

THE BELoit POETRY JOURNAL

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BATALLA

The dark forest
 echoed behind you
 with a rumble
of days
 falling on the rocks
 and nights consuming the trees;
coyotes' faces
 smeared with feathers
looked out from the bushes,
 and your heels
 flashed with needles,
your lungs collapsed
 for fear of air . . .

you grabbed at the tiger of the sun
 and the wolf of the moon
and drew them to the thicket
 of your bosom;
the tiger clawed at your hair
 and your eyes,
the wolf
 ate into your stomach
 and curled asleep;

and while you struggled
 in a storm of barbed wire and nails,
a fox slipped into your chest
 and cracked the sun of your ribs,
the wolf awoke
 and fed on the flowers
 of your womb.

Peter Wild

TWO POEMS**In Memoriam: P.F.H.: 1901-1965**

There you were, slumped, sleeping, mouth open, teeth
On the table beside your cigarettes;
Curled like a child against the mountain of
Pillows in the bed where at last you had
Allowed me to take care of you — feeding
And washing you; cleaning up your messes;
Pleased almost to tears by the comfort that
My arm round your bony shoulders gave you.
(Boys, you once told me, don't kiss, they shake hands.)

Then the nurse, who had been quite
Chatty, turned me out and,
With professional tact,
Got on with the job
Silently, behind
The closed door.
Until at last,
Like a sculptor
Presiding over his
Private view, he called
Me in and, in suitable tones,
Invited me to unveil his creation.

And I hardly knew you—it must have been
At least ten years since I'd seen you so straight,
Full-faced, such a fine figure of a man.
And then I knew you were dead: noted the
Cotton wool stuffed up your nose; wondered how
He had managed to get your teeth back in.
Your hair was brushed, but your face was yellow.

Oh yes, I knew then you were dead all right,
Lying there stiff as a stone king in a
Cathedral, laid out till eternity
Under the eyes of the curious crowd.

I could not cry (and not because, as you
Might have said, weeping is for the women),
But death had become too familiar,
Had turned my heart into a cathedral.
You were but the latest of my carved kings.

Old Woman Dying

Old woman dying, death is drawing out your bones
And leaving you shapeless, like an empty wine skin.
And, unaware, you do not resist: assume
A fatal resignation as the dark vomit
Dribbles like the dregs of your life from your lips.
I wipe your stained skin—a wrinkled husk from which
Death's sly fingers are stealing the nut.

Old woman dying, this night you have endured,
Ignorant of what you have endured;
Questioning this morning like a child the strange,
Unlooked-for ailment; postulating possible
Reasons for the state in which you find yourself,
Giving it familiar, innocuous names.
To give you a mirror would be cruel.

Old woman dying, bearing with you to your death
My childhood, when you stood, robust and laughing,
Against my horizons; a tree I played under,
Climbed, teased and loved; companion on countless
walks;
Dispenser of cocoa and family history.
Old woman dying, you have loomed too large in my life
Not to take part of me to your death.

R. L. Hughes

ART OF THE SONNET: 263

Last year, this autumn, this time, my mother
was alive. She stopped dyeing her hair black,
she let it go gray. She let everything
go gray, even her fingernails: color
was a bother. Her hands trembled on her
knees, the vast diamond wedding ring a mine
disaster of the blinding first magnitude
in the deepest shaft—my husband's trapped down
there, she said, and her mouth waited by
the opening. The oxygen's turning
gray, she said, my feet are down to earth, she
said, and turning black — I can dye my shoes
black, she said, and walk alongside my hearse,
she laughed. She recognized me from photographs.

Gill Orlovitz

ON SKIATHOS

Vassili Dancing Zambekiko

Each time he jars
The floor, his heel
Hammers so fiercely we feel he might be poised
To fling

A knife. He springs,
His shoulder carves
Swerving comets, spinning stars out of the noise
And air.

And while we stare
At such burning,
The dance is turning him toward his spacious joys.
Desire,

The whetted wire
Coiled in his back,
Cuts the body from the mind's rack, almost destroys
Time's bars.

Vassili on the Veranda

Once we called him The Spanish Bandit
Because of his black mustache
And smile bright as a knife.

