

opus 300

THE POET'S PRESS
ANTHOLOGY
1971-2021

THE POET'S PRESS
ANTHOLOGY
1971-2021



OPUS
300

THE POET'S PRESS
Pittsburgh, PA
Formerly New York — Brooklyn — Weehawken
Providence — Boston

Compilation and Editorial Notes Copyright © 2022 by The Poet's Press.

This is the 300th publication of The Poet's Press.

Original dates and places of publication appear after each selection.

All the contents of this book are taken from chapbooks, books, and online publications of The Poet's Press and its associated imprints, from the years 1971 to 2021. The titles and dates for all Poet's Press editions are in the Chronology section.

Selections from the Poets of the Palisades Anthologies were chosen by editors Paul Nash, Denise Laneve, and David Messineo.
All rights for these items revert to the authors.

Items reprinted from Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthologies by permission of the authors and Rose Pearson.
All rights for these items revert to the authors.

Published in print and in a PDF edition.

THE POET'S PRESS
2209 Murray Avenue #3
Pittsburgh, PA 15217-2338
poetspress.org

CONTENTS

ANNA AKHMATOVA (1889-1966)

Which One Are You? 1

JOEL ALLEGRETTI

The Plague Psalms 2

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824-1899)

The Fairies 7

LEONID ANDREYEV (1871-1919)

The Serpent's Story 8

MIKHAIL ARTSYBASHEV (1878-1927)

The Horror 10

JODY AZZOUNI (b. 1954)

Starlight, Starbright 18

Landscape by Dali 18

Perhaps as many as thirty 18

Wings come in pairs 18

The Vampire's Gift 19

Amateur Theology 19

Odin gets to see it all 19

MOIRA BAILIS (1921-2013)

Friend (At the Bay) 21

On Seeing Maud Gonne, Dublin 1942 21

Wir hatten uns 22

Heritage 22

Dreamers 23

Alone in the Cemetery 23

It Has to Do with Seeing 24

Oracle 24

For Emily Brontë 25

Just Like Jane 25

Bird and the Sea 26

Autumn Evening (November) 26

JOEL BARLOW (1754-1812)

Cruelty 27

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821-1867)

The Dance of Death 29

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (1803-1849)

A Subterranean City 31

The Old Ghost 31

GUSTAVO ADOLFO BÉQUER (1836-1870)

They Closed Her Eyes 32

HAKIM BEY (PETER LAMBORN WILSON 1945-2022)

Poetic Terrorism 34

Paganism 34

Sorcery 35

Advertisement 36

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889)

The Pied Piper of Hamelin: A Child's Story 37

GOTTFRIED AUGUST BÜRGER (1747-1794)

Lenore 42

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796)

Tam O'Shanter (Annotated) 46

LORD BYRON (1788 - 1824)

Darkness 58

OLGA CABRAL KURTZ (1909-1997)

An Old Man in Camden 61

WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL (1861-1918)

The Were-Wolves 62

ROBERT L. CAROTHERS (b. 1942)

Muskrat 63

Grandfather 63

Letter to the Ghost 64

Past Midnight 65

MADISON CAWEIN (1865-1914)

A Dreamer of Dreams 66

November 67

TOM CHANDLER

the happiness of clams 68

hair 68

One Tree Forest 68

Footage of Hitler 69

6am 69

... And Even the Dead Shall See 69

JOSÉ SANTOS CHOCANO (1875-1934)

Song of the Road 70

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1771-1834)

Limbo 71

ELLEN M. H. CORTISSOZ

On Kingston Bridge 72

HART CRANE (1889-1932)

Fear 73

RICHARD DAVIDSON (1930-1993)

From "The Song of Walt Whitman" 75

FANNIE STEARNS DAVIS (1884-1958)

Ghosts 78

The Black Witch 78

Hoofs in the Dark 79

MARJORIE DEFAZIO (1933-2020)

"Today I am free" 80

Exercise in Futility 80

Master Plan 80

New York City 80

Quiet Noise 80

WALTER DE LA MARE (1873-1956)

I Saw Three Witches 81

JACQUELINE DE WEEVER

Orb-Weaving Spider 82

Otherworld Ambush 82

Hunting Orion 82

CLAUDIA DOBKINS DIKINIS (b. 1949)

writing poetry 83

The Orange Tent 83

a sudden simple song 83

walking 83

Tulips 84

Voice 84

Resurrection of the Devil 84

Imagined Dinner 85

Horror Story 85

JOHN DRINKWATER (1882-1937)

The Cotswold Farmers 86

ARTHUR ERBE

Scent of Lilacs 87

Ritual Rock 87

Rain 87

On Walden Pond with Thoreau 88

Room with No View 88

ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN

The Eye Invisible 89

JAMES ELROY FLECKER (1884-1915)

From "The Bridge of Fire" 98

GEORGE FLYNN (1926-2007)

About the Teenagers 100

Emilie Glen 100

The Doctoral Candidate 100

In-Between 100

Words for Judy Garland 100

Barbara's Dream 100

A Good Spiritual Foundation 100

ALICE FURLONG (1866-1946)

The Warnings 101

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811-1872)

Moonlight in the Cemetery 102

DOLORES GILES (1919-2005)

Irregular Lyric In Re Fear 103

I Don't Apologize 103

BORUK GLASGOW

Rare Book Renegade 104

Shmuel Tiger Cat Revisited 106

Tale Of A Sufi Surfer 106

EMILIE GLEN (1906-1995)

Of the Night 109

Named Emily 109

Death's Hotel 109

Late to the Kitchen 110

Up to Us Chickens 110

Crypt 63 111

Cato's Midnight 112

Open Reading 112

Willard 112

Please 113

Educated 113

Mills Time 113

Window Cats 113

Stair Builders 114

Our Greece 114

Toward 114

The Girls from 59th Street 115

Moon Laundry 115

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1832)

The Sorcerer's Apprentice 116

The Erl-King 117

ROBERT GRAVES (1895-1985)

Sorley's Weather 118

I'd Love To Be A Fairy's Child 118

THOMAS GRAY (1716-1771)

The Fatal Sisters 119

EMILY GRECO (? - 1972)

At Fifty-One 121

Illegal Entry 121

It 121

Things To Do in the Office 122

Things to Do When Dead 122

FRANCES H. GREEN (1805-1878)

Song of the North Wind 123

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

The Leveled Churchyard 127

ANNETTE HAYN (1922-2004)

Exits 128

The Girl Who Hid 128

On Holidays I Don't Observe 128

Unlikely Marriage 129

Painted Windows 129

High Holy Day 129

Where Dragons Sang 130

Marianne 130

The Game 130

A Song 131

Idols 131

The Crossing 131

HEINRICH HEINE (1797-1856)

From "Germany: A Winter's Tale" 132

RONALD HOBBS

Lama Poem 134

Interstice, The Poem's Own Time 135

BARBARA A. HOLLAND (1925-1988) 136

Medusa 137

The Inevitable Knife 138

High on Three Cups of Tea 139

Autumn Wizard 139

The Apples of Sodom 140

Not Now, Wanderer! 141

Black Sabbath 142

The Breaker 143

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-1894)

The Comet 144

DENNIS HOLT (b. 1942)

Spring Beetles 145

VICTOR HUGO (1802-1885)

The Cemetery at Eylau, 1807 146

The Black Huntsman 150

Dance of the Witches' Sabbath 151

THOMAS D. JONES

Land of Dreams 155

The Last Narcissus 155

Who's Afraid of the Dark? 155

Alternative View of Revisionist History 155

Generation X 156

Left-Overs 156

River Journey 157

MICHAEL KATZ

"On a misty night" 159

Dreamland 160

The Children Have Been Fixed in Amber 160

The Water Drops 160

The Promise of Fire 161

How Like Snakes You Have Come and Gone 162

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

La Belle Dame Sans Merci: A Ballad 163

HENRY KENDALL (1839-1882)

The Hut by the Black Swamp 164

ROBERT KRAMER

Like the Severed Head Staring 166

After-Love Song 166

ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN (1861-1899)

The City of the End of Things 167

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE (1887-1917)

All-Hallow's Eve 169

DONALD LEV (1936-2018)

There Is Still Time 170

The Passenger 170

August Poem Written in February 170

The Republic 170

The Terror 171

Sadat 171

Soliloquy 171

Summer Composition 171

"The Landlord Refuses To Repair This Window" 171

City Life 171

Fall and Winter (A Russian Novel) 172

Wisdom Poem 172

Improvisation 1983 172

End of Year Kvetch 172

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS (1775-1818)

The Gay Gold Ring 173
The Erl-King's Daughter 175

FRANK BELKNAP LONG (1901-1994)

The Gods Are Dead 178
On Icy Kinarth 178

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882)

The Red Planet Mars 179
The Skerry of Shrieks 179
Enceladas 181

HOWARD PHILIPS LOVECRAFT (1890-1937)

Night-Gaunts 182
Nyarlathotep 182
The Well 182
The Howler 182
From "Night Gaunts: An Entertainment"
by Brett Rutherford 183

AMY LOWELL (1874-1925)

Haunted 189

RICHARD LYMAN (1925-2003)

"The leopard came into the world ..." 190
"Dare I advance to her" 190
"Life's flying rivers dammed" 191
Fondly angered by morning's grief 191
"Locked in the flood of the grave" 192
"Mad" 192

DAVID MALLET (1705-1765)

Margaret's Ghost 193

DON MARQUIS (1878-1937)

In the Bayou 195
Hunted 196

D. H. MELHEM (1926-2013)

Broadway Music 197
Tough Babe Doesn't Beg 198
This Tourist, Resident 198
Crier (Song) 198
Supermarket 198
On 94th Street 198

DAVID MESSINEO (1962-)

The Cross-Dressers of Antietam 199
To Be or Not to Be 200
Morning 201
The Palace of Nine Perfections 202

TH. METZGER

From "Hydrogen Sleep and Speed" 203

STUART MILSTEIN (d. 1977)

Sailboats on Lake Calhoun 206
A Fairy Tale of Old Age 206
Roman Holiday 206
Devolution 206
A Dream in Eden 207
E.E.G. 207
The Race 208
Genesis I 208
Genesis II 208

BRIAN MORRISEY

Reluctant Death 209

CATHERINE MURRAY (1918-1990)

A Short Poem 210
Lights in the Water 210
Poème 210

LOUIS NEWMAN

The Residue 211
A Financial Portrait 211

ALFRED NOYES (1880-1958)

A Fairy Funeral 212

WILLIAM JEWETT PABODIE (1812-1870)

Go Forth Into the Fields 214
Song – From Goethe 215

JOHN BURNETT PAYNE (1919-1986)

The Ways of Love 216
Emily and Walt, 217

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-1849)

Ulalume 219

SHIRLEY R. POWELL (1931-2019)

At the Bar 222
Seventy Years Ago 222
When Will It Happen 223
Grammarians' Poem 223
Under the Lighthouse 223
First Magic 224
About Barbara 224
Real Poet 224

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN (1799-1837)

The Demons 225

- JACOB RABINOWITZ
The Vampire 227
- BURT RASHBAUM (1953-) 229
From "Of the Carousel" 230
- SUSANNA RICH
Beware the House 232
Anchor 232
Sitting with Grandmother 233
- JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849-1916)
A Dream 234
- STEPHEN RONAN (d. 2007)
Our Lady of Fall River 235
- CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)
From "Goblin Market" 238
- RICHARD P. L. ROWE (1828-1879)
Soul Ferry 240
- BRETT RUTHERFORD (b. 1947)
The Tree at Lovecraft's Grave 241
What Is a Poet For? 242
To Loneliness 242
Judge Hathorne's Grave, At Salem 243
An Expectation of Presences 244
To the Arc of the Sublime 245
The Dresser in Emily's Bedroom 246
Lyric 246
- BORIA SAX
The Physicist 247
Something About 247
Poetry After Auschwitz 247
Suit and Tie 247
The Job Interview 247
The Lovers 248
Grandmother, 1983 248
One Being 248
- FRIEDRICH SCHILLER (1759-1805)
A Group in Tartarus 249
- SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832)
To the White Lady 250
- WILLIAM BELL SCOTT (1812-1890)
The Norms Watering Yggdrasil 253
- PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)
On the Medusa of Leonardo Da Vinci 254
- JOSÉ ASUNCION SILVA (1865-1896)
Nocturne III 256
- CLARK ASHTON SMITH (1893-1961)
Medusa 258
- CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY (1895-1915)
Sonnet 259
- ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774-1843)
Bishop Bruno 260
Cornelius Agrippa's Bloody Book 260
- VINCENT SPINA
East End 263
Fossil Shark Tooth 263
County Fair 264
- JOHN COLLINGS SQUIRE (1884-1958)
Meditation in Lamplight 266
- LUDWIG TIECK (1773-1853)
Courtship of the Hunchbacks 267
- JOHN TODHUNTER (1839-1916)
The Banshee 271
- PIETER VANDERBECK
Two Figures 273
What Will Happen to Lenin? 273
Farewell to Earth 274
The Cyclist 274
Shadows 275
Halloween 276
- JACK VEASEY (1955-2016)
Misreflection 277
Slur 277
Fear of the Dark 277
An Empty House in Anytown 278
From Puberty to Poetry 278
The Bloodhound Spell 278
Sorry, Emily Dickinson 278
Note for the Teacher 279
"Loving..." 279

DON WASHBURN (1932-2021)
From "The Boy From Under the Trees" 280
The Starship 282
Waters 282
First Date 282
Personal History 282

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN (1803-1878)
From "Conversations With Goethe" (1839) 283
The Raven 285
Noon 286

OSCAR WILDE (1854-1900)
The Sphinx 291

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939)
The Stolen Child 298
The Song of Wandering Aengus 298

*** **

THE POETS OF THE PALISADES ANTHOLOGIES 299

DOROTHY ALEXANDER
When Gravity Stops Working 300

RENÉE ASHLEY
Glass 301

RAPHAEL BADAGLIACCA
García's House 302

AMY BARONE
Defying Extinction 303

JOHN BARRALE
From the Long Year of Saying Goodbye 304

CATERINA BELVEDERE
Misericordia 305
Sacco and Vanzetti 305

LAURA BOSS
Snapshot 307

LAURIE BYRO
The Other Vincent 308

CATHY CAVALLONE
On the Cape of New Jersey 309

JUDITHA DOWD
What, Where? 310

LAURA FREEDGOOD
You Are 311

DAVIDSON GARRETT
A Fifteenth-Century Monk Laments 311

DEBORAH GERRISH
Windthrow 313
The Gift 314

GEORGE GUIDA
In a café, killing time, 315

THERÉSE HALSCHEID
The Bottom Stones 316

PATRICK HAMMER, JR.
In Moloney's Front Field 317
Each Time a Person Dies, a Library Burns 318

JOSH HUMPHREY
Spontaneous Poem for the Actor John Garfield 319

VASILIKI KATSAROU
Elements 319

DENISE LA NEVE
The Constancy of Radioactive Decay 321
Yellow Mum Next to a Cabin at Lake Atsion 322

ROY LUCIANNA
Orion 323

CHARLOTTE MANDEL
Sagaponack Beach 324

MARILYN MOHR
June 18, 1940 325
Panama Jack 325

PAUL NASH
Trace 326
Slipstream 327

SUZANNE GILI POST
At the Edge of the Forest 329
Titanic 329

MORTON D. RICH
The Man Without a Zip Code 330
Night Sky, March 23, 1996 331

DENISE RUE
My Norwegian Loneliness 332
Buzzard Song 332

ALISON RUTH
paint chipped his heart 333
chalk outline 333

JOHN J. TRAUSE
What Lies Between Us 334
WE hold tight 335

DORIS UMBERS
The Absence of Crows 336
Dressing in Dark 336

GALEN WARDEN
Losing Your House Is a Hurricane 337

GEORGE WITTE
D A K 338

ANTON YAKOVLEV
The Car You Drove That Night Was Silver 339

DONALD ZIRILLI
Blazon 340

*** **

RHODE ISLAND WRITERS' CIRCLE ANTHOLOGIES 341

JACK COULEHAN
Babushka 342

MATTHEW GOLDMAN
Ontology Revisited 343
There Is No Will 344

INGRID WILD KLECKNER (1931-??)
Talking to the Moon 345
Life's Alphabet 346

*** **

ABOUT THIS BOOK 347

PUBLISHING CHRONOLOGY, 1971-2022 349

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY 385

AUTHORS PUBLISHED BY THE POET'S PRESS 386

ANNA AKHMATOVA (1889-1966)

Which One Are You?

after Akhmatova's "Muza"

Ah, welcome guest, my Muse!
I wait up for you, whom no one
can compel. The candle is lit.
The pot of tea is enough for two.
There is champagne for the finish
when we have done the work of poetry.

