liquor and girls

while wife-swap clubs
 advertising in readers digest
 spread all over
 reviving millions
 who thought they were dead

and there was no more strontium
 falling out of the sky

Everyone was astounded
 at how well things hung together

while at the riviera
 the few official meetings
 were still held in the nude
 so no statesman could pretend
 he had no organs of elimination

Billy graham raved the devil was here
 to a crowd of 7
 including two dogs
 temporarily gathered at a street corner

while poets out of boredom
 lamented
 they had nothing to lament about

and boy scouts everywhere
suddenly tried to rape den mothers
and the mothers were astounded
but finally went back
to minding their own business

Then one day the heat went off
and my junk peddler
was back in his doorway

and slowly

slowly

reality

refocused

to normal

E. L. Armstrong

THE OLD CARPENTER

'I feel a little better today.
But how long shall I lie
coiled here?

The marrow of my bones is gouged and eaten,
I am a mere ghost. I just breathe.

This is April. The jack that shines
like slashed gold at the touch of the chisel
and the Honey-Mango that always tempts the hand
to carve a play-boat from its trunk, will be shaking now
with blossom, with fruit.
If only I could creep to the window
and take a look at them!

There's not a plantain stump in my garden;
and my heart beats when I see a tree,
any tree, anywhere.

That single tampaka tree near the Uliyannur temple.
O it is huge, it is so straight.
Nine men cannot hug it
with their joined hands.
No bend, no crack,
not a bole in it, not a hole.
I can measure it with my eyes,
it's more than eighty kols.
Cut it, you can change the bamboo thatch
of every mother's son in the village.
Or else we could make rafters for houses
that would be the envy of the chieftains.

But this stump is now rotten.

What is the use of wishing for things?
I cannot sink the edge of my chisel into any wood
any more.

Nani, she sits at the doorstep,
her stomach caved in,
bent double, fumbling
for bits and pieces of dry betel leaf,
a chunk of betelnut, a stalk of tobacco.
Fire a cannon in her ear,
she will not hear it.

She is an old crone now. I remember
the day she stood by my side,
straight as a champak tree in bloom,
a body fresh from under the chisel,
her smile a sparkle of new silver.'

The old eyes came out of the grey bush of eyebrows,
went through the back door all eaten by white ants,

and wandered there for a little while.

'If only I can get up, I can crawl.
O the hand that could have held up an old man . . .'
The Old Carpenter shook with sobs.

(As if to wipe it all away, memory and all,
his hand passed slowly over the furrows on his
forehead.)

'If only I could totter somehow
just up to the workshop,
I could at least sit there.
I could have licked a gladness
that only scale and chisel bring.

That temple
like a huge inverted bowl
carved in black wood
shining under the sky—
it rose under these working hands.

With the chisel I put in his hands,
my child made that sacred eagle
now there! on the flagmast of burnished brass
and those wings look as if they are moving.

They say, I am green with envy.
Which father will not beam
to hear praises of his son?

But then, you can stop the clappers of a thousand bells
but you cannot stop one wagging tongue in a mouth.

We two made teakwood images
of the Guardsmen of the Eight Directions
and placed them on the twin towers:

one with this hand,
another with his.
They said, his image had more life
than mine. My son wins, but what does it matter
for a father to lose to his son? Isn't his glory
my glory too?

But, look, they said my face darkened
to hear the boy praised.

Maybe I am a carpenter, but am I not
also a father?

They said:
The old man knows the carpentry and the craft,
but it is the son who has the sculptor's art.
Why should these village idiots gabble like this?

We sat near each other
at work in the shop,
but there was silence between us.

Let them slight me and say what they will,
can I, can I, really, his father, wish for this dreadful
end?

He may be clever, may be a genius,
but he got it all from his father.

That old Nayar said, when I went to his house:

When the moon arrives,

The sun must fade.

Why did he have to say such things?

Once, for fun, I made a moving doll
and fixed it below the bridge.
At the first footfall,

the doll would dance like a water goddess ;
when a man came to the middle of the bridge,
she would inch by inch come up on the eaters
and open her mouth
and spit at the unsuspecting man,
taking him completely by surprise.