Tonight his eyes are red with wine.
The old moon drags its copper arm
Toward us over the oily harbor.

The island's lights are out,
And all its houses on the hill
Stand as tall and pale as graves.

Vassili's come up from the beach,
Strumming the guitar for mooning girls.
He laughs and calls us all old men.

All day he saws and sweats,
His face as dark as a Turk's
Beneath his carpenter's turban.

Wearing out the night now,
He drums the table in time
To the vein that throbs in his neck.

After Vassili's Wedding

Vassili and Stavro dancing hasapiko

In shapeless suits and brand-new shoes,
they might be convicts just released.

All their freedom is in the dance.
Each with an arm around the other,
they stand like lovers, heels together.
Their eyes look inward toward the song.

Vassili's fingers snap. With bending knees,
they lean out into space and then begin
to step and dip. One is like a mirror
of the other. The swing and slap of feet

is stylized flight, still so free
that Stavro thinks aloud, "the old times!"
The wedding guests applaud and talk.
Vassili's Suzie flirts with lazy eyes
And smiles at her completed desires.
The carpentry shop is doing well.
They'll have us home for dinner soon
and speak of the house they mean to build.
And sometime climbing toward Pascali's,
we'll look in at Vassili's window
to see them in their over-furnished room,
playing cards. The music still will climb
down the cobbled steps. As we pass by,
Vassili's hand will still be drumming time.

Robert S. Hahn

DOS POEMAS

Epilogo

Hombre de cualquier tierra o meridiano,
yo te ofrezco la mano,
Te doy en ella el sol americano.

Te doy la brava pluma
del cóndor, la candela ágil del puma ;
selva y montaña en suma.

Te doy la geografía
vasta y azul, el día
concentrado en el fruto de ambrosía.

Te doy nuevo tesoro :
el pimienta y el toro
y la cúpula de oro.

Te doy vulcána y rosa,
la clave de esa gente misteriosa
que en vasijas reposa.

Mi mano es de alfarero
solar, de navegante, misionero
y libre guerrillero.

Mano de constructor de un Continente,
mano de techo y puente
y alfabeto de amor para la gente.

El sol americano
te lo entrego en mi mano,
hombre mundial, mi hermano.

TWO POEMS

Epilogue

Man of whatever land or latitude,
in my hand
I offer you the American sun.

I give you the wild feather
of the condor, the nimble flare of the puma ;
forest and mountain in epitome.

I give you the endless
blue geography, day
focused in ambrosial fruit.

I give you new treasures ;
hot pepper, the bull,
the golden cupola ;

the volcano and the rose
the key of this mysterious people
buried in urns.

My hand is of solar
potter, navigator, missionary
and free soldier.

Hand of a continent builder,
hand of roof and bridge,
the people's alphabet of love.

Man of the world, my brother,
in my hand
I offer you the American sun.

Mujeres Escapadas de los Cuadros

Hay la mujer prisión, la mujer templo,
la mujer selva y la mujer molino,
la mujer alquimista que transforma
en oro hasta el suspiro.

La mujer galería de mujeres,
mujer obra maestra de un museo,
mujer circo de fieras
y hasta mujer cordero.

Témpano con dos piernas y dos brazos,
el Gran Hielo Polar forrado en tela.
o el Trópico vestido
con galas de doncella.

La mujer tribu ardiente y emplumada
o gran fiesta caníbal
alrededor del poste
donde sangra la víctima.

Hay la mujer de sombra a mediodía,
la mujer continente inexplorado,
mujer isla de flores,
mujer bosque de pájaros.

La mujer muro y la mujer espejo,
la mujer horizonte
o camino desnudo entre la niebla.
Hay la mujer orquesta a medianoche.

Autómata del cielo,
domadora de tigres y relámpagos,
mujer de nidos y mujer colmena
o cueva de tesoros ignorados.

Women Breaking from Pictures

We have the prison woman, the temple woman,
 the wild woman, the mill woman,
 the woman scientist who can transform
 even a sigh into gold.

The woman's woman,
 the perfect woman, museum masterpiece,
 the wild animal woman
 the gentle lamb woman.

Kettledrum with two legs and arms,
 the Great Polar Iceberg, skin-lined,
 or the elegant young
 woman of the Tropics.