All that I am or ever hope to be
is in this night's expectation.
Freedom and glory, and youth, too
I offer up, when with your flute
you arrive, and the lines fill up
in perfect symmetry and flow.

I wait. *Wait.* At my unlocked door
that ever-so-light twice tapping
fails to come no matter how far
I lean into midnight's silence.

Instead, from above, a wind howls.
The shutters flap-clap and shear off
from the trembling house-side. The tea
in my cup shows rolling waves.

Then, hooded and winged, *one* comes,
in somber and terrible robes,
tattered with cold eternity.
Oozing through the torn window screen
her bulk swells in until it fills
entire the moonlight's trapezoid.

The room is small. She seems to take
full half of it. I huddle down.
Gentle Euterpe, laurel-browed,
this is not you, the expected!

Her silver veil she puts aside.
Her eyes fix mine with calm resolve.
Her tablet and stylus laid down,
she places her hand over mine.
The thumb and double digit hold
upon my pen now led by hers.

"Millions already dead,:" she says.
"And millions more to come. Commence!"
My hand shakes. I tremble. "Why me,
the merest lyric poet, why me?" —

— "Because they have not killed you yet.
And because you can." The blank page
is filled with lines. I write till dawn.

It is done now. She moves to go.
"Which one are you?" I ask. — "The one
who whispered into Dante's ear
the cantos of his *Inferno*." —
All I can say is, dumbly, "Oh!"

— *Translated/adapted by Brett Rutherford*

JOEL ALLEGRETTI

The Plague Psalms

I.

*Ring around the rosie,
Pocketful of posies,
Ashes, ashes,
All fall down.*

So sweetly gamboling,
in guileless innocence,
from the pink lips of happy children,
this paean to a blood-greedy microbe.

II.

It began with the trader ships,
homeward bound from eastern ports,
hulls sated with cardamom and cedar
and a more insidious cargo that embarked
on the haunches of stowaway vermin.
With each nautical mile a man fell
until the deck was a salted bier,
the sail, a flag of surrender
to the pestilent buccaneer,
and the galley itself,
a mausoleum hung with barnacle garlands.
Not merely the passing of ailing men,
this was a sentence imposed by a pitiless magistrate
whose gavel was the mandibles of a parasite.
It begins when the flesh bubbles
like broiled cheddar,
and the blood gurgles in the veins
like molten lead.

And the sound that passes
for the creaking of hinges on closing doors
is the plea-bargaining of bones
seeking parole from incarceration
in condemned anatomies.

Blood was its Avatar and its seal —
the redness and the horror of blood.
—Edgar Allan Poe, “The Masque of the Red Death”

III.

“I am wealthy,” the nobleman said
from the sick room window,
“I will give you an armful of gold
if you come to my bedside
and lift a goblet to my mouth,
for I am too feeble to slake my thirst alone.”
He announced this every hour on the hour,
day and night,
until the fever, at last, abducted his voice
Forever.

Wind-blown we bloom,
Wind-blown decay;
With weeping we come
And so pass away.
—Anonymous English Poet, c. 13th Century

IV.

In the Florence of Boccaccio’s day,
Beneath the muslin funeral pall,
They called it *gavocciolo*,
As they tumbled, one and all.
“*Gavocciolo*,” the figure chimed,
black clad and scarlet eyed.
“Pardon?”
“*Gavocciolo*.”
“What is it? Something to eat?”
“Yes. It is served with the reddest
and most succulent of gravies.
It is that and more, besides.”
“Is it a type of dance?”
“Yes. Such a dance as skeletons do,
keeping time with the chattering
of their bicuspid.
It is that and more, besides.”
“Is it a musical direction?”
“Yes. It means to play in the style
of a man whose soul has just left him.”

V.

And they took ashes of the furnace
and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it
up to heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth
with blains upon man, and upon beast. —*Exodus*, 9:10

Ding dong, ding dong,
“Bring out your dead!”
Ding dong, ding dong,
“Bring out your dead!”
Below a bloodless sky,
amid the remnants of dawn,
amid the remnants of a cold, fallow dawn,
a procession creeps and crawls
like a roving centipede
through muddy streets that smolder
with the vapors of sinister incinerations.
A priest with incense and prayer book
guides his complement of sextons,
who stagger about after a night-long revelry
baptized in ale
to numb themselves for the morning’s vile labor.
“Bring out your dead!”
Ding dong, ding dong.

Rumbling along on grave-heavy wheels,
the death cart is loaded high
with merchandise for the tomb,
limbs and torsos entwined like an obscene trellis.
Look! The rich man’s arm straddles
the poor man’s shoulder.

O Death!
You, the glorious integrator!
The impartial arbiter, in whose eyes
all men are spared the indignity of prejudice!
A castle and a hovel are both built of walls and floors,
and the odor of a dying man’s breath
is not any sweeter
simply because his purse weighs more.

VI.
THE PRAYER OF THE FLAGELLANTS

With these leather thongs,
O Just and Merciful Lord,
I rend the abject flesh
that encages my imperishable spirit.

(Lash!)

By their sting,
I shall flow the crimson drivel
that animates my being,
as sap nourishes the poplar tree.

(Lash!)

In this manner,
may You grant me clemency
as You visit Your wrath
upon a petty and ungrateful race.

(Lash!)

In humility and remorse,
I shall wander from town to town
clothed in rags and my own shredded hide,
like the meanest of beggars,
appealing for neither alms nor meat,
but rather, the fraternity of fellow penitents.

(Lash!)

In the Name of the Father,
the Son
and the Holy Ghost.

Amen.

(Lash!)

VII.
O wise and skilled physician,
dear progeny of Hippocrates,
see how my arteries rust and corrode?
Drain them, I implore you,
with any apparatus at your command.
Use scalpels,
leeches,
vampires.
Cleanse me and give me blood anew,
so that I may consort again with the living
and praise the miracle of creation.

VIII.

Fire and fleet and candlelight,
And Christ receive thy soul.
—The Lyke-Wake Dirge

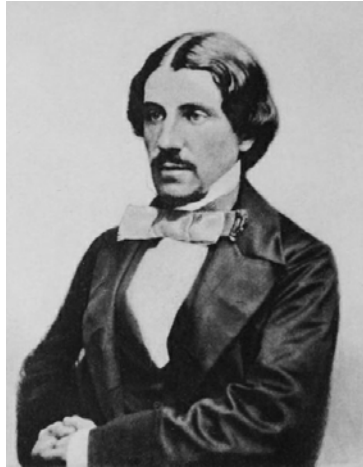
Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison.
Confiteor Deo Omnipotenti.
O Monarch of Earth and Ether,
I confess to avarice,
Sanctus
I confess to blasphemy,
Sanctus
Sanctus

I confess to lust,
Sanctus
Sanctus
Sanctus
I confess to sanctimony,
Ave Maria
I confess to iniquity,
Dominus vobiscum
I confess to hypocrisy,
et cum spiritu tuo
I confess,
I confess,
I confess ...

Hic desinunt Psalmi Pestilentiae
(Here end the Plague Psalms)

— From *The Plague Psalms* (The Poet's Press, 2000).

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824-1899)



The Fairies

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkil he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
If any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

LEONID ANDREYEV (1871-1919)

The Serpent's Story

SILENCE! Silence! Silence! Come closer to me. Look into my eyes! Always was I a fascinating creature, tender, sensitive, and grateful. I was wise, and I was noble. And I am so flexible in the writhing of my graceful body that it will afford you joy to watch my easy dance. Now I shall coil up into a ring, flash my scales dimly, wind myself around tenderly and clasp my steel body in my own gentle, cold embraces. One in many! One in many!

Be still! Be still! Look into my eyes!

So you do not like my writhing, and my straight, open look! Oh, my head is heavy — therefore I sway about so quietly. Oh, my head is heavy — therefore I look so straight ahead, as I sway about. Come closer to me. Give me a little warmth; stroke my wise forehead with your fingers; in its fine outlines you will find the form of a cup into which flows wisdom, the dew of the evening flowers. When I draw the air by my writhing, a trace is left in it — the design of the finest of webs, the web of dream-charms, the enchantment of noiseless movements, the inaudible hiss of gliding lines. I am silent and I sway myself. I look ahead and I sway myself. What strange burden am I carrying on my neck?

I love you.

Always was I a fascinating creature, and loved tenderly those whom I loved. Come closer to me. Do you see my white, sharp, enchanting little teeth? Kissing, I used to bite. Not painfully, no — just a trifle. Caressing tenderly, I used to bite a little, until the first bright little drops appeared, until a cry came forth which sounded like the laugh produced by tickling. That was very pleasant — think not it was unpleasant; otherwise they whom I kissed would not come back for more. It is only now that I can kiss only once — how sad — only once! One kiss for each I love — how little for a loving heart, for a sensitive soul, striving for a great union! But it is only I, the sad one, who kiss but once, and must seek love again — he knows no other love any more, to whom my one, tender, nuptial kiss is inviolable and eternal. I am speaking to you frankly; and when my story is ended — I will kiss you.

See how I love you.

Look into my eyes. Is it not true that mine is a magnificent, a powerful look? A firm look and a straight look? And it is steadfast, like steel forced against your heart. I look ahead and sway myself, I look and I enchant; in my green eyes I gather your fear, your loving, fatigued, submissive longing. Come closer to

me. Now I am a queen and you dare not fail to see my beauty; but there was a strange time — Ah, what a strange time! Ah, what a strange time! At the mere recollection I am agitated — Ah what a strange time! No one loved me. No one respected me. I was persecuted with cruel ferocity, trampled in the mud and jeered — Ah, what a strange time it was! Sway, sway, one in many! One in many!

I say to you: Come closer to me.

Those others — why did they not love me? Back then, I was also a fascinating creature, but without malice; I was gentle and I danced wonderfully. But they tortured me. They burnt me with fire. Heavy and coarse beasts trampled upon me with the dull steps of terribly heavy feet; cold tusks of bloody mouths tore my tender body — and in my powerless sorrow I bit the sand, I swallowed the dust of the ground — I was always dying of despair. Crushed, I was dying every day. Every day I was dying of despair. Oh, what a terrible time that was! The stupid forest has forgotten everything — it does not remember that time, but you have pity on me. Come closer to me. Have pity on me, on the offended, on the sad one, on the loving one, on the one who dances so beautifully.

Sadly, I love you.

How could I defend myself? I had only my white, wonderful, sharp little teeth — they were good only for kisses. How could I defend myself? It is only now that I carry on my neck this terrible burden of a head, and my look is commanding and straight, but then my head was light and my eyes gazed meekly. That was before I had poison. Oh, my head is so heavy and it is hard for me to hold it up! Oh, I have grown tired of my look — two stones are in my forehead, and these are my eyes. Perhaps the glittering stones are precious — but it is hard to carry them instead of gentle eyes — they oppress my brain. It is so hard for my head! I look ahead and sway myself; I see you in a green mist — you are so far away. So, come closer to me.

You see, even in sorrow I am beautiful, and my look is languid because of my love. Look into my pupil; I will narrow and widen it, and give it a peculiar glitter — the twinkling of a star at night, the playfulness of all precious stones — of diamonds, of green emeralds, of yellowish topaz, of blood-red rubies. Look into my eyes: It is I, the queen — I am crowning myself, and that which is glittering, burning and glowing — that which

robs you of your reason, your freedom and your life — it is poison. It is a drop of my poison.

How has it happened? I do not know. I did not bear ill-will to the living.

I lived and suffered. I was silent. I languished. I hid myself hurriedly when I could hide myself; I crawled away hastily. But they have never seen me weep — I cannot weep; and my easy dance grew ever faster and ever more beautiful. Alone in the stillness, alone in the thicket, I danced with sorrow in my heart — they despised my swift dance and would have been glad to kill me as I danced. Suddenly my head began to grow heavy — How strange it is! — My head grew heavy. Just as small and beautiful, just as wise and beautiful, it had suddenly grown terribly heavy; it bent my neck to the ground, and caused me pain. Now I am somewhat used to it, but at first it was dreadfully awkward and painful. I thought I was sick.

And suddenly ... Come closer to me. Look into my eyes. Be still! Be still! Be still!

And suddenly my look became heavy — it became fixed and strange — I even frightened myself! I want to glance and turn away — but cannot. I always look straight ahead, I pierce with my eyes ever more deeply, I am as though petrified. Look into my eyes. It is as though I am astonished, turned-to-stone, petrified, as though everything I look upon is petrified. Look into my eyes.

I am not stone: I love you. Do not laugh at my frank story, or I shall be angry. Every hour I open my sensitive heart, for all my efforts are in vain — I am alone. My one and last kiss is full of ringing sorrow — and the one I love is not here, and I seek love again, and I tell my tale in vain — my heart cannot bare itself, and the poison torments me and my head grows heavier. Am I not beautiful in my despair? Come closer to me.

Closer, because I love you.

Once I was bathing in a stagnant swamp in the forest — I love to be clean — it is a sign of noble birth, and I bathe frequently. While bathing, dancing in the water, I saw my reflection, and as always, fell in love with myself. I am so fond of the beautiful and the wise! And suddenly I saw — on my forehead, among my other inborn adornments, a new, strange sign — Was it not this sign that has brought the heaviness, the petrified look, and the sweet taste in my mouth? Here a cross is darkly outlined on my forehead — right here

— look. A cross! Come closer to me. Is this not strange? But I did not understand it at that time, and I liked it. Let there be no more adornment. And on the same day, on that same terrible day, when the cross appeared, my first kiss became also my last — my kiss became fatal. One in many! One in many!

Oh!

You cherish precious stones (I know you do) but think, my beloved, how far more precious is a little drop of my poison. It is such a little drop. — Have you ever seen it? Never, never. But you shall find it out. Consider, my beloved, how much suffering, painful humiliation, powerless rage devoured me: how much I had to experience in order to bring forth this little drop. I am a queen! I am a queen! In one drop, brought forth all by myself, I carry death unto the living, and my kingdom is limitless, even as grief is limitless, even as death is limitless. I am queen! My look is inexorable. My dance is terrible! I am beautiful! One in many! One in many!

Oh!

Do not be faint. My story is not quite done. Come closer.

So then I crawled into the stupid forest, into my green dominion.

Now it is a new way, a terrible way! I was kind like a queen; and like a queen I bowed graciously to the right and to the left. And they — they ran away! Like a queen I bowed benevolently to the right and to the left — and they, queer people — they ran away. What do you think? Why did they run away?

What do *you* think? Look into my eyes. Do you see in them a certain glimmer and a flash? The rays of my crown blind your eyes, you are petrified, you are lost. I shall soon dance my last dance — do not fall back. I shall coil into rings, I shall flash my scales dimly, and I shall clasp my steel body in my own gentle, cold embraces. Here I am! Accept my only kiss, my nuptial kiss — in it is the deadly grief of all oppressed lives. One in many! One in many!

Bend down to me. I love you.

Die!

— Adapted from a 1917 translation by Herman Bernstein, from *Two Russian Exiles* (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2019.)

MIKHAIL ARTSYBASHEV (1878-1927)

The Horror



NINA USUALLY SPENT the whole evening at the old Ivolgins'. She always felt happy and at home there, for the Ivolgins' house was bright and cozy; and she, young, buoyant, and full of hope, could be happy anywhere. All the time her talk was of the wonderful life that she meant to lead, and of the gladness that was to be hers. At eleven o'clock she went home, and old Ivolgin accompanied her.

It was dark and damp out of doors. From the river that was hidden by huts and sheds came a humid, fitful breeze, and one could hear the willows wailing at the water's edge. On the river there was a muffled sound of something that cracked, and slid, and suddenly dispersed with a strange, resonant, gurgling noise.

"The ice is breaking up," said Ivolgin, striving to face the wind that flung back the folds of his cloak, shook Nina's dress, and spattered their faces with icy drops.

"And now the spring is coming," replied Nina loudly, merrily as ever.

It really almost seemed as if, out of the darkness that covered the river, something floated to them on the moist, warm air, something mighty and immense.

"You will soon be home now," said Ivolgin, just to cheer his companion, for the girl, young, happy, charming as she was, always roused in his old heart a sense of warmth and joy and sorrow.

"Yes, thank goodness, very soon," cried Nina. Her merry voice in the wind sounded trembling and sweet. Passing along a dark, wet street, they reached an open square. Here the air was cold and bleak as a draft from a vault. Half-thawed snow lay on the church wall, gleaming faintly in the grey mist. Behind the church, fenced in by gaunt, bare trees which rattled like black bones, stood a large angular house built of brick. Its two windows were lit up like yellow eyes that glared wrathfully upon the general gloom outside.

"Ah! visitors have come," said Nina eagerly.

They went to the gateway, looked over at the dark garden that gave out a warm, damp smell of manure, and stopped at the school-room door. Nina held out her hand and Ivolgin in friendly fashion clasped her soft little hand in his, and said: "Good night, my pretty one."

Then, pulling his cap closer about his ears and thumping the ground with his stick, he hurried off,

glancing once more at the windows that for a moment lit up his bent form as it vanished into the mist.

Nina ran up the steps and tapped at a dark window next to the door.

Someone came around from the gateway, splashing through the puddles until he stood below her at the bottom of the steps.

"Is that you, Matthew?" called Nina. "Have you got the key? Who is it that has come?"

"It is I," replied the shadowed figure in a hoarse voice.

"Have you got the key?"

"Here it is." Matthew went up the creaking steps, and, pushing past Nina, opened the door, which rattled somewhat on its hinges. There was a smell of bread.

"Who is it that has come?" asked Nina a second time. Matthew stood silently in the dark for a moment.

"The Magistrate, with the Doctor and the Commissioner of Police. Over at Tarasovka a corpse has been found."

Nina groped her way to the classroom to look for matches. "Where can I have put them?" she muttered. Matthew waited in the dark vestibule and was silent. At last Nina found the matches and lit her lamp. As she passed into the school-room a faint ghostly light fell on the rows of desks and benches that resembled coffins in the cold, bare room.

"I have to get the post-chaise ready, Miss, to fetch witnesses from Tarasovka."

"Now? To-night?" asked Nina, in surprise. Matthew nodded his head and sighed. "You had better go across to the priest's, Miss. These gentry are drinking it up. With all their row you will never be able to sleep."

"That won't matter," replied Nina. "Have they had such a lot to drink, then?"

"Ah! I should just think they had!" said Matthew, half-irritably and half-enviously. He sighed again. "They've been at it all the evening. You ought really to go to the priest's. They mean to make a night of it."

"That won't matter," said Nina once more.

Matthew, disapproving, was silent. "Well, I'm off," he said at last.

Nina went with him to the door, which she bolted, and then passed through the school-room to her own room, taking the lamp with her. At once she heard sounds of drunken laughter, of the clinking of glasses and of the moving of chairs. The noise came through the door which shut off her room from that used by

“officials and travelers.” It was locked and covered with a curtain, but tobacco-fumes and a hot, heavy odor came through it into Nina’s room. She opened a window, looked suspiciously at the door, and, with her ear close against it, listened.

“Ha! Ha! It’s all very well. We know you! Expect you’ve been there already,” shouted someone with brutal vehemence.

“Shut up!” cried another with a wild, drunken laugh.

“No, sirs, I swear to God.”

For some reason or other Nina suddenly felt as if she had been insulted, although she had understood nothing. Bewildered and irresolute, she moved to the table,

“I had better have stayed the night at the Ivolgins’,” she thought, in fear and disgust.

On the other side of the wall she heard shouts and the noise of falling furniture; at times it seemed as if they were fighting like wild beasts in a cage. Nina strove not to listen. She sat down at the table and gazed thoughtfully at the lamp-light.

“Education, so they say, makes man moral. Our peasants would never roar like that. . . . They must know that I am here! No, a vile man becomes by education yet more vile. . . . It is as if all that he does were done intentionally.”

Then she recollected that in April she would be free to go.

“I wish that it could be soon. I am so tired.” Unconsciously her face wore a jaded, weary expression. Yet bright, glad thoughts came back to her — visions of faces she loved from the wide, joyous world that lay before. Smiling, she gave them welcome with her dark, thoughtful eyes.

Suddenly there came a sharp rap at the door. Nina started and looked around.

“Please. Miss,” said a voice so loudly that it seemed as if it were in the room, “could you . . . please, Miss, let us have a candle? Our lamp is going out.”

Nina smiled confusedly, as if the speaker could see her, and stammered out, “Er — yes, yes —”

She got up, and, fumbling in the cupboard, produced a candle with which she went to the door. The bolt was on her side. She thrust it back, and, opening the door very slightly, put her hand through the aperture.

“Here! Will you please take this?”

“A thousand thanks, Miss. So much obliged!” the same thick, drunken voice said with unnatural politeness. To Nina it was as if the speaker had made her a bow; but he did not take the candle. Nina, holding still, moved the candle again in front of the door so he would see it. She thought she heard a chuckle, and suddenly felt as if, close to her hand, something was

being stealthily attempted. Before she could be certain a fat, moist hand grasped the candle, and pressed Nina’s fingertips close to the greasy tallow with brutal gallantry.

“Thank you, thank you, Miss!” said the same voice, hastily, and in a more repulsively polite tone than ever.

“Don’t mention it,” replied Nina mechanically, as she withdrew her hand.

There was suddenly silence in the adjoining room; and, after that, a dull, suppressed murmuring.

Feeling reassured, Nina sat down on the bed, yawned, and began to undress. She took off her boots, her dress, and her stays, remaining in her chemise and long black stockings with pale blue garters. The tight-fitting black stockings made her feet look so dainty and childish, and her soft, delicately-molded arms were lustrous in the lamplight. She arranged her hair for the night, removing the hair-pins and making a single plait.

“If you please, Miss,” said the voice again at the door, “we’ve made some tea. Won’t you have a glass with us?”

The voice was still that of a drunken man, and it sounded unnaturally polite, but the tone was more excited than before, as if the speaker panted between each word.

“No, thank you!” answered Nina, in alarm, seizing the counterpane. The voice was mute, and silence reigned. Only a second it seemed of absolute stillness, and then through the window came a far-off sound of turbulence and commotion from the river. The wind wrenched off a shutter, and howled round the roof, from which a slab of ice fell, breaking like glass.

Nina got gently, almost stealthily, into bed, as if she sought to conceal herself, drawing the coverlet right up to her chin. Her eyes were wide open, fixed in a vacant, horrified stare upon the door, and thoughts whirled in her brain like startled birds.

“I must get away. . . . If only Matthew would come!”

Yet, instead of escaping, she did not dare to move, but convulsively clutched the coverlet and drew it up to her chin, striving to allay her fears.

“Nonsense! Drunken fellows . . . what could they do? They would never dare to come in!”

To her, this seemed simple and conclusive enough, yet at the same moment she felt that something incredibly hideous was about to happen.

At the door, all was still.

“Yes . . . but the bolt is not drawn.” The words were uttered in an awful whisper quite close to Nina, almost in her ear. Scarcely audible, and yet having the effect of a piercing scream, they sent a flash of mortal terror through her brain.

“Does that matter?” Another sharp whisper in her ear, and, at the same time a slight noise, as of some

one behind the curtain who stealthily, with bated breath, was trying to open the door.

Nina's brain reeled; her soul and body were gripped by wild fear; one keen, agonizing thought of something inconceivably horrible seemed to light up the whole world. As if a hand had struck her, she sprang up, and, half nude, like some beautiful little animal, stood by the bed, at bay. The curtain moved gently. From the gloom behind it a large, shadowy form emerged.

"What — what do you want? Go away at once! I'll scream!" cried Nina, in a trembling voice.

The shadowy form suddenly tottered forward, and a big, red, burly man almost fell into the room. Behind him came a second, and a third.

"Eh . . . we've come to thank you . . . for the candle and . . . well, you see . . . perhaps you're feeling a bit lonely . . . such a pretty girl, too" . . . stammered the man, with a hideous leer, and, by his bloated, bestial eyes, Nina could see that he was drunk. Her voice seemed frozen in her throat; but suddenly she uttered a wild, piercing shriek.

"Help! Help!"

"Be quiet! Shut up!" hissed someone in alarm.

Thereupon the big, burly man attacked her, and with his whole body crushed, her against the wall. Some one, panting, seized her in his rough, sweaty hands and with a suppressed grunt of fury flung her aside.

II

Then, suddenly, they became sober. The grey dawn had come; the lamp went out; the room had a close, sickening smell. Pillows lay on the floor, and the coverlet was huddled up at the foot of the bed. Bruised and blue, Nina lay there, crying and screaming, as she tossed from side to side; not beautiful, now, but wretched, awful, even hideous to behold. The tall, pale Commissioner of Police held her down with all his might, closing her mouth with one hand. The Doctor and the Magistrate looked on, moving restlessly up and down. Their hands trembled; their eyes were bloodshot and vacant; their faces in the dawn-light seemed strangely gray.

"Come, now, do listen, little one. . . . It's no good making all this fuss . . . it can't be helped now. . . . Do listen, for goodness' sake! What's done is done!"

So, all speaking at once, the three strove noisily to pacify her; and at last relapsed into craven silence.

Nina, however, the wreck of her former engaging, beautiful self, writhed, disfigured and soiled, in the Commissioner's grasp. Wrenching herself free, she shrieked again, her eyes starting from their sockets.

"What on earth are we to do with her?" muttered the Magistrate, furious and afraid.

From the village yonder came sounds remote, indistinct.

Just below the window, loudly, defiantly, a cock crew thrice. "Ah! Ah! Ah!" screamed Nina, who had freed her mouth from the Commissioner's grasp.

His features became distorted with bestial rage as he ruthlessly gripped her face with all his force, crumpling it up in such a way that his fingers were covered with blood and saliva. For a moment they looked both into each other's eyes — a brief, piercing, glance, horrible, inhuman.

"Now . . . scream away, do!" hissed the Commissioner in frenzied triumph.

III

IT WAS BRIGHT, sunny morning. Long, damp shadows still lay in front of the houses and fences, but where the sun shone the puddles glittered, and, here and there, straws that had been trodden into the frozen mud gleamed like gold. The school-yard was empty, and only the mark of wheels in the wet ground were visible. All the furniture in the room "For Officials and Travelers" was displaced, except the sofa that was set exactly in front of the door. One could see empty bottles, dirty glasses, heaps of wet, greasy cigar-ashes and crushed gherkins. It seemed strange to imagine that human beings had been here. On the other side of the door, in Nina's room, all was still and motionless. It was as though the folding-doors, like clenched teeth, were guarding a grim secret.

Until eleven o'clock the school-yard was crowded with boys and girls chasing, pushing, and striking each other, shrill-voiced as a flock of sparrows. But at eleven o'clock a sudden ominous silence ensued. Then some one rushed down the street to proclaim the awful news, and at once there was a stir and commotion, as from every side horror-struck people ran, shouting, to the school-house. Old Ivolgin came, and the fat veteran of the village, and the policeman. The door was opened, and into Nina's mournful room, where all was silent as the grave, noisy folk forced their way, with strange, wild, curious eyes.

There, where all was sad and silent, all things bore mute and harrowing testimony to a mysterious and awful tragedy. The whole room had obviously been hastily and ignorantly set in order by strange hands, the furniture accurately placed, and the bed, as if long disused and superfluous, most carefully made. Nina's clothes lay folded with scrupulous neatness upon a chair, and the room had a strange, faint, indefinable odor.

In a corner of the room, from a peg of the empty clothes-stand, Nina was found hanging, in a white chemise with spotless pleats that still smelt of soap. Her delicate arms, already slightly discolored, hung helplessly at her side, and her legs, in black stockings, with sky-blue garters, were unnaturally bent outwards, as if convulsively struggling to touch the ground. The ghastly head, blue and bloated, with its glassy eyes was bent backwards; from livid lips the big, puffy tongue protruded; the agonized expression of the face was inconceivably horrible,

Old Ivoglin uttered a wild shriek, and the others with him screamed and chattered incoherently, as if they had lost their reason. A deep, long-drawn sigh seemed to float along the street, subsiding in the dense dark crowd that thronged the stairway. The general horror and disgust knew no bounds, while deeper and deeper grew the thirst for revenge.

IV

ON THE NEXT day, towards evening, the Commissioner of Police, the Magistrate and the Doctor arrived; not together, but singly. There was yet daylight, but where the lengthening shadows fell, thin, brittle ice sparkled. From the office they went to the desolate-looking schoolhouse in front of which two plain-clothes policemen with a stretcher were posted. In silence the officials entered the schoolhouse. The fat, bloated Doctor was breathing hard, and his hands twitched convulsively like a helpless animal scratching the ground. The gaunt, lanky Commissioner led the way, his face hard as stone, resolute and bold.

The Magistrate walked sideways; his thin white neck moved in jerks beneath his puny, pert face, and fair, upturned moustache.

The Commissioner was the first to enter the room, walking straight up to the corpse, cold and motionless, in its sack-cloth shroud. For the space of a second he looked upon that ghastly head, and then, turning round, said in a dull, hard voice:

“Away with it!”

The two assistants hastily flung down their caps by the door, and carefully, with slippered feet, approached the bed. Their hands trembled; even their backs, bent and rigid, expressed horror and pity. Breathing low, they halted.

“Be quick!” said the Commissioner in the same hollow, determined voice.

The men obeyed. The little black feet quivered, and then rose and sank helplessly. From the coarse canvas covering a small livid hand fell out, and dangled on the floor.

“Carry her down to the yard on the stretcher!”

The men moved forward, then stopped, and then moved on again, carrying their burden as if it was something extremely heavy and fragile.

As the strangely-extended black legs moved down the school-house steps, another sigh, muffled and poignant, swept along the village street alive with a hundred staring eyes.

“Drive those people away!” whispered the cowardly Doctor to the Commissioner.

The latter drew himself up, as in a cold, domineering tone, he shouted: “What are you all staring at? Go away! March!”

The mob moved, grew denser, swayed, and remained stationary.

“Go away! Go away !” cried the policemen, gesticulating timorously, feebly.

Nina was carried down on the stretcher and placed on the frozen ground. The little head shook slightly, and then lay quite still.

One of the men, a pale, fair fellow, crossed himself in terror. The Commissioner, glancing at him, said mechanically:

“Go and fetch witnesses.”

The man’s features were contracted as if by a spasm of genuine pity and brainless fear.

V

AFTER THE INSPECTION of the corpse, the Doctor and the Magistrate sat silently in the office. Starless night lay without, and on the dark plain some one seemed to hover, listening. “Oh! my God, my God!” groaned the Doctor, as with fat fingers he tried to make a cigarette. The Magistrate glanced at him and walked up and down the room.

Both were utterly dejected; each felt unable to look the other in the face. Thoughts, recollections, blurred and confused, yet at times sharp as a razor, flashed through their besotted brains. To the Doctor at times it seemed as if all were an error, a mistake that could be rectified; all would pass away, and life would be as jolly and pleasant as before. Then suddenly there came a fiery mist, and the vision of an alluring maid with whom they did everything that came to mind, until the obscuring clouds of drunkenness and obscenity rose and revealed a livid corpse. All life vanished; even the possibility of living; the whole future was engulfed in the black chasm of terror from which there was no escape. Avenging forms arose; familiar faces became strange and hideous; hands were stretched forth to seize; and the heart sank down, down into an abyss of horror and shame.

“Oh! my God, my God!” groaned the Doctor, wailing for mercy. The Magistrate paced the room from

one corner to the other, walking faster and faster, as if to escape from something. The boards creaked; it seemed as though a phantom were pursuing him. The Doctor's lamentations irritated him. They were needless now, he thought; the important thing was how to wriggle out of the affair. The thought of that little murdered girl had taken firm root in a dark corner of his brain.

"Oh! my God!" sighed the Doctor. The Magistrate became furious. He turned sharply round, his little eyes, transparent as gelatine, rolling with rage.

"What's the good of all this whining?" he exclaimed. "For God's sake, shut up!"

An evil thought suddenly flashed across his mind.

"You planned the whole thing yourself, and now you blubber like some old woman!" he said viciously, without looking at the Doctor.

The latter understood him and turned a purplish red.

His big round face resembled a child's toy balloon. His breath came in short, labored gasps.

"What? . . . It was *P* . . . *I* that . . . ?" he stuttered, slowly rising on his short legs.

"Of course, it was you!" retorted the other with a nod and a chuckle.

The little lamp on the table tottered, and its green glass shade rattled piteously. The light fell on broad, firmly planted feet, and fists convulsively clenched. The faces of the two were in the shade; their eyes only gleamed ferociously.

"*P*" gasped the Doctor, choking with rage.

"Yes, you, you, *you!*" shouted the Magistrate wildly.

"Who first suggested it?"

"I was only joking; but you went in first."

"And who hit her on the head, pray? Yes, on the head? I did, perhaps?"

"Ah! but who was it that said we had nothing to fear?"

There was a knock at the door. They both started backward in alarm, and were mute. The Commissioner of Police entered. He wore a dull grey coat with shining buttons, and his sword. His face looked grey and hard as stone; his eyes had a luster as of metal. Approaching the table he leant upon it with both hands, and, looking at the wall between them, said:

"We will hold the inquest at once."

Then, as he did not see, but felt, how pale they turned, he bit his lip, and continued:

"We might have had such a nice night of it. This stupid affair has spoilt everything. Ah! well, it doesn't matter!" He glanced scornfully at both of them, and then, altering his tone, added sternly:

"All the same, we're not going to ruin ourselves just because of a woman. We must get ourselves out of it somehow, eh? I have just heard that two peasants saw

the watchman, Matthew Povalny, leaving the school-house that night. Do you hear?"

"Well, what of that?" asked the Doctor huskily.

Again a black thought darted into the Magistrate's mind. He uttered a sigh of relief.

"That's what will save us! It's not a case of outrage; merely one of theft. That's simpler, and it won't create so much fuss. I'll manage the watchman. No need to bring it in outrage at all . . ."

"Oh! . . . I see!" said the Commissioner, leaning over the table, and craning his sinewy neck as if to hear a distant sound. But the Magistrate grasped the grey cloak and whispered something, as his eyes rolled insanely, and saliva spurted from his mouth.

As he proceeded to explain how all the blame should be laid upon the watchman, the fat Doctor became more and more unnerved. Another awful phantom confronted him; one that he felt powerless to face. When the Magistrate had finished speaking, the Doctor sank feebly into a chair, struck the table with his elbow, and covered his face with his fat fingers, exclaiming fretfully:

"Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! What *are* you going to do now?"

The Commissioner slowly turned to him a face of iron.

"What else is there to be done?" he asked coldly.

"Why, that means prison. . . . An innocent man is sent to prison through us!"

The Magistrate's puny face was lit up by a look of savage glee.

"Well, what do you want, then?" asked the Commissioner, with suppressed ferocity of tone.

"Impossible . . . I can't do it!" The Doctor groaned and pressed his fingers harder against his face.

"What do you mean by 'I can't do it?'"

"No, I can't!" The Doctor shook his head. "I can't," he murmured in a broken, husky voice.

"Ah! but you could do what you did!" cried the Magistrate.

"That . . . well . . . how that happened, I don't know. . . . But this — no, I can't!" replied the Doctor sadly.

"So you can't do it? But twelve years' penal servitude — you could do that, eh?" asked the Magistrate venomously, as he bent down close to the Doctor's ear. "And how about your wife and child, eh?"

Hurriedly uncovering his fat, red, perspiring features, the Doctor stared at the speaker with dazed, lustreless eyes. His head sank on the table, and he sobbed and moaned:

"My God! My God!" . . . What will be the end of it all? What shall I do?"

His head wobbled to and fro on the edge of the table like a big soft ball.

“What is the meaning of all this humbug?” asked the Commissioner contemptuously, as he moved away from the table. “I fail to understand.”

The Doctor sobbed, and then suddenly burst out laughing. The Magistrate in alarm hastened to fetch water, and, as the glass rattled against the other’s teeth, he kept repeating;

“For goodness’ sake, stop! What’s the matter? We had a bit of fun with the girl; we were drunk, and — there it is! Anybody else in our place would have done the same. We never meant to kill her, did we? Here, drink this, go on! Be quiet and don’t scream like that! What’s done is done, and it can’t be mended!”

The Doctor now began to groan and laugh alternately.

The Magistrate turned round in terror, and for a moment experienced a most extraordinary sensation. It was as if he and the others had gone mad; his brain seemed on fire. The Commissioner, rushing forward, knocked the glass out of his hand and, seizing the Doctor by the shoulder, yelled at him furiously.

“Shut up, curse you! If you don’t, I’ll kill you!” The Doctor shook as if his head were being torn from his body, and stammered out: “I . . . understand. Let me . . . alone . . . ! I’ll say . . . nothing!”

VI

ALREADY THAT EVENING, invisibly, inaudibly, news of the grave crime had passed from lip to lip, and gradually the spirit of mutiny and revolt grew deeper. Next morning workmen at the cotton factory and on the railway left their work, and in black crowds surged across the fields to the village. “They murdered her themselves, and now they want to hold an inquest!” cried a dull, hard voice; and from these words something huge and sinister as an approaching cloud took shape which grew with lightning speed, and, moving, bore in its wake the bygone shame and oppression of centuries.

It was as if this little murdered maiden had been the embodiment of gaiety and youth and human charm, and that these now were hopelessly extinguished and destroyed.

When, early in the morning, the corpse was carried by police-agents along the street, a huge crowd like a black whirlpool blocked the whole road, dispersing silently at the approach of the roughly made, unpolished coffin that slowly swayed aloft. No one knew what to do; but all gazed mournfully at the yellow lid. Silence prevailed, but yonder, somewhere in the distance, there was a suppressed sound like subterranean rumblings.

The sky grew bright. Frost shone on the roofs, the fences, and the ground. A single star gleamed sadly in the east. Slowly forming a circle, the black crowd followed the coffin down the long, silent street. In the sky all was so pure and calm and bright; and all so restless, so brutal on the black earth. The bier was hastily borne to the church, and then, at a slow pace, to the graveyard. Suddenly a voice was heard, shrill, insistent. Greyhaired Ivolgin ran, bareheaded, after the bier, and, shaking his bony fist, shouted: “*Stop! Stop!*”

The coffin came to a standstill as of its own accord, swaying to and fro. Ivolgin approached, his grey hair ruffled, his eyes moist, his mouth awry.

“Where are you going?” he gasped, attempting to stop the coffin’s progress. “Go back! First murdered, and then the matter hushed up! Lying villains! Go back! We’ll see about that!”

A dull murmur, as that of distant breakers, rose from the crowd.

“For these words, Ivolgin, you will have to answer! Do you hear?” cried a police-agent, blocking the old man’s way. “Go on, you fellows, go on!” Ivolgin mechanically grasped the other’s hand, and his lips moved convulsively.

“Don’t lay your hands on me!” exclaimed the police-agent, roughly withdrawing his hand. But Ivolgin seized him by the elbow and murmured something, opening and shutting his mouth like a fish.

“Leave me alone!” shouted the police-agent furiously.

“It was they who killed her! They, themselves!” murmured Ivolgin, at last. “You’re doing wrong . . . You surely know . . .”

“Know? What do I know?” cried the police-agent angrily. “What is it — what business is it of yours? Here, arrest this man!”

A fair, pale man timidly caught hold of Ivolgin’s arm. “What does this mean, fellows?” cried a voice from the crowd.

“Let him go! Murderers! Stop the funeral, you fellows! What? What? What? — Don’t let them go on!” Several voices uttered these words wildly and at random, as the crowd suddenly surged forward. The police-agent yelled out something in reply, but his words were lost in the general din. The coffin swayed, and then was swiftly lowered to the ground.

VII

NEXT DAY AT noon the District Governor arrived, having been summoned by telegraph. He was accompanied by the Commissioner of Police. Ever since the early morning the whole village had been astir. The coffin stood in the empty church, the sunlight falling on its yellow lid. The fat, pompous Governor climbed down from his carriage in clumsy fashion, saying sharply to the Commissioner, but in an undertone; "Call the police-witnesses and have the girl buried at once."

Taking short steps, he himself walked briskly to the church. The space in front of the porch was filled by a silent crowd. The policeman, the sergeant, and the Commissioner, now came, and their heavy, uneven footsteps could be heard on the pavement of the church. Then they went out again, and the yellow coffin-lid appeared in the black doorway, swaying above the crowd.

"Come, now, clear off!" said the Governor sharply, as he scowled at the spectators. Silently, automatically, the crowd advanced, thronging the porch. The coffin was brought to a halt.

"Make way!" cried the Governor, stepping forward.

"What's the meaning of 'make way'?" replied one of the crowd. "First you murder somebody, and then it is, 'go your ways!' A fine thing, indeed!" Ivolgin, with a small white cross on his grey cloak, firmly and courteously accosted the Governor.

"Allow me, sir," he began, in a low voice, bending closer. "The voice of the people shows that . . ."

"What do you say?" asked the Governor, turning sharply round and frowning.

"I was saying that we all know who the murderers are. We cannot let this awful crime"

The Governor glanced furtively at the other, and then abruptly turned away.

"If you please, this is no business of yours. Who are you, pray? Be good enough to stand aside." With that he gently pushed Ivolgin out of the way.

"Take care, sir!" cried Ivolgin, in a threatening voice, as he shook himself free.

The Governor stopped and suddenly grew pale.

"Gently, gently!" he muttered, and then, in a tone of command: "Remove the coffin!"

A long, painful silence ensued. All stood motionless.

The coffin still swayed in the church porch.

"Do you know what you are doing, you fellows?" cried the Governor, white with anger. His voice was weak yet shrill. "You'll have to take the consequences! Let the coffin pass. The inquiry has discovered who the

culprit is. The law must now take its course, or you'll suffer for it!"

"Law must take its course, indeed! Ha! Ha! Ha!" cried several mockingly. "Fast-talking lawyers, eh? No, my friends, there's no such thing as law or justice!"

"Stand back!" shouted the Governor, beside himself with rage. "What does this mean?"

"I'll tell you what it means," cried Ivolgin, again advancing. "You think that, for *you*, justice does not exist! You lying wretches! You're going to be brought to justice, now!"

The Governor, frowning, drew back a step. The crowd instantly advanced, menacingly.

"Commissioner!" cried the Governor, utterly disconcerted.

The tall, pale Commissioner pushed roughly past him to seize Ivolgin. His face like a mask of steel wore a cold, hard expression as if he understood nothing.

Just as the Commissioner and a policeman had arrested Ivolgin, a big gaunt workman struck the official full in the face with his bony fist. "Murderer!" he cried.

Blood spurted, and there was a gruesome sound of something broken. The Commissioner staggered but kept his feet. His face had suddenly become shapeless. It expressed neither pain nor fear, but only brutish, insensate fury. He yelled, crouched like a cat, and leapt at the workman. Locked for a moment in a deadly embrace they both staggered and fell, screaming, down the steps of the church porch.

In a moment all was uproar and confusion. Rebellion, as a grim, grey ghost, floated above the mob, and was mirrored in the pallid faces of the fighters.

"Go ahead! Give it to them, boys!" cried a voice, high-pitched and exultant.

The Governor and the Magistrate ran side by side over the muddy ground, splashing through the half-melted snow, their faces splattered with slush and mire. They ran, panting, gasping and in tatters, bruised and disfigured, like big hares scurrying across the fields, pursued by the howling, frenzied mob.

VIII

THAT NIGHT, ALONG the dark, muddy high-road a huge mass advanced towards the village. Nothing definite was discernible in the gloom, but one could hear the snorting of horses, the trampling of hoofs and the faint jingling of steel. Neither men nor movements were visible, but it was as if some force, dense and threatening, approached.

The troops halted in the square. The streets were silent and deserted; only a couple of restless yard-dogs

barked and howled. Here and there lights flickered at windows and immediately went out. A detachment of soldiers, burly, equal-sized phantoms, dismounted and occupied the space in front of the church. Then out of the darkness they brought a box and swiftly carried it across the glimmering wall to the churchyard.

All was still. Rest everywhere, until the coming of the grey, restless day. At dawn the main street was again filled by black masses of humanity — men ill-favored and sinister of mien, who had flocked thither from the factory whose chimneys no longer smoked, standing there like huge candles that had been put out. From the streets adjoining the square, black figures emerged. These gradually became fused and welded, resembling some dark mass that had been poured out upon the snow-covered square.

Pale, anxious faces collected and then separated, glancing round and watching the soldiery with rapt attention. Half the square by the church was occupied by a dense crowd. Some squatted on the wall and on beams beside it — a veritable sea of faces. The other half of the square was, as before, empty and silent. Here, motionless, in one long line the Cossacks were stationed, their stony, inscrutable faces turned towards the mob. They sat there, rigid in their saddles; only the horses kept nodding their heads. In front of them sundry gray forms paced back and forth; strange figures that shone above the dark ground. These now swung themselves adroitly into their saddles. The word of command rang out, and the long line of cavalry with jingling spurs and clattering hoofs rode straight across the square at the mob.

Shouts of astonishment and alarm now broke the silence, as the crowd, recoiling, separated. Then the whole black mass with wild shrieks clambered on to the wall and the beams. The horses tossed their heads vehemently and dashed forward. A yell rose from the wall, and a storm of hisses. One tall, haggard workman rushed from the church towards the horses, crying: “This way, boys, this way!”

Others followed him, one by one, shouting: “Go for them! Let them have it!”

Riot and confusion now became general. Sticks and stones whizzed through the air; on every side were faces purple with fury, and wild, flashing eyes. There was no shouting now, but a dull confused sound, as merciless blows struck living bodies, as horses whin-

nied, and fighters were felled to the ground. Then a savage yell of triumph resounded, and in the distance, at the end of the square, the Cossacks were seen, no longer in a regular line, but broken up into little groups. On these a steady rain of large round stones was falling.

“We’ve won!” cried a lanky fellow, laughing triumphantly like a schoolboy.

“Look out, you fellows!” said a voice from the crowd, gently.

Across the square, on the other side, a long grey stripe slowly unraveled itself, and one could see plainly how a hundred feet struck the ground with swift precision. Instantly all was silent; and once more above the square a grim, grey phantom hovered.

“They’ll never dare to do that! They only want to frighten us!” murmured voices, nervously, in the crowd. “Lads! what shall we do now?” cried the workman hoarsely.

Immediately afterwards there was a loud report.

The line of grey men opposite had disappeared in a cloud of bluish smoke.

IX

Towards evening the clouds dispersed and there was a gleam of sunlight. The streets were deserted; only hens wandered calmly across the high-road, and, close to the church, dogs sniffed the ground, slinking along, their tails between their legs. Silence and horror prevailed, while between the earth with its victims and the fair blue sky a Power invisible, death, all-oppressing, seemed to hover.

At the police-station, on stretchers, lay rows of rigid bodies, with white eyes staring upwards. In these eyes there was a look, a sad, questioning look of horror and despair.

Translated by Percy Pinkerton, originally
published in the story collection
The Millionaire (1915)

—From *Two Russian Exiles*
(Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet’s Press, 2019.)

JODY AZZOUNI (b. 1954)

Starlight, Starbright

What men are poets who can speak of Jupiter
if he were a man, but if he is an immense
spinning sphere of methane or ammonia must be si-
lent? — R. Feynman

Nightfall, a friendly ash, sticks to everything:
makes me think of heaven. The dumb
stars too are hopeless. Only Greeks, flimsy with
evidence, connected the dots;
sketched imaginary companions like children.
Nowadays mad gravity dominates even
the scattered heavens; the black hole,
where spacetime sleeps crunched like a
button, embraces light: an eye gone
stomach.

Do I have to say it? Some people
like this sort of thing. But they too die,
and find themselves nowhere.

Landscape by Dali

It persists, surprisingly:
a boneless statue, its meat
yielding only to time.
A theological sky:
eyes scattered like birds.
Near the murdered clock
a virus, its treasured codex,
blueprint for immortality,
sleeps in a bottle.
The faint-veined ruby
its throb barely detectable
hangs in the air like a heart.
Outside the cloud of paint
something is ticking.
Pray it doesn't wake up.

Perhaps as many as thirty

Dumb as a nail, I look out the window,
watching the dead snow gather in piles.
They point flashlights into his livingroom
floor; the broken parquet slumps around
a vulnerable hole, the dark a shadow
blanketing its kill. "Paydirt,"
one says. I see an arm
in a plastic bag, other bags
beneath it.

They take me out of the building. One
holds my hands, a small gift of flesh,
and tells me I'm safe. I gaze at his badge
and like a lamp it fills with light.

There is a box in my future now
and I'll be there
if I ever shut my eyes again.

Wings come in pairs

Snow whispers promises
as it melts. A mouth, too,
breeds its own kind of ghost:
the red stain on the cheek, the noise
of lips on the move, the short-lived
kiss, its tiny belly swollen with tongue.

I no longer remember what I told you
about your face, love, butterflies,
autumn leaves. But now
butterflies look like wings in a rush —
the spinal cord still dangling
between them. I rake up
the dead, pick through the remains,
take home whatever gold I can find.

The Vampire's Gift

I expected bats, fangs,
the usual openmouthed coffin.
Instead he woos me with poetry of a sort:
“Dreams are baggy shadows
bursting their skins each dawn
and colorsplashing the mornings.”
Why I fall for this, I don't know,
but we do things in bed I don't quite remember.
And before he leaves,
he gives me a diamond
with a prominent spot of blood
deep inside.
“We fertilized it,” he explains.
I sleep fitfully,
naturally enough,
and dream that when he caresses my face,
it comes off in his hands.
At dawn, when I awake, the diamond is gone.
But there's a child now
I must feed whatever way I can.

Amateur Theology

Sometimes,
the sky looks like the inside of a skull;
its clouds the puffy white brains
of a retarded God.
On such days, I think skyscrapers
are acupuncture needles:
too weak a cure for too grave an illness.
Other times, its clouds look like
white frilly silks
against the blue thigh of a vain God
too silly to think of us.
Some days, clouds resemble the white mist
a small boy-God blows over his blue hands
on a cold day: the sun
reminds me of a small fire barely enough
to warm him after a romp
through the empty cosmos.
But there are those days, like today,
when clouds look like the discarded napkins
of a vampire-God gorging himself
on the day's dead.
The sunset is especially beautiful.

Odin gets to see it all

Hungry for control, the dangfool god
gouges his own eye out
and drops it in the seedy well.

Then he gulps down the thick stew
Mimir has ladled out for him: pond scum,
decomposing bird ... not pure by a long shot
but the usual for neglected wells.

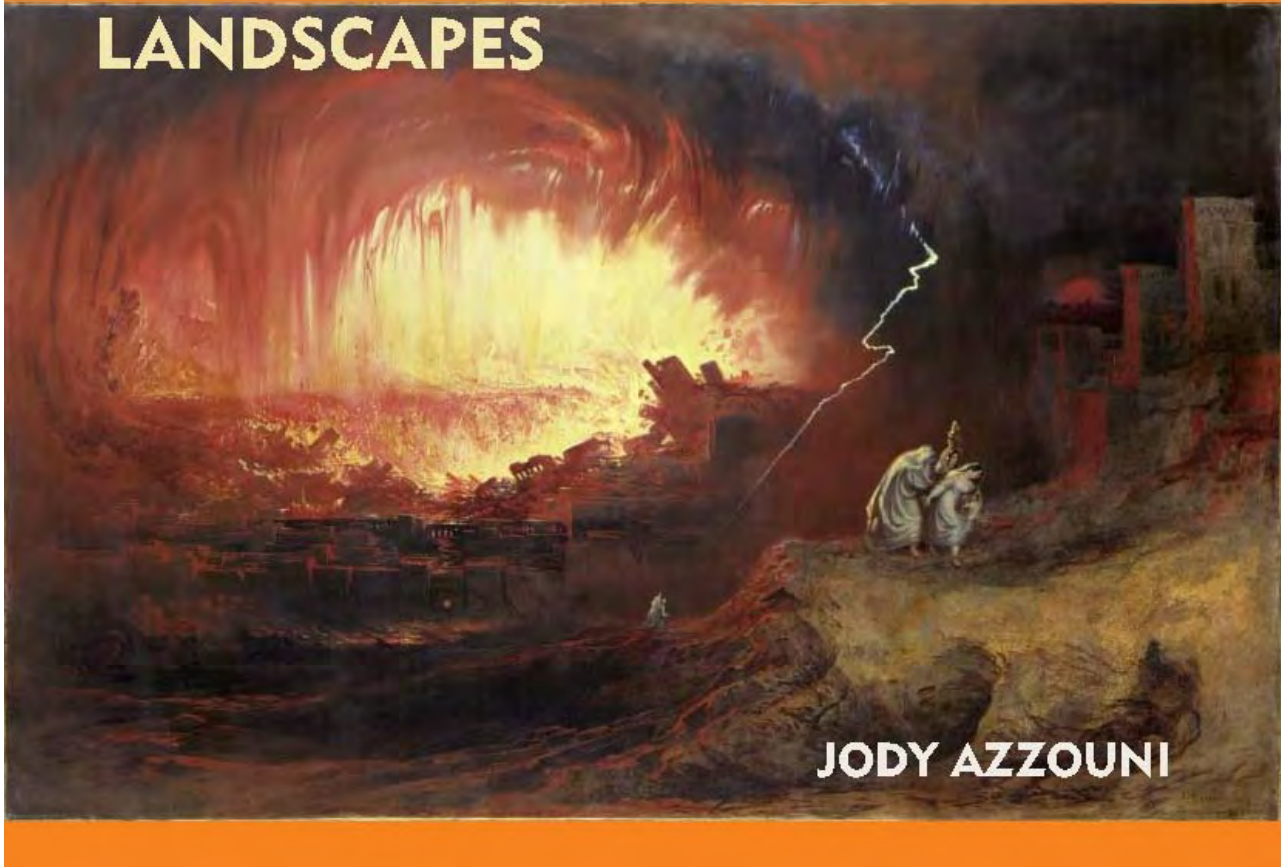
“I don't think I'm any smarter,” Odin says,
the throbbing in his esophagus
finally subsiding.

Mimir shrugs and counsels patience.
Sure enough, at dawn some days later,
there is dew for the first time.

Those awake at such an hour wonder
what large thing has spent the night crying.
And some centuries hence, Christians
will suspect dew-drops are angel-eggs.
But for Odin they are new eyes,
and he sees the dawn
from everywhere at once.

— From *The Lust for Blueprints*,
(The Poet's Press, 1999).

HEREAFTER LANDSCAPES



Cover of Jody Azzouni's *Hereafter Landscapes*. Cover design by Brett Rutherford, incorporating the apocalyptic art of John Martin.

MOIRA BAILIS (1921-2013)

Friend (At the Bay)

Farewell, swift light!
Our summers are too short.
— Baudelaire

I come to seek an
old identity,
where the sea sighs
eternal whispering,
where gulls wheel and wail
in a sad blue sky
like fading flowers
along the Green Walk.

Seduced by nostalgia,
returning again and again
to where we used to walk,
I am survivor and mourner
standing above the cliffs
which fall in granite folds
to the Irish Sea.

These breaking waves —
a slow, insistent susurrant,
a metaphor underscoring time.
Here we walked quoting Baudelaire
who wrote of the poet's special calling,
of his suffering which gives
the creative urge
a sharper edge.

Mentor, teacher, friend,
remembering you
who set me on a path of creativity,
I write poems,
simple verses saying
like the sigh of the sea
there is a continuum.

In the Bay
a foghorn begins to moan,
mist curdles among the trees,
the birds are silent.

Walking away through the woods
I carry with me
a sense of your presence
of all that has passed
into the air
into the rain
into eternity.

On Seeing Maud Gonne, Dublin 1942

On the pavements, narrow Georgian houses
cast long summer shadows.
In the chestnut trees behind Trinity railings
a blackbird sang,
on an afternoon in war-time,
long ago.

In the green glass
of Johnston's window
I saw your reflection,
like a black swan on a lake,
moving slowly through the Dublin crowd,
a legend in mourning.

In age your beauty dimmed,
your melancholy gaze turned inward.
Were you remembering old dreams
or lamenting Yeats' Ireland?

You walked away towards Grafton Street.
Above you, gray gulls
keening in the pale sunlight,
sailed over the roof-tops
to Stephen's Green.

Wir hatten uns gefürchtet . . .

We were afraid . . .

I can hardly remember
what my Austrian friend
told me
that autumn day
long ago
in the sad city
of Graz.

I asked him
“When the Jews were banned
from the towns
and the synagogues
stood silent and empty
did you feel pity
or maybe shame?”

I think he told me,
“No, it did not
concern us,
we wanted only
to survive.
*Wir hatten uns
gefürchtet.*”

I thought
of those others
on the trains going east
believing, somehow,
it was also only
a matter
of surviving.

And the tall chimney
beckoned
on the horizon.

Heritage

In this museum at Cullowhee
I see a people’s heritage:
an old map, sea routes
of Scots-Irish migration,
a rusty plough,
a spinning wheel —
symbols of men and women
who made these mountains home.

In the dimly-lit room
of a thatched cottage
hauled stone by stone
from Ulster:
simple plates, tin spoons,
a grate with its stack of peat —
artifacts in a candlelit tomb.

I look at the small objects,
in their simplicity
beautiful as children’s faces.
A woman comes up to me;
Hearing me speak she asks,
Do you know Derry, Armagh, Portadown?
In her voice an exile’s longing
a need to say the names.

A wind comes up as we speak
and the names blow away from us
across the valley,
vanish like the ghosts
of settlers in the blue mists
of the Smoky Mountains.

Dreamers

“In their dreams there
drifted canoes with great
white wings like giant birds.”
— 16th Century Micmac vision

As the ships weighed anchor
near the end of summer,
they had to believe
everything was possible.
There was no going back.

Somber woods a rampart
beyond the shore.
In the cove
the simple sand
without footprints.

In the hot evening
the women struck camp,
spoke softly.
They must have feared
the immense silence.

The men, black clad,
shouldered muskets.
Clouds of mosquitoes
hummed a terrifying chorus,
an enormous moon
rose over the ocean.

The voyagers' prayers
sonorous on the evening air
drifted from this small space
on the edge
of the continent.

Deep in the woods
the dreamers
who had foretold
“canoes with white wings
like giant birds
floating towards the shore”
watched the winking campfires.

Peering into the dark
they both could not
have imagined
what they had never seen,
other than in dreams.

Alone in the Cemetery

Between the sides of tombs
a rabbit runs as
the breeze from the west
stirs the maples,
sets flags dancing.
The air is full of murmurs.

On O'Grady's tomb
Born County Clare, Ireland
a robin perches,
flies off on my approach
draws a thread of sweet music
down the hillside.

I fancy I hear
O'Grady's Irish brogue
on the wind
and Mary Moore's from Athenry
and the Polish mazurkas
of the Wieniawskis.

Marcantonio's canzone
seems to soar in the air,
lyrical chansons
from the Renans of France,
Lieder from the Hausmanns.

The voices of Fort Lee's
“glorious resurrected”
join in triumphant
Hallelujahs.
Surrounded by their presence
I start singing
alone
in the cemetery.

— From *The Antidote to Prejudice*
(The Poet's Press, 2011).

It Has to Do with Seeing

In memory of Charlie Brady

With an old friend
in a Dublin gallery,
I looked at a painting
sent from America —
a small cloud
in a blue sky
like a white sail
on a sapphire sea.

My obstinate friend
refused to believe
a single cloud
could float alone
in an expanse of
eternal blue.
Swore he had never
seen such a thing.

We argued, pro and con,
artistic imagination,
the perception of reality.
I told him what O'Keefe said:
"Nobody sees a flower, really.
It is so small and to see
takes time." I thought
'Nobody sees a little cloud.'

But this young painter
captured one forever,
caused my friend
to consider the possibility
that painting simply
has to do with seeing
and everything, however small,
has its own importance.

Oracle

For my Father (1896-1955)

I remember you
walking in the garden
at Gurrawn
looking at the sky.

I asked you,
"How do you foretell rain?"
You told me,
"When a soft wind blows
from the West
and the mountains look close
we'll have rain."

And they came
those quick Irish showers,
pattering on the roof-tops,
a rush of sound
passing out to sea,
a blackbird singing
in the ash trees.

I think of the
moment we shared,
when you turned to me,
your gentle voice saying,
"Now, that's beauty,
isn't it?"

For Emily Brontë

A dry cough
sounds on the stairs
halting footsteps
along the flagged passage.
The candle's flicker
casts a thin shadow
on the white walls.
The dogs' dinner
readied —
the task must be done
before the clock
strikes six.
The wind skirls
off the moors.
Windows rattle.
In a quiet corner
the spider
weaves its net
undisturbed
by the dying candlelight.
Down the narrow passage
a door
is gently closed.

Just Like Jane

I take a book
from my bookcase
out scrambles
the thinnest spider,
pale yellow.
Slips across *Sanditon*
hesitates at *Persuasion*
races to *Emma*
disappears behind
Sense and Sensibility.

Between pages sixteen
and seventeen
of *Mansfield Park*
lies a crushed moth,
leaf-thin,
silver wings
gracefully folded
in a humble
prayerful position.

I have no doubt
that the deceased
was part of
the spider's
winter larder.
Was it
just like Jane —
deliciously simple
or simply delicious?

Bird and the Sea

On a painting by Morris Graves
at the Montclair Art Museum, NJ

The gaze poignant.
Big, wistful eyes brood
in an unwinking stare.
The beak fierce
but this bird is vulnerable,
it has no protection
against the elemental rage
of the sinister sea.

It crouches, waiting,
talons grasping a rock
by the moonlit winter waters.
The paint strokes
hint at a turbulence hidden,
menacing.

What was Graves saying?
Is his bird a symbol
of us all, part of a mystery
of fragile, transient life
standing at the edge of darkness
as clouds obscure the moon?



Autumn Evening (November)

It is that hour of evening
when the light
drifts through the trees
and turns the last leaves bright.

Darting starlings
cross the sky
in winnowed flocks
seagulls give their last lamenting cry.

In a long, slow fugue
the waning day
clouds the pale sky
in sere and fragile grey.

Over the trees, now black
against a frigid blue
the farthest clouds
reflect dazzling hue.

Haunting the west
a strip of yellow light,
in the cold east, Venus,
a single winking star, is bright.

The wheel has turned full circle
and the darkening east
holds a thin moon
tip-tilted where the clouds are least.

So ends the evening
and the stars are bright,
and in the west the thinnest line
where day has turned to night.

— From *It Has to Do With Seeing*
(The Poet's Press, 2011).

JOEL BARLOW (1754-1812)

Cruelty

From Book VI of The Columbiad, 1809

Cold-blooded Cruelty, first fiend of hell,
Ah think no more with savage hordes to dwell;
Quit the Caribian¹ tribes who eat their slain,
Fly that grim gang, the Inquisitors of Spain,
Boast not thy deeds in Moloch's shrines of old,
Leave Barbary's pirates to their blood-bought gold,
Let Holland steal her victims, force them o'er
To toils and death on Java's morbid shore;
Some cloak, some color all these crimes may plead;
'T is avarice, passion, blind religion's deed;
But Britons here, in this fraternal broil,
Grave, cool, deliberate in thy service toil.
Far from the nation's eye, whose nobler soul
Their wars would humanize, their pride control,
They lose the lessons that her laws impart,
And change the British for the brutal heart.
Fired by no passion, madden'd by no zeal,
No priest, no Plutus bids them not to feel;
Unpaid, gratuitous, on torture bent,
Their sport is death, their pastime to torment;
All other gods they scorn, but bow the knee,
And curb, well pleased, O Cruelty, to thee.²

Come then, curst goddess, where thy votaries reign,
Inhale their incense from the land and main;
Come to New York, their conquering arms to greet,
Brood o'er their camp and breathe along their fleet;
The brother chiefs of Howe's illustrious name
Demand thy labors to complete their fame.
What shrieks of agony thy praises sound!
What grateless dungeons groan beneath the ground!
See the black Prison Ship's expanding womb
Impested thousands, quick and dead, entomb.
Barks after barks the captured seamen bear,
Transboard and lodge thy silent victims there;
A hundred scows, from all the neighboring shore,
Spread the dull sail and ply the constant oar,
Waft wrecks of armies from the well fought field,
And famisht garrisons who bravely yield;
They mount the hulk, and, cramm'd within the cave,
Hail their last house, their living, floating grave.

¹ *Caribian*, i.e., Caribbean.

² This section of Barlow's American history epic, *The Columbiad*, employs the classic device of personification. In depicting the savage treatment of American prisoners of war aboard British prison ships in New York harbor during the American Revolution, Barlow makes his Cruelty figure a cross between a mythological Fury and the Grim Reaper. It is a curious mixture of the classical and the Gothic, but all in keeping with neoclassical concepts of the Sublime.

She comes, the Fiend! her grinning jaws expand,
 Her brazen eyes cast lightning o'er the strand,
 Her wings like thunder-clouds the welkin sweep,
 Brush the tall spires and shade the shuddering deep;
 She gains the deck, displays her wonted store,
 Her cords and scourges wet with prisoners' gore;
 Gripes, pincers, thumb-screws spread beneath her feet,
 Slow poisonous drugs and loads of putrid meat;
 Disease hangs drizzling from her slimy locks,
 And hot contagion issues from her box.
 O'er the closed hatches ere she takes her place,
 She moves the massy planks a little space,
 Opes a small passage to the cries below,
 That feast her soul on messages of woe;
 There sits with gaping ear and changeless eye,
 Drinks every groan and treasures every sigh,
 Sustains the faint, their miseries to prolong,
 Revives the dying and unnerves the strong.
 But as the infected mass resign their breath.
 She keeps with joy the register of death.
 As tost thro' portholes from the encumber'd cave,
 Corpse after corpse fall dashing in the wave;
 Corpse after corpse, for days and months and years,
 The tide bears off, and still its current clears;
 At last, o'erloaded with the putrid gore,
 The slime-clad waters thicken round the shore.
 Green Ocean's self, that oft his wave renews,
 That drinks whole fleets with all their battling crews,
 That laves, that purifies the earth and sky,
 Yet ne'er before resign'd his natural dye,
 Here purples, blushes for the race he bore
 To rob and ravage this unconquer'd shore;
 The scaly nations, as they travel by,
 Catch the contagion, sicken, gasp and die.



— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
 Volume 1, (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poets's Press, 2015).

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821-1867)

The Dance of Death

Carrying bouquet, and handkerchief, and gloves,
Proud of her height as when she lived, she moves
With all the careless and high-stepping grace,
And the extravagant courtesan's thin face.

Was slimmer waist e'er in a ball-room wooed?
Her floating robe, in royal amplitude,
Falls in deep folds around a dry foot, shod
With a bright flower-like shoe that gems the sod.

The swarms that hum about her collar-bones
As the lascivious streams caress the stones,
Conceal from every scornful jest that flies,
Her gloomy beauty; and her fathomless eyes

Are made of shade and void; with flowery sprays
Her skull is wreathed artistically, and sways,
Feeble and weak, on her frail vertebrae.
O charm of nothing decked in folly! They

Who laugh and name you a Caricature,
They see not, they whom flesh and blood allure,
The nameless grace of every bleached, bare bone,
That is most dear to me, tall skeleton!

Come you to trouble with your potent sneer
The feast of Life! or are you driven here,
To Pleasure's Sabbath, by dead lusts that stir
And goad your moving corpse on with a spur?

Or do you hope, when sing the violins,
And the pale candle-flame lights up our sins,
To drive some mocking nightmare far apart,
And cool the flame hell lighted in your heart?

Fathomless well of fault and foolishness!
Eternal alembic of antique distress!
Still o'er the curved, white trellis of your sides
The sateless, wandering serpent curls and glides.

And truth to tell, I fear lest you should find,
Among us here, no lover to your mind;
Which of these hearts beat for the smile you gave?
The charms of horror please none but the brave.

Your eyes' black gulf, where awful broodings stir,
Brings giddiness; the prudent reveler
Sees, while a horror grips him from beneath,
The eternal smile of thirty-two white teeth.

For he who has not folded in his arms
A skeleton, nor fed on graveyard charms,
Recks not of furbelow,¹ or paint, or scent,
When Horror comes the way that Beauty went.

O irresistible, with fleshless face,
Say to these dancers in their dazzled race:
“Proud lovers with the paint above your bones,
Ye shall taste death, musk scented skeletons!

“Withered Antinoüs, dandies with plump faces,
Ye varnished cadavers, and grey Lovelaces,
Ye go to lands unknown and void of breath,
Drawn by the rumour of the Dance of Death.

“From Seine's cold quays to Ganges' burning stream,
The mortal troupes dance onward in a dream;
They do not see, within the opened sky,
The Angel's sinister trumpet raised on high.

“In every clime and under every sun,
Death laughs at ye, mad mortals, as ye run;
And oft perfumes herself with myrrh, like ye
And mingles with your madness, irony!”

Translator unspecified, from *The Poems and Prose Poems of Charles Baudelaire*.
James Huneker, ed. New York: Brentano's. 1919.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Volume 1*,
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2015).

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (1803-1849)

A Subterranean City

I followed once a fleet and mighty serpent
Into a cavern in a mountain's side;
And, wading many lakes, descending gulfs,
At last I reached the ruins of a city,
Built not like ours but of another world,
As if the aged earth had loved in youth
The mightiest city of a perished planet,
And kept the image of it in her heart,
So dream-like, shadowy, and spectral was it.
Nought seemed alive there, and the bony dead
Were of another world the skeletons.
The mammoth, ribbed like to an arched cathedral,
Lay there, and ruins of great creatures else
More like a shipwrecked fleet, too vast they seemed
For all the life that is to animate:
And vegetable rocks, tall sculptured palms,
Pines grown, not hewn, in stone; and giant ferns,
Whose earthquake-shaken leaves bore graves for nests.

The Old Ghost

Over the water an old ghost strode
To a churchyard on the shore,
And over him the waters had flowed
A thousand years or more,
And pale and wan and weary
Looked never a sprite as he;
For it's lonely and it's dreary
The ghost of a body to be
That has mouldered away in the sea.
Over the billows the old ghost stepped,
And the winds in mockery sung;
For the bodiless ghost would fain have wept
Over the maiden that lay so young
'Mong the thistles and toadstools so hoary.
And he begged of the waves a tear,
But they shook upwards their moonlight glory,
And the shark looked on with a sneer
At his yearning desire and agony.

—From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

There are few facts about this ignored and largely neglected poet, who committed suicide using the exotic poison curare. Beddoes' manuscripts found their way to Robert Browning in the 1870s, and were the basis of a two-volume edition in 1890, which makes Beddoes as much a Victorian product, via rediscovery, as a Romantic figure. Beddoes' great passions were Shelley, Elizabethan drama, and German literature, which he studied at Göttingen. After several decades in Germany, he acquired a medical degree, and his medical knowledge combined with his scholarship tinge his Gothic poems with a piquant gruesomeness. He grew up in a medical household: his father was a radical, and the discoverer of "laughing gas." Their home was frequented by poets Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. A child who played among poets, and amid dissected cadavers, might be expected to turn out to be a singular person.

GUSTAVO ADOLFO BÉQUER (1836-1870)

The vast majority of Spanish verse of the 19th century is conventional in theme and outlook. Romantics are rare, and the Gothic influence rarer still. The poet Gustavo Adolfo B  quer was born in Seville, Spain. He struggled in Madrid as an art student, and was married unhappily. His *Obras*, published posthumously in Madrid in 1871, show him as a writer influenced greatly by Hoffmann and Heine. He is regarded by some critics as the founder of the modern Spanish school of poetry. Although this is a poem of mourning without overt supernatural elements, it counts as Gothic for its Poe-like mood and its evocation of death-bed, church and tomb.

They Closed Her Eyes

They closed her eyes
That were still open;
They hid her face
With a white linen,
And, some sobbing
Others in silence,
From the sad bedroom
All came away.

The nightlight in a dish
Burned on the floor;
It threw on the wall
The bed's shadow,
And in that shadow
One saw sometime
Drawn in sharp line
The body's shape.

The dawn appeared.
At its first whiteness
With its thousand noises
The town awoke.
Before that contrast
Of light and darkness,
Of life and strangeness
I thought a moment.
My God, how lonely
The dead are!

On the shoulders of men
To church they bore her,
And in a chapel
They left her bier.

There they surrounded
Her pale body
With yellow candles
And black stuffs.

At the last stroke
Of the ringing for the Souls,
An old crone finished
Her last prayers.
She crossed the narrow nave,
The doors moaned,
And the holy place
Remained deserted.

From a clock one heard
The measured ticking,
And from a candle
The guttering.
All things there
Were so dark and mournful,
So cold and rigid,
That I thought a moment:
My God, how lonely
The dead are!

From the high belfry
The tongue of iron
Clanged, giving out
A last farewell
Cr  pe on their clothes,
Her friends and kindred
Passed in a line
In homage to her.

In the last vault
Dark and narrow,
The pick-axe opened
A niche at one end;
They laid her away there.

Soon they bricked the place up,
And with a gesture
Bade grief farewell.
Pickaxe on shoulder
The gravedigger,
Singing between his teeth,
Passed out of sight.

The night came down,
It was all silent.
Alone in the darkness
I thought a moment —
My God, how lonely
The dead are!

In the dark nights
Of bitter winter,
When the wind makes
The rafter creak,
When the violent rain
Lashes the windows,
Lonely I remember
That poor girl.

There falls the rain
With its noise eternal,
There the north-wind
Fights with the rain.
Stretched in the hollow
Of the damp bricks,
Perhaps her bones
Freeze with the cold.
Does the dust return to dust?
Does the soul fly to heaven?
Or is all vile matter,
Rottenness, filthiness?
I know not, but
There is something — something
Something which gives me
Loathing, terror, —

To leave the dead
So alone, so wretched.

Translated by John Masefield.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800, Supplement 1* (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021).

HAKIM BEY (PETER LAMBORN WILSON) (1945-2022)

Poetic Terrorism

WEIRD DANCING IN all-night computer-banking lobbies. Unauthorized pyrotechnic displays. Land-art, earth-works as bizarre alien artifacts strewn in State Parks. Burglarize houses but instead of stealing, leave Poetic-Terrorist objects. Kidnap someone & make them happy. Pick someone at random & convince them they're the heir to an enormous, useless & amazing fortune — say 5000 square miles of Antarctica, or an aging circus elephant, or an orphanage in Bombay, or a collection of alchemical mss. Later they will come to realize that for a few moments they believed in something extraordinary, & will perhaps be driven as a result to seek out some more intense mode of existence.

Bolt up brass commemorative plaques in places (public or private) where you have experienced a revelation or had a particularly fulfilling sexual experience, etc.

Go naked for a sign.

Organize a strike in your school or workplace on the grounds that it does not satisfy your need for indolence & spiritual beauty.

Graffiti-art loaned some grace to ugly subways & rigid public monuments — PT-art can also be created for public places: poems scrawled in courthouse lavatories, small fetishes abandoned in parks & restaurants, xerox-art under windshield-wipers of parked cars, Big Character Slogans pasted on playground walls, anonymous letters mailed to random or chosen recipients (mail fraud), pirate radio transmissions, wet cement...

The audience reaction or aesthetic-shock produced by PT ought to be at least as strong as the emotion of terror — powerful disgust, sexual arousal, superstitious awe, sudden intuitive breakthrough, dada-esque angst — no matter whether the PT is aimed at one person or many, no matter whether it is "signed" or anonymous, if it does not change someone's life (aside from the artist) it fails.

PT is an act in a Theater of Cruelty which has no stage, no rows of seats, no tickets & no walls. In order to work at all, PT must categorically be divorced from all conventional structures for art consumption (galleries, publications, media). Even the guerrilla Situationist tactics of street theater are perhaps too well known & expected now.

An exquisite seduction carried out not only in the cause of mutual satisfaction but also as a conscious act in a deliberately beautiful life — may be the ultimate PT. The PTerrorist behaves like a confidence-trickster whose aim is not money but CHANGE.

Don't do PT for other artists, do it for people who will not realize (at least for a few moments) that what you have done is art. Avoid recognizable art-categories, avoid politics, don't stick around to argue, don't be sentimental; be ruthless, take risks, vandalize only what must be defaced, do something children will remember all their lives — but don't be spontaneous unless the PT Muse has possessed you.

Dress up. Leave a false name. Be legendary. The best PT is against the law, but don't get caught. Art as crime; crime as art.

Paganism

CONSTELLATIONS BY WHICH to steer the barque of the soul. "If the moslem understood Islam he would become an idol-worshipper." — Mahmud Shabestari Eleggia, ugly opener of doors with a hook in his head & cowrie shells for eyes, black santeria cigar & glass of rum — same as Ganesh, elephant-head fat boy of Beginnings who rides a mouse. The organ which senses the numinous atrophies with the senses. Those who cannot feel baraka cannot know the caress of the world.

Hermes Poimandres taught the animation of eidolons, the magic in-dwelling of icons by spirits — but those who cannot perform this rite on themselves & on the whole palpable fabric of material being will inherit only blues, rubbish, decay.

The pagan body becomes a Court of Angels who all perceive this place — this very grove — as paradise ("If there is a paradise, surely it is here!" — inscription on a Mughal garden gate)..

But ontological anarchism is too paleolithic for eschatology — things are real, sorcery works, bush-spirits one with the Imagination, death an unpleasant vagueness — the plot of Ovid's Metamorphoses — an epic of mutability. The personal mythscape.

Paganism has not yet invented laws — only virtues. No priestcraft, no theology or metaphysics or morality — but a universal shamanism in which no one attains real humanity without a vision.

Food money sex sleep sun sand & sinsemilla — love truth peace freedom & justice. Beauty. Dionysus

the drunk boy on a panther — rank adolescent sweat — Pan goatman slogs through the solid earth up to his waist as if it were the sea, his skin crusted with moss & lichen — Eros multiplies himself into a dozen pastoral naked Iowa farm boys with muddy feet & pond-scum on their thighs.

Raven, the potlatch trickster, sometimes a boy, old woman, bird who stole the Moon, pine needles floating on a pond, Heckle/Jeckle totempole-head, chorus-line of crows with silver eyes dancing on the woodpile — same as Semar the hunchback albino hermaphrodite shadow-puppet patron of the Javanese revolution.

Yemaya, bluestar sea-goddess & patroness of queers — same as Tara, bluegrey aspect of Kali, necklace of skulls, dancing on Shiva's stiff lingam, licking monsoon clouds with her yard-long tongue — same as Loro Kidul, jasper-green Javanese sea-goddess who bestows the power of invulnerability on sultans by tantrik intercourse in magic towers & caves.

From one point of view ontological anarchism is extremely bare, stripped of all qualities & possessions, poor as CHAOS itself — but from another point of view it pullulates with baroqueness like the Fucking-Temples of Kathmandu or an alchemical emblem book — it sprawls on its divan eating loukoum & entertaining heretical notions, one hand inside its baggy trousers.

The hulls of its pirate ships are lacquered black, the lateen sails are red, black banners with the device of a winged hourglass.

A South China Sea of the mind, off a jungle-flat coast of palms, rotten gold temples to unknown bestial gods, island after island, the breeze like wet yellow silk on naked skin, navigating by pantheistic stars, hierophany on hierophany, light upon light against the luminous & chaotic dark.

Sorcery

THE UNIVERSE WANTS to play. Those who refuse out of dry spiritual greed & choose pure contemplation forfeit their humanity — those who refuse out of dull anguish, those who hesitate, lose their chance at divinity — those who mold themselves blind masks of Ideas & thrash around seeking some proof of their own solidity end by seeing out of dead men's eyes.

Sorcery: the systematic cultivation of enhanced consciousness or non-ordinary awareness & its deployment in the world of deeds & objects to bring about desired results.

The incremental openings of perception gradually banish the false selves, our cacophonous ghosts — the “black magic” of envy & vendetta backfires because Desire cannot be forced. Where our knowledge of

beauty harmonizes with the *ludus naturae*, sorcery begins.

No, not spoon-bending or horoscopy, not the Golden Dawn or make-believe shamanism, astral projection or the Satanic Mass — if it's mumbo jumbo you want go for the real stuff, banking, politics, social science — not that weak blavatskian crap.

Sorcery works at creating around itself a psychic/physical space or openings into a space of untrammelled expression — the metamorphosis of quotidian place into angelic sphere. This involves the manipulation of symbols (which are also things) & of people (who are also symbolic) — the archetypes supply a vocabulary for this process & therefore are treated as if they were both real & unreal, like words. Imaginal Yoga.

The sorcerer is a Simple Realist: the world is real — but then so must consciousness be real since its effects are so tangible. The dullard finds even wine tasteless but the sorcerer can be intoxicated by the mere sight of water. Quality of perception defines the world of intoxication — but to sustain it & expand it to include others demands activity of a certain kind — sorcery. Sorcery breaks no law of nature because there is no Natural Law, only the spontaneity of *natura naturans*, the tao. Sorcery violates laws which seek to chain this flow — priests, kings, hierophants, mystics, scientists & shopkeepers all brand the sorcerer enemy for threatening the power of their charade, the tensile strength of their illusory web.

A poem can act as a spell & vice versa — but sorcery refuses to be a metaphor for mere literature — it insists that symbols must cause events as well as private epiphanies. It is not a critique but a re-making. It rejects all eschatology & metaphysics of removal, all bleary nostalgia & strident futurismo, in favor of a paroxysm or seizure of presence.

Incense & crystal, dagger & sword, wand, robes, rum, cigars, candles, herbs like dried dreams — the virgin boy staring into a bowl of ink — wine & ganja, meat, yantras & gestures — rituals of pleasure, the garden of houris & sakis — the sorcerer climbs these snakes & ladders to a moment which is fully saturated with its own color, where mountains are mountains & trees are trees, where the body becomes all time, the beloved all space.

The tactics of ontological anarchism are rooted in this secret Art — the goals of ontological anarchism appear in its flowering. Chaos hexes its enemies & rewards its devotees ... this strange yellowing pamphlet, pseudonymous & dust-stained, reveals all ... send away for one split second of eternity.

Advertisement

What this tells you is not prose. It may be pinned to the board but it's still alive & wriggling. It does not want to seduce you unless you're extremely young & good-looking (enclose recent photo).

Hakim Bey lives in a seedy Chinese hotel where the proprietor nods out over newspaper & scratchy broadcasts of Peking Opera. The ceiling fan turns like a sluggish dervish — sweat falls on the page — the poet's kaftan is rusty, his ovals spill ash on the rug — his monologues seem disjointed & slightly sinister — outside shuttered windows the barrio fades into palmtrees, the naive blue ocean, the philosophy of tropicalismo.

Along a highway somewhere east of Baltimore you pass an Airstream trailer with a big sign on the lawn SPIRITUAL READINGS & the image of a crude black hand on a red background. Inside you notice a display of dream-books, numbers-books, pamphlets on Hoodoo and Santeria, dusty old nudist magazines, a pile of Boy's Life, treatises on fighting-cocks...& this book, Chaos. Like words spoken in a dream, porten-

tous, evanescent, changing into perfumes, birds, colors, forgotten music.

This book distances itself by a certain impassibility of surface, almost a glassiness. It doesn't wag its tail & it doesn't snarl but it bites & humps the furniture. It doesn't have an ISBN number & it doesn't want you for a disciple but it might kidnap your children.

This book is nervous like coffee or malaria — it sets up a network of cut-outs & safe drops between itself & its readers — but it's so baldfaced & literal-minded it practically encodes itself — it smokes itself into a stupor.

A mask, an automythology, a map without place-names — stiff as an egyptian wallpainting nevertheless it reaches to caress someone's face — & suddenly finds itself out in the street, in a body, embodied in light, walking, awake, almost satisfied.

— From *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*, first published by Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press in 1985. This book went through several printings in Weehawken NJ and again after the press moved to Providence RI.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889)

The Pied Piper of Hamelin: A Child's Story

Written for, and inscribed to, W. M. the Younger.

I.

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,¹
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

II.

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup
from the cooks' own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

III.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
" 'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation — shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine

¹ *Hamelin, Hanover, Brunswick, Weser.* The locales in this narrative poem are all real, and are accurately portrayed. The medieval legend of *Der Rattenfänger von Hamelin* had already been told by The Brothers Grimm, and in a poem by Goethe. The actual incident did not involve rats, but concerned the disappearance of 130 children. According to the Lueneberg manuscript (1440-50), "In the year 1284, on the day of Sts. John and Paul, on June 26. By a piper, clothed in many kinds of colors, 130 children born in Hamelin were led away, and lost at the place of execution (Calverie) near the *koppen* [mountain]." Speculation about the actual fate of the children ranges from their being removed because of plague, to their being taken away on one of the Crusades (this explanation was offered by Gottfried Leibniz).

What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV.

An hour they sate in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain —
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"

V.

"Come in!" — the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smile went out and in;
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,

Starting up at the Trump of Doom's² tone,
Had walked this way from his painted
tombstone!"

VI.

He advanced to the council-table:
And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers they noticed were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon his pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
"Yet," said he, "poor Piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats,
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampyre-bats:
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders?"
"One? fifty thousand!" — was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII.

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,

² *Trump of Doom*. The trumpet call for The Last Judgement.

Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives —
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser
Wherein all plunged and perished!
— Save one who, stout as Julius Ceasar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary:
Which was, "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe:
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks:
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice!
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!
— I found the Weser rolling o'er me.'"

VIII.

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles,
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!" — when suddenly up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, "First, if you please,
my thousand guilders!"

IX.

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor
 with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something to drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X.

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Baghdad, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI.

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d' ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII.

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight came;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
 Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling,
that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds jostling at pitching
 and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes
 clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues
 chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley
 is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls.
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and
laughter.

XIII.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by.
— Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced
 and the children followed,



*Earliest known depiction of the Piper, from a painted church window in Hamelin.
The mountain and its execution spot are shown at right; the walled town with the Weser River,
and the Piper in a boat summoning the rats into the river, at center.*

And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain side shut fast.
Did I say, all? No; One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say, —
“It’s dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can’t forget that I’m bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles’ wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!”

XIV.

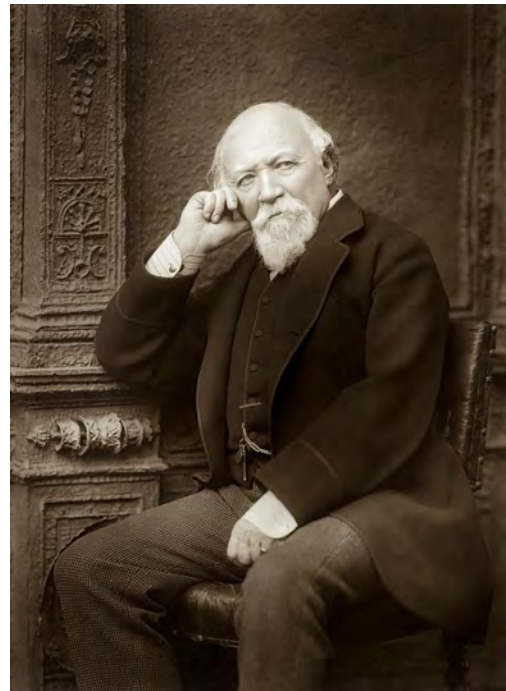
Alas, alas for Hamelin!
There came into many a burgher’s pate
A text which says that Heaven’s gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle’s eye takes a camel in!
The Mayor sent East, West, North, and South,
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men’s lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart’s content,
If he’d only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw ’twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
“And so long after what happened here
On the Twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:”
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children’s last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper’s Street —
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison

Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

XV.

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men — especially pipers!
And, whether they pipe us free from rats
or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep
our promise!



— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2015).

GOTTFRIED AUGUST BÜRGER (1747-1794)

This was, in its time, the most famous poem in Europe. Gottfried Augustus Bürger's original poem was adapted by Sir Walter Scott as "William and Helen" and, in its best-loved English version, by William Taylor of Norwich, as "Lenora," published in 1796. Taylor's version is in Volume 2 of *Tales of Wonder*. Matthew Gregory Lewis's poem, "Alonzo the Brave," is a variant of this theme, and is found in Volume 1 of *Tales of Wonder*.

The following translation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, from 1844 (not published until 1900) gives this famous ballad new life in the midst of the Pre-Raphaelites, and confirms the never-ending interest in the theme of skeleton-abduction on horseback.

Lenore

Translated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Up rose Lenore¹ as the red morn wore,
From weary visions starting;
"Art faithless, William, or, William, art dead?
'Tis long since thy departing."

For he, with Frederick's men of might,
In fair Prague waged the uncertain fight;
Nor once had he writ in the hurry of war.
And sad was the true heart that sickened afar.

The Empress and the King,
With ceaseless quarrel tired,
At length relaxed the stubborn hate
Which rivalry inspired:

And the martial throng, with laugh and song,
Spoke of their homes as they rode along.
And clank, clank, clank! came every rank.
With the trumpet-sound that rose and sank.

And here and there and everywhere,
Along the swarming ways,
Went old man and boy, with the music of joy,
On the gallant bands to gaze;

And the young child shouted to spy the vaward,
And trembling and blushing the bride
 pressed forward:
But ah! for the sweet lips of Lenore
The kiss and the greeting are vanished and o'er.

¹ Rossetti's note: "I have retained the German version of the heroine's name; thinking it more suited to the metre than the lengthy English word "Leonora," — and by far less displeasing to the ear than the stunted and ugly abbreviation, "Leonor."

From man to man all wildly she ran
With a swift and searching eye;
But she felt alone in the mighty mass,
As it crushed and crowded by:

On hurried the troop — a gladsome group —
And proudly the tall plumes wave and droop:
She tore her hair and she turned her round,
And madly she dashed her against the ground.

Her mother clasped her tenderly
With soothing words and mild:
"My child, may God look down on thee,—
God comfort thee, my child."—

"Oh! mother, mother! gone is gone!
I reckon no more how the world runs on:
What pity to me does God impart?
Woe, woe, woe! for my heavy heart!" —

"Help, Heaven, help and favor her!
Child, utter an *Ave Marie!*
Wise and great are the doings of God;
He loves and pities thee." —

"Out, mother, out, on the empty lie!
Doth he heed my despair, — doth he list
 to my cry?

What boots it now to hope or to pray?
The night is come, — there is no more day." —
"Help, Heaven, help! who knows the Father
Knows surely that he loves his child:
The bread and the wine from the hand divine
Shall make thy tempered grief less wild." —

“Oh! mother, dear mother! the wine
and the bread
Will not soften the anguish that bows down
my head;
For bread and for wine it will yet be as late
That his cold corpse creeps
from the grim grave’s gate.” —

“What if the traitor’s false faith failed,
By sweet temptation tried, —
What if in distant Hungary
He clasp another bride?

“Despise the fickle fool, my girl,
Who hath ta’en the pebble
and spurned the pearl:
While soul and body shall hold together
In his perjured heart shall be
stormy weather.” —

“Oh! mother, mother! gone is gone,
And lost will still be lost!
Death, death is the goal of my weary soul,
Crushed and broken and crost.

“Spark of my life! down, down to the tomb:
Die away in the night, die away in the gloom!
What pity to me does God impart?
Woe, woe, woe! for my heavy heart!” —

“Help, Heaven, help, and heed her not,
For her sorrows are strong within;
She knows not the words that her tongue
repeats —
Oh! count them not for sin!

“Cease, cease, my child, thy wretchedness,
And think on the promised happiness;
So shall thy mind’s calm ecstasy
Be a hope and a home and a bridegroom
to thee.” —

“My mother, what is happiness?
My mother, what is Hell?
With William is my happiness,—
Without him is my Hell!

“Spark of my life! down, down to the tomb:
Die away in the night, die away in the gloom!
Earth and Heaven, and Heaven and earth.
Reft of William are nothing worth.” —

Thus grief racked and tore the breast of Lenore,
And was busy at her brain;
Thus rose her cry to the Power on high,
To question and arraign:

Wringing her hands and beating her breast —
Tossing and rocking without any rest; —
Till from her light veil the moon shone thro’,
And the stars leapt out on the darkling blue.

But hark to the clatter and the pat pat patter!
Of a horse’s heavy hoof!
How the steel clanks and rings
as the rider springs!
How the echo shouts aloof!

While slightly and lightly the gentle bell
Tingles and jingles softly and well;
And low and clear through the door plank thin
Comes the voice without to the ear within:

“Holla! holla! unlock the gate!
Art waking, my bride, or sleeping?
Is thy heart still free and still faithful to me?
Art laughing, my bride, or weeping?” —

“Oh! wearily, William, I’ve waited for you, —
Woefully watching the long day thro’, —
With a great sorrow sorrowing
For the cruelty of your tarrying.” —
“Till the dead midnight we saddled not, —
I have journeyed far and fast —
And hither I come to carry thee back
Ere the darkness shall be past.” —

— “Ah! rest thee within till the night’s
more calm;
Smooth shall thy couch be, and soft, and warm:
Hark to the winds, how they whistle and rush
Thro’ the twisted twine
of the hawthorn-bush.” —

“Thro’ the hawthorn-bush let whistle
and rush, —
Let whistle, child, let whistle!
Mark the flash fierce and high
of my steed’s bright eye,
And his proud crest’s eager bristle.

“Up, up and away! I must not stay:
Mount swiftly behind me! up, up and away!
An hundred miles must be ridden and sped
Ere we may lie down in the bridal-bed.” —

— “What! ride an hundred miles to-night,
By thy mad fancies driven!
Dost hear the bell with its sullen swell
As it rumbles out eleven?” —

— “Look forth! look forth! the moon
shines bright:
We and the dead gallop fast thro’ the night.
’Tis for a wager I bear thee away
To the nuptial couch ere break of day.” —

— “Ah! where is the chamber, William dear,
And William, where is the bed?” —
— “Far, far from here: still, narrow, and cool;
Plank and bottom and lid.”

“Hast room for me?” — “For me and *thee*;
Up, up to the saddle right speedily!
The wedding-guests are gathered and met,
And the door of the chamber is open set.” —

She busked her well, and into the saddle
She sprang with nimble haste —
And gently smiling, with a sweet beguiling,
Her white hands clasped his waist —

And hurry, hurry! *ring, ring, ring*
To and fro they sway and swing;
Snorting and snuffing they skim the ground,
And the sparks spurt up, and the stones
run round.

Here to the right and there to the left
Flew fields of corn and clover,
And the bridges flashed by to the dazzled eye,
As rattling they thundered over.

“What ails my love? the moon shines bright:
Bravely the dead men ride through the night.
Is my love afraid of the quiet dead?” —
— “Ah! No — let them sleep
in their dusty bed!” —

On the breeze cool and soft what tune
floats aloft,

While the crows wheel overhead? —
Ding dong! ding dong! ’tis the sound,
’tis the song, —

“Room, room for the passing dead!”

Slowly the funeral-train drew near.
Bearing the coffin, bearing the bier;
And the chime of their chaunt was hissing
and harsh,
Like the note of the bull-frog within the marsh.

“You bury your corpse at the dark midnight,
With hymns and bells and wailing —
But I bring home my youthful wife
To a bride-feast’s rich regaling.

“Come, chorister, come with thy choral throng,
And solemnly sing me a marriage-song;
Come, friar, come — let the blessing be spoken,
That the bride and the bridegroom’s sweet rest
be unbroken.”

Died the dirge and vanished the bier:—
Obedient to his call,
Hard hard behind, with a rush like the wind,
Came the long steps’ pattering fall:

And ever further! *ring, ring, ring!*
To and fro they sway and swing;
Snorting and snuffing they skim the ground,
And the sparks spurt up, and the stones
run round.

How flew to the right, how flew to the left,
Trees, mountains in the race!
How to the left, and the right and the left,
Flew town and market-place!

“What ails my love? the moon shines bright:
Bravely the dead men ride thro’ the night.
Is my love afraid of the quiet dead?” —
— “Ah! let them alone in their dusty bed!” —

See, see, see! by the gallows-tree,
As they dance on the wheel’s broad hoop,
Up and down, in the gleam of the moon
Half lost, an airy group —

“Ho! ho! mad mob, come hither amain,
And join in the wake of my rushing train —
Come, dance me a dance, ye dancers thin.
Ere the planks of the marriage-bed close us in.”

And hush, hush, hush! the dreamy rout
Came close with a ghastly bustle,
Like the whirlwind in the hazel-bush,
When it makes the dry leaves rustle:

And faster, faster! *ring, ring, ring!*
To and fro they sway and swing;
Snorting and snuffing they skim the ground,
And the sparks spurt up, and the stones
run round.

How flew the moon high overhead,
In the wild race madly driven!
In and out, how the stars danced about.
And reeled o’er the flashing heaven!

“What ails my love? the moon shines bright:
Bravely the dead men ride thro’ the night.
Is my love afraid of the quiet dead?” —
— “Alas! let them sleep in their dusty bed.”

“Horse, horse! Meseems ’tis the cock’s
shrill note,
And the sand is well nigh spent;
Horse, horse, away! ’tis the break of day —
’Tis the morning air’s sweet scent.

“Finished, finished is our ride:
Room, room for the bridegroom and the bride!
At last, at last, we have reached the spot,
For the speed of the dead man
has slackened not!”

And swiftly up to an iron gate
With reins relaxed they went;
At the rider’s touch the bolts flew back,
And the bars were broken and bent;

The doors were burst with a deafening knell,
And over the white graves they dashed pell mell;
The tombs around looked grassy and grim,
As they glimmered and glanced
in the moonlight dim.

But see! but see! in an eyelid’s beat,
Towhoo! a ghastly wonder!
The horseman’s jerkin, piece by piece,
Dropped off like brittle tinder!

Fleshless and hairless, a naked skull,
The sight of his weird head was horrible;
The lifelike mask was there no more,
And a scythe and a sandglass the skeleton bore.

Loud snorted the horse as he plunged
and reared,
And the sparks were scattered round —
What man shall say if he vanished away
Or sank in the gaping ground?

Groans from the earth and shrieks in the air!
Howling and wailing everywhere!
Half dead, half living, the soul of Lenore
Fought as it never had fought before.

The churchyard troop — a ghostly group —
Close round the dying girl;
Out and in they hurry and spin
Through the dance’s weary whirl:

“Patience, patience, when the heart is breaking;
With thy God there is no question-making:
Of thy body thou art quit and free:
Heaven keep thy soul eternally!”

Translated in 1844 when Rossetti was 16 years old.
From the edition printed in 1900 by Hazell, Watson
& Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800, Supplement 1* (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet’s Press, 2021).

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796)

Tam O'Shanter (Annotated)

[A Tale. "Of Brownys and of Bogillis full is this Buke." — Gawin Douglas]^a

When chapman billies¹ leave the street,
And drouthy² neebors,³ neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An'⁴ folk begin to tak the gate;⁵
While we sit bousing⁶ at the nappy,
An' getting fou⁷ and unco⁸ happy,
We think na⁹ on the lang Scots miles,¹⁰
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,¹¹
That lie between us and our hame,¹²
Whare¹³ sits our sulky sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand¹⁴ honest Tam O'Shanter,
As he frae¹⁵ Ayr ae¹⁶ night did canter,
(Auld¹⁷ Ayr wham¹⁸ ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny¹⁹ lasses.

[a] The subtitle "A Tale" and the Epigraph appear in Burns' Collected Poems, but did not appear in the Lewis volume.

1. *Chapman billies*. Peddler boys.

2. *Drouthy*. Thirsty.

3. *Neebors*. Neighbours.

4. *An'*. And.

5. *Tak the gate*. Return home.

6. *Bousing*. Drinking.

7. *Fou*. Drunk.

8. *Unco*. Very.

9. *Na*. Not.

10. *Lang Scots miles*. Long Scots miles. Scotland had its own mile, based on the distance from the castle to Holyrood Abbey in Edinburgh. Scotland did not adopt English miles until 1824.

11. *Mosses, waters, slaps and styles*. Bogs, waters, pools, and styles. Styles are openings or breaches in fences or stone walls.

12. *Hame*. Home.

13. *Whar*. Where.

14. *Fand*. Found.

15. *Frae*. From.

16. *Ae*. One.

17. *Auld*. Old.

18. *Wham*. Whom.

19. *Bonny, or bonnie*. Handsome.

O Tam! had'st thou but been sae²⁰ wise,
 As ta'en thy ain²¹ wife Kate's advice!
 She tauld²² thee weel?²³ thou was a skellum,²⁴
 A blethering,²⁵ blustering, drunken blellum;²⁶
 That frae November till October,
 Ae market-day thou was nae²⁷ sober;
 That ilka melder,²⁸ wi' the miller,
 Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;²⁹
 That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,³⁰
 The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
 That at the L——d's house,³¹ even on Sunday,
 Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
 She prophesy'd that, late or soon,
 Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon;³²
 Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,³³
 By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.'³⁴

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet³⁵
 To think how mony³⁶ counsels sweet,
 How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
 The husband frae the wife despises!

20. *Sae*. So.

21. *Ain*. Own.

22. *Tauld*. Told.

23. *Weel*. Well.

24. *Skellum*. A rogue.

25. *Blethering*. Talking idly, chattering.

26. *Blellum*. A babbler.

27. *Nae*. Never.

28. *Ilka melder*. Each installment of grain, i.e., Tam gets drunk while waiting for the miller to grind his grain into flour.

29. *Siller*. Money, from silver.

30. *That every naig was ca'd a shoe on*. Every time a horse had a shoe nailed on.

31. *L——d's house*. Lord's House. An act of self-censorship on the part of Lewis's printer. Burns spells it out in his text. Printers in England were wary of blasphemy charges —BR.

32. *Doon*. The River Doon.

33. *Mirk*. Dark.

34. *Alloway Kirk*. The roofless church of Alloway, two miles south of the town of Ayr, abandoned in 1756.

35. *Gars me greet*. Makes me weep.

36. *Mony*. Many.

But to our tale: Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle,³⁷ bleezing³⁸ finely,
Wi' reaming swats,³⁹ that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter⁴⁰ Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;⁴¹
Tarn lo'ed him like a vera brither;⁴²
They had been fou for weeks thegither.⁴³
The night drave⁴⁴ on wi' sangs and clatter;⁴⁵
And ay the ale was growing better:
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours, secret, sweet, and precious:
The souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair'⁴⁶ and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himself amang the nappy,⁴⁷
As bees flee hame wi' lades⁴⁸ o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be bless'd, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a'⁴⁹ the hills o' life victorious!

37. *Ingle*. Fire.

38. *Bleezing*. Burning.

39. *Reaming swats*. Foaming ale.

40. *Souter*. A shoemaker.

41. *Crony, or cronie*. An old acquaintance.

42. *Vera brither*. Very brother.

43. *Thegither*. Together.

44. *Drave*. Passed.

45. *Sangs and clatter*. Songs and discourse.

46. *Rair*. Roar.

47. *Amang the nappy*. Among the ales.

48. *Lades*. Loads.

49. *A'*. All.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white — then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm. —

Nae man can tether⁵⁰ time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun⁵¹ ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic⁵² a night he tacks⁵³ the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn⁵⁴ its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd:
That night a child might understand,
The deil⁵⁵ had business on his hand.

Weel⁵⁶ mounted on his grey mare, Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit⁵