There were milling crowds at the river
to see this wonder.

If they are chafed,
young sandal trees get fragrant.
Not with scorn, or ill-will,
let me tell you,
my child proved his mettle against mine.

In four days,
another doll rose in his name
everywhere on the lips of the people.

When my doll went up to spit,
his doll would turn and slowly lift her hand ;
and when mine opened her mouth,
his would slap her smartly on the face.

I felt that slap.

Even in a sky, there is not space enough for two
moons.

He left the house. Nani was in tears.
My heart burned inside like a heap of paddy husk
but I held my tongue.

Then came the Elephant Pandal
for the temple. Why on earth
did I have to call on this great son of mine for it ?
My master said to me :
“Consult your son and make the pandal beautiful.”

I felt like turning back at once,
but I didn't. Consult! No one so far had told me that.

It might look like envy.
But isn't a son's glory the father's?

Yet, the carpenter may work with wood,
but he is not wood.

The pandal came up well. As you know,
in the facade, they need artistic work.

"I will look after that if you wish," he said,
"and father may work on putting up the gables."

Does he, my son, have to instruct me, his father,
to put up the gables? Do I need his nod for this?

His hands were working on Goddess Lakshmi's lotus,
carving in sandal. And I was shaping a wooden rivet
with the broad chisel, the blade glittering in the sun
like the edge of a sword.

And then, unawares,
unawares it slipped out of my hand,
that chisel!

I began to pray at once and begged of God
that it should not fall on my son.

With the flick of an eyelash,
I saw my son
reeling to the ground,
head severed from body.

People gathered.
Long sharp needles,
eyes,
came at me.

How could I find my feet on the ladder?
I somehow fell to the earth.
It seems I said: "Son, forgive."
I did not hear it.

Curly hair gummed to the neck with blood,
in blood, he lay.

Those staring eyes that had swallowed all pain,
that sight,
it is always with me, it does not leave me.

And no one has ever seen Nani smile
since then.
Scalding tears flowed from her eyes
till they could flow no more.

Who will believe that it was a slip of the hand
Whatever one might say
Who will ever believe it?

O Nani, you don't believe it, do you,
will a father ever do this?

My son would now have been my staff of life
if only it had not happened.

"Happened? Made to happen!"
says my little voice inside
as it wakes;
again, and again, it corrects me.

Can a father do it?

Something hammers away with a mallet
at my heart, something tries to pull that nail
thrust so deep.'

Nani broke the Old Man's chain of memories:

"It is some time since those cobwebs
were swept from the ceiling. Did something fall
in your eyes or what? Look, why does it water?"

pounding away
at her little hand-mill
of betel leaf and betel nut.

G. Sankara Kurup
translated from the Malayalam by
K. M. George and A. K. Ramanujan

THE SECOND KEY

On my typewriter there's a secret key
That moves everything to big letters —
And someday I push another key,
Smaller and more secret,
That keeps the first key pushed in.
Then I make big letters only.
I can do it for hours,
And never miss and make a small one.

I have the first key in my head too.
But it's hard to push in,
And to hold it in
For more than one thought
Would exhaust me.
The second key is missing.

William Sullivan

OUT OF THE EAST

Strange things out of the East
today. To this border town
Private Frank Guerra came home
this morning from Viet Nam.
On TV we saw the train bearing
the casket hiss into the station.
Those life and death servants,
the cameramen, zeroed in;
the black-shawled mother
wept for the world.

Tonight on TV a movie called
The Hideous Sun Demon:
Scientist exposed to radiation
turns monster when the sun
hits him; lives evolution
backward in seconds to scaly
reptile. The police, of course,
shoot him; we're safe.

We're safe. Tomorrow they bury
Private Frank Guerra. The casket
will not be opened.

Strange things out of the East,
out of the sun. The clock queers
itself. We sail with the Genoese
west, till the East assails us.
We blink at the sun wet salty eyes
with the first reptile, and feel
our faces for scales.