The passionate tribe woman in feathers
 O great cannibal feast,
 behind the pillar
 where the victim bleeds.

At noon, we have the woman of shadow,
 the woman, unexplored continent,
 woman, island of flowers
 woman, thicket of birds.

The wall woman, the mirror woman,
 the woman of the horizon
 or desolate misty road,
 We have the woman, midnight orchestra.

Automaton of sky,
 tamer of tigers and lightning,
 woman of nests and beehives
 O chest of unknown treasures.

Arrecife de rosas, faro oculto,
mujer de luz casera,
mujer jardín de estatuas,
mujer troje sin puertas.

Mujeres escapadas delos cuadros,
 los parques y las fuentes,
hermanas de Raquel, luz en camisa,
 música más secreta que la muerte.

Jorge Carrera Andrade

Rose cliff, secret beacon,
woman in the light of the home,
woman, garden of statues,
granary without doors.

Women breaking from pictures,
 parks and fountains,
sisters of Rachel, shrouded light,
 death has no greater music.

Jorge Carrera Andrade
translated from the Spanish
by D. M. Pettinella

FATHER

My father is lying
stretched out on my bed
asleep.
His great knotted muscles
 feeders of my belly
 builders of the bank account
twitch repeatedly
in response to dreams.
His ripped and dirty underwear,
the bald spot growing
on top of his head—
this is my father:
great, coarse and fumbling man,
doomed as any Greek hero,
who lost a finger to a
buzz saw
and his children to dreams
far removed from the Polish village
where he found his manhood
amid the swilling of pigs.
His teeth have been taken from him,
his appendix,
his twelve brothers
and two sisters,
the love of his wife,
the thick black hair from off his head
 that waved at me all through
my youth.

There lies my father,
 the pound of his heartbeat
 shaking all his bones,
 like some immense sea bird
 that will soon drape heavy
 around my neck,
 bending me at the knees.

Alex Silberman

PA-PHOOEY

Taken from a news report that a
 white whale weighing 3,500 lbs.
 was sighted on the Rhine. The
 Director of the Dusseldorf Zoo
 gave unsuccessful chase.

Moby Dick was last seen going up the Rhine,
 Rolling between the barges in the green polluted
 slime
 From Duisburg to Dusseldorf he spouted it like wine.
 Pa-Phooey Pa-Phooey

Zoo director Wolfgang took net and tranquilizers,
 An ASPCA-hab with the best modern devices
 With visionary grimness sought the ere elusive
 geysers.

Pa-Phooey Pa-Phooey

Moby Dick was last seen heading toward the sea.
 The Herr director has gone home for a latish tea.
 And poets are supposed to end by rhyming free with
 sea.

Pa-Phooey Pa-Phooey

Karen Swenson

THE DANCING GALACTIC BEAR*to John on his fortieth birthday***The Bear's Journey**

My brother has grown a furry body
 to suit him for this world,
 to suffer in, to wince in,
 to roustabout his own domestic load.
 Though he's slightly stooped, imperfect,
 his eyes wiggly-giggly,
 merely his odor comforts me, an old hand
 at strugglings and the whip.
 He dances.
 He sprawls on his back and dreams.
 Each waking up is a beginning.
 On all fours
 he lopes along through strawberries and thorns,
 slowed by the lash but never stopped,
 on and on he goes,
 forty years old,
 his tongue lolling,
 rolling his shaggy head from side to side.

Song of The Bear's Ears and Nose

The first month scowling in the womb
 the embryo resembles man
 fish and fowl.
 And what will grow in our berry-eating mother?
 a catfish?
 a hen?
 Unbeknownst, oh unbeknownst, beloved,
 the little muzzle forms,

lengthens, the ears take shape.

His eyes closed,
the tiny cub's nose
unbeknownst,
in darkness
grows whiskers.

A Word About This World

1.

Take these pages —
their one wish is to slip
from your fingers
fall face down
and scatter.

Here on earth
everything you own has one desire —
to jam, sag, rust, crack,
in shattering, to flee in all directions
rid of you for good.

For shape is pain.
Utility is pain.
They all want *relief*.
Grin when what you're holding
falls to pieces
in your hand.

2.

The planet turns,
in turning tells of cosmogenesis,
of symbiosis:
spirit wrestling with matter,
the two in suffering and gain.

Yesterday you carried in the groceries,

eyes glazed, mouth turned down,
the package slipping, bursting on the floor.

The bear is only what he is —
He grunted as he bent to pick them up.
The bear's stomach was pouty with wrinkles.
His bottom looked foolish in the air.

There is nothing to fear in this
no foolishness
no lack of dignity
no poorness of spirit.

Tale of the Flesh Wincing

1.

There are no smiles
if ants should swarm
into a sleeping bear's ears and nose.

2.

Reading of Auschwitz

*you balanced your cigarette on the table edge
and shut your eyes.*

You imagined the SS come for your family,
come into this sunny afternoon
shouting orders

*the cigarette burning on the table edge
speechless, yet talking*

You saw love
herded along a station platform,
love inside barbed wire.

*the table winces
as the scorching begins*

There is no smile in your mind
as love moves in lines
toward the brick building.

*in the charred depression
ash*

Song of the Domestic Load

This summer
I am living at home,
sleeping under a blanket
with my wife.

Yesterday she brought in
apples, tomatoes,
each a tiny earth
with bulk and mass.

We have no running water here
and the buckets
instruct me
in weight, struggle, pain.

Tale of Chuckling While Looking Out Through Eyes That Won't Work Right

Do you remember?
At horse chestnut time
our house was troubled
by Sweet Aunt Alice
slightly stooped, quick of tongue,
cataracts in both eyes.

*You can hear
still hear*

*her easy affectionate chuckle
vast as sleep*

No one may kiss her.
At dinner she spilled her wine.
When Dad spoke out
no secret frowns, no giggling!
We were the cubs watched by the dark lens.
But let him expound
from the head of the table —
“Oh my Gawd!” she’d laugh
and he was eight years old again
his nose running
his socks falling down.

Later she sought you out,
sat on your bed,
in dark glasses,
your model airplane on her lap.
You told her all —
what you were saving up to buy,
your grownup plans, the death
of a child in your class.

Oh to hug her as she left the house!
But she’d never allow it, never,
great cross black creature
stooped
half blind
old chuckler
all a boy could ever want.

Song of the Odor of the Animals

Ich musste beim Heranschaffen, beim Verbrennen der Leichen zusehen, musste das Zahnausbrechen, das Haarabschneiden stundenlang mitansehen. Hatte mich irgend ein Vorgang sehr erregt, so war es mir nicht möglich, nach Hause zu meiner Familie zu gehen. Ich ging des Nachts durch die Pferdeställe und fand dort Beruhigung.

I had to be there while the corpses were being dragged out and burned; for hours on end I had to watch their hair being shaved off and their teeth broken out. If something particularly upset me I was unable to go home to my family. I went through the stalls at night and found consolation among the horses.

Rudolf Höss, *Kommandant in Auschwitz*

Moonlight on snow.
He unbuckles his pistol and his whip
and steals in the paddock
toward the huddle
of little ears and noses
stirring at his approach.

He slows. His boots
tread gently on their straw.
Creeping in among the scattering ponies
he sinks to his knees.

It is Poland. December.
Here under the lean-to
they have their trough of grain,
their bale of hay.
A little mare draws near.
He bows his head.
His lids droop
in the drowsy warmth of her breath.

One by one they gather in around him,
sniffing his neck and hands.

They've grown their winter coats
and move in closer
against the cold.
An odor of pony
masks the stink of hell
hanging over the countryside.

Straw. The little hooves.
Moonlight on brick.
Gently, tenderly,
drowsing
their long shaggy heads nuzzle his.

Question of the Struggle and the Kill

You have risen before dawn,
padded in to find Davy safe,
breathing easily.
A pepper light was gathering.

This is the bleakness that chills the heart.

Beyond your son
you saw a spider crouched in the window frame
feeding on that light
in the name of all blackness.
You moved closer, troubled,
drowsy . . . from somewhere
hearing the line

love inside barbed wire

On its head, the segmented eyes.
It worked upside down, legs taut,
stringing up a Bible of capture,
struggles, killing.

The Answer of Dancin' Daddy

You woke from your nap
put on your sombrero
and watched the tiny carnivores
the ant and waterskipper
locked in a struggle to the death.

You saw my lips
bristling in the bushes,
suddenly there, unsummoned,
to interpret,
to quote you *lines*.

But Davy and the children
came running round the house.
Barefoot, whooping,
they dashed through the sprinkler,
around and around
naked against the bluebells.

Oh you were foolish with excitement,
up you jumped
and bojangled through after them
brim down over your eyes,
struttin' back and forth
old cake-walkin' Daddy who don't care nohow.

Song of the Galactic Dream

It is winter now
and the bear lies upside down asleep,
a blur of fur, a speed-glow,
long gone
pulsing on through the galactic dream.
Over his lair
staggering showers of white light
play across the snow.

The northern lights!
The northern lights!
Deep in the ecliptic
the earth sleeps
turning still,
weary of struggle
weary of life-bearing,
sheets of energy
pouring in at her poles.

All effort is gone,
the way clear to vast leaps of mind,
the bear is whatever he thinks he is,
a cross-galactic champion,
an admiral of the deep.
He seeks Andromeda,
sulky and disheveled
doing numbers
in the white light of the inter-galactic bed.

Here everything you own has one desire,
to harmonize, to flow,
the lower numbers swooping into the higher,
the melodic commitments merging,
small love nestling into greater,

all the colors tossing here,
rocking
welcoming
brimming in the sheets
of white light.

Song of Moving Out Between the Slopes

It is never too late.

Old man William Butler Yeats
rode his body to the ground

and jumped on monkey-glands
then
moved out
between the slopes
of strawberries and thorns
to the long reach of water
where the twin gyres,
 bliss
 and heartbreak,
begin. Turning round each other
as they climb into the galaxy,
all the lines open, rocking,
welcoming, crazed with joy,
they gathered him in.

It is never too late.

Even now you can get up
go to the window
and look out into the beginning.

Song of What To Do On All Four Paws

It is to drowse, propped up in the letter L,
literate and learned,
wearing a sombrero,
able at any moment to scrawl your name.

It is to rise upon all fours
to look out, drowsy, straight ahead
through bum eyes, over your whiskers, beyond your
 nose,
at the honeycomb grown fat and golden while you
 slept.

It is to stand
grinning and happy

beside the man in uniform
who guards the iron gate.

It is to stretch up
and bite the string
that spills the lower numbers
out of the higher.

It is to advance
on all fours to the honeycomb
and teach those bees
the grief of the scooping paw.

It is to know the stunned bliss
of him who reaches up for something
to have it
fall on his head.

It is to pay the rent
and carry in the groceries,
to do the polar shuffle
of Old Dancin' Daddy who don't care nohow.

It is to lay all before the publisher,
the very best you can do,
and when he shoves it away, to drool the puckered grin
of Dumb-Dee-Doo.

It is to leave him, to go out whistling
on the icy steps
and sit down hard,
stunned, the eyes glazed.

It is to wake up
into the beginning,
to rise on all fours
into the beginning.

Song of the Dancing Galactic Bear

The bear is growing older.
You are forty today
and each year
a whiplash in the chops.

We have said goodbye to Sweet Aunt Alice
and reached the place
where we must lose our Davy.
Just a year ago
we lost your wife.
The planet turns around the sun
which turns upon itself.

The bear winces
as the lash falls.

He is slowed in his tracks
but never stopped.

From strawberries to dream
from honey to dance
he lopes on toward freedom,
extravagant
exultant
a tussler in the summer of his life,

his tongue lolls,
and he rolls his shaggy head
from side to side
as he makes his own
slow
but marvelous
turning way
out between the slopes.

William Whitman

**THE UNSOLVED MURDER OF MRS. GLARP
FROM REEK RUE HAS A LIGHT SHED ON IT
BY A SCRAP FOUND ON THE CORPSE**

Met a mother,
made him madder
calling him a martyr.

See, she said,
me to some sod,
feeling somewhat sad.

Found a hill
for the hole,
somehow far from hail.

Fished for food
for her to feed,
not knowing she had fed

and lashed a lamb
he knew was lame
falling from a limb.

Liked the fellow
(not the fallow)
feeling what would follow.

Begged for beans
but boiled her bones,
stirring them with bines.

Couldn't cope
without a cup
pouring out her cap.

Saw the loot,
tried to light—
eating got too late!

Heard her shout
before he shot —
glad her mouth had shut;
and laughed
from the loft
and kissed her as he left.

Marvin Howard Albert

WOODWINDS

For Mason Jones

The hall's a lonely clarinet,
until the oboe enters in,
or hornist hides his right
 hand in the horn.
The bassoon
 capers up
 or
 down
and flute must have
a little time to flutter.

Which will hold the echo more delayed ?

Ten thousand years ago
a cave man came
upon these sounds
by chance:
(soft winds blowing
through a broken reed.)
A hundred centuries later
the five become
a pentatonic one.
A thing so delicate
old virgins
in their pews
are stirred.
There's one
would will
a flutist
her tibia
for his flute.

The instruments
are put away,
but not till clarinet
is pulled with silk,
and sounds are where
the woodwinds lately were.

When the five go home
they leave their echoes
in the pews,
a ceiling neat
with holes,
the quiet caves
of silence.

Virginia Brady Young

TWO POEMS

The Risk

*"If you want to become all,
You must desire to be nothing."*
—St. John of the Cross, known as
"The Doctor of Nothingness."

Still innocent in my Eden, what risk beckons,
 what hazard more than this,
 the revolution under the skin,
 the stirring snakewise downward, inward;
 And in that garden mortals moving between glory
 and loss,
 possessed by love and angels
 till the flame edged sword divides,
 and sequel holds: stone bruised words,
 daylight tilting its sun to the west,
 the fat years taking and the lean years giving.
 How may I walk in a sun that casts no shadow,
 and live as spare as first creation?
 St. John of the Cross said: all and nothing.
 Then rage with hermit cold
 possessed by everything low or high or level;
 or naked in sleep or love, a god's bride,
 yielding to yea of thunder,
 to a thirst of sun and hunger of huge moons,
 stone in the fruit, and a cave of unopened melons;
 know in this possession how devils cease,
 and a caterpillar pilgrimage of saints
 is no less holy than blood roses burning.
 And she who leans out of the world for an hour
 returns as though from Ararat,
 begins the circle through landscape, desert,
 asking what Doctor of Nothingness stabs alive,

what welcome clarifies a doubt of strangers.
Yet the simple earth is meant for walking,
and birds on the moon will cry no comfort here.
We live with glory and loss,
 rivering seaward
 while time and a child called grief
 surely go unmothered by any arm.
Now breast and belly are gourds that rattle dry,
and night becomes the husband of my bones.
Single bodied at last, I can renew
the self that wept alarm
or crouch in a cave where a fox whimpers,
remembering hands once sacramental to love,
remembering lions that licked a dead saint's feet,
and the rose that grew from the slain lion's
 wound;
still innocent in my loss,
while the sky moves left to right with its weight
of stars.

At Duxbury

The sign should state: Traveller, beware.
At this corner where four sea captains
Built their homes
Shadows tighten every leaf;
The sun hesitates, hides between noon and going.
Facing the tide, men once alive
To a new December wintered here,
And dared that reef which curves to an Atlantic
Barren of all but skulls and rare islands.

I enter, wind the stairs,
And shivering with the world's cold
Lie in a worn sleigh bed still pointed east,

While the sea, like an ancient tomb, muffles my year,
 And echoes fill this old and sounding room.
 I think of morning when fog rides
 To its own horizon,
 A place of pilgrimage eight days to the week,
 The risk I travel as though it were a bleak way
 And foreign home,
 While the prow of my sleep rides and rides to the
 night.

Margaret Albanese

FROST BOIL

Look straight ahead:
can you make him out at the core of the frozen shell?
 Dante, *Inferno*, Canto XXXIV, 2 and 3

So far I have not seen him, only what
 he did: the garage door open and the pipes
 unjointed when the water froze, the very
 foundations of our house cracked and raised,
 the plaster on our newly painted walls
 split far across and crumpled.
 Satan must have loosed himself and heaved.
 I say, this comes from building on a swamp.
 I never knew until this year and doubt
 if Dante knew just what a frost boil is.
 But how did he, who pictured wind and fire,
 know that the Devil also dealt
 in ice?

Ruth Van Horn Zuckerman

ECUMENICAL SONNET

(Jews are forgiven the death of Christ)

Holy Mother Church, blind to Her own guilt,
sees only merchants standing in a ring,
playing with toy trumpets and the cross they built,
and spitting on the man who was their king—
but not how, when Jews were condemned to die
by civil order in the canon West,
dispassionate churchmen looked at the sky
and not upon the helpless whom they blessed.

Now, in the age of jets and cocacola,
for Lady Irony's grim-witted sake,
it has been found that mercy, "pro sola
humanitate," is better than the stake:
so the Vatican forgives the scar of Cain,
leaving a pile of corpses scorched in Spain.

John Park

AT COLD POND**1.**

At Cold Pond
when the ducks
gawked, circled round
their stupid ice-bound

hole, and gawked again
I thought I knew myself:
provincial and numb —
the chosen one.

Here the season can kill.
Its winter light
is God's love, low,
cast long. I know

myself too well
by that light, not
that love. I am
a cautious, circling man
unwilling to go forth.

2.

Safe in their cautious towns
beneath the blued snow
small lives go

in fear; the lean hawk
circles and shouts
and starves above
Cold Pond. God's love

limits the small
to their protected rounds.
In high solitude
the empty owl will brood

amid the fur rot
of his savage room.
Some starve; some hide.
Who is satisfied

with this bad season
but myself?

3.

That winter, Lord,
the black Atlantic roared

as Thy hand scooped.
Six-hundred miles away
at Cold Pond
all the dry bark groaned

and whipped, tossed
off its dead
as Thy weight
flew by in the night.

Is this Law?
Things shaken, stripped,
survive Thy will.
By sunrise winds still

tore the landscape
black and white. O,
but that litter shined!
surely that wind

was mild and just.
Lord, the land bends
beneath thy Discipline
Should I learn

Obedience, or be stern?

4.

My father was a stern man,
eye to eye. Firm in his cause,
he kept the hard laws,

knew his life, and thought
of shaking hands with God.
Beyond the intricate harm
I see him, calm

in all the season's danger.

Father, I am spinning,
lawless, out of hand.
Nothing we planned

has come to pass. We
are passing in a dream
above Cold Pond
like blown snow, far beyond

the last light
 and the outward train
 where good friends
 grasped my traveller's hands
 and wished me well.
 Everything unsure turns
 on a vanished track.
 Father, I have come back
 again, unwilling
 to be brave.

5.
 Bound to this difficult season,
 beyond reason —
 beyond will — one
 learns the calm
 cold disciplines ; survives,
 And simplifies.
 Now the ducks
 like frozen cherubs
 rise from their ice
 to turn precise
 bright circles
 in the awkward light.
 Delusion prospers everywhere.
 I must beware
 things simplified —
 the easy vision, or
 the light that seems to spin.
 Lord, I have driven
 these forth, but still the ducks

turn in their black pond
my own circumference,
that formal balance

which I choose and learn.

Father, the land we
settled starkens in the light,
turns all ways, over, black, white,

different. Unkept or
ordered, does this
live? Father, no word?
I would be ordered

kindly, by your hand.
I would be that calm friend.

Jon Anderson

DEATH OF THE INSPIRED MAN

o help aunt jerry
 you considerable speck
 frost again the pumpkin let old madness
 traverse the thickening air and find my window
 the fallacy with you was not pathetic

 o help i'm running
 through concrete orchards into asphalt fields
 breathing the oven-rot of dying awe
 i may be gone a lifetime—
 you come, too

/nothing is clear/ you sang an hour ago
 as starlight flung your words against the sky
 hallucinating scenes of old disasters
 you groped and stumbled
 through the american night

 help aunt jerry
 dawn is dry ice gulping its sibilant secret
 i choke for want of whiteness
 you and ahab
 sang of desire and blood moved to earthward
 through spermfire, painfire —
 shout, aunt jerry! roar!
 bawl out your fine iambsics on this dawn!

Eve Adamson