Seth Wade

WAITING TO GO

While people in the world are
outside, I am

clamped without a sky
in an existence suddenly alerted
to the beat of my pulse where
milligrams are marked to drug me
in a room of oranges and flowers

here with stone arms, holding on
to basins of quiet. I am
washed like a child in absurd
obedience with my shoes and stockings
off, stripped down in a plain gown

tied behind my back and tagged
on the fourth floor near
someone's mother who is
dying opposite
a lady under a white sheet reciting in
Russian the names of her lovers

in a room of oranges and flowers, I am
asked over and over to tell
what my valuables are
on long forms of endless
interrogation and no space

for what I am thinking . . . that it is
time to stop thinking, braid my hair
with anaesthesia and try not
to fall to pieces before
I am wheeled out.

Ruth Lisa Schechter

EUGENE ONEGIN. *Alexander Pushkin. Translated with a Commentary by Vladimir Nabokov. Pantheon. 4 vols. boxed. \$18.50.*

This is the most monumental act of English scholarship ever accomplished for Russia's greatest poet. The translation of the verse-novel is as close to the essential qualities of Pushkin as one is likely to find in any translation. The notes are exhaustive, fascinating and, above all, wonderfully revealing of the poet's special world. The final volume contains the full Russian text. A remarkable achievement on every count.

GO READ THE RIVER. *Dave Etter. University of Nebraska. \$1.40.*

The roots of Dave Etter's poetry are stuck down deeply into the soil and life of the Midwest. His imagery, his references, even many of his intoned word patterns stem from the vast spaces of the prairie. Places often seem more important than people. Yet there is a solid warmth here, a dignity and a stately pacing that always refer the poems back to the particular people of the prairies and their sad, wise and nostalgic attitudes.

MODERN HINDI POETRY. *Edited by Vidya Niwas Misra. Indiana University. \$4.95.*

Most of the poets here are young. They write from and of modern India in an old tradition in a language spoken by 150 million people. The collection is brilliantly translated by six poets working with Misra who repeated the Hindi texts for them. The result is good poetry in English and a tantalizing glimpse of an immense poetic world still largely unknown in the West.

NO ONE WALKS WATERS. *Daniel Berrigan. Macmillan. \$4.50.*

There are not many poets today who write blatantly or obviously "religious" poetry. It isn't fashionable. It is therefore a pleasure to find someone like Fr. Berrigan who goes his own accomplished way bringing his considerable poetic skills and

deeply devout insights to a wide variety of superficially non-religious subjects: war, Henry Moore, Ivan Mestrovic, Dachau, Paris and poetry itself.

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH. *Stephen Mooney. University of Tennessee. \$3.95.*

Social crises often give rise to bad poetry. (The death of President Kennedy is an outstanding example.) Many of Mooney's poems are concerned with violence in the South—but not for the mere effect of a powerful retelling. They catch the thin line between hope and despair and hold it up for our examination. The poems often hurt. They always work. A section of lovely Irish pieces furnishes a wholesome relief for eye and ear.

SAINT THOMAS. *Tram Combs. Wesleyan University. \$1.85.*

There is a deceptively simple surface quality to these poems. They seem to be lush pictures of the life and scenery on a beautiful tropic island. But they are much more. They are tough, witty, very perceptive reports from the dog that rages beneath the skin of most sensitive self-exiles. The use of word patterns is original and helpful without ever seeming mere gimmick. Combs has much undeservedly overlooked talent.

DISCREPANCIES AND APPARITIONS. *Diane Wakoski. Doubleday. \$2.95.*

One can read most of these poems lightly, often be amused by them, sometimes be vaguely put off by them. Then set the book aside. But the poems stick in the mind. As they stay, their deeper implications begin to shine through. The poems are sometimes as flip as Wakoski's often-repeated comment that a poem can be only as interesting as the poet who writes it. But she's young. She'll learn and fulfill the high promise she shows here.

NOTE: We call your attention to a recently-published book of verse by a Beloit Poetry Journal editor: "Quickly, Over the Wall" by David Palmer (Wake-Brook House—\$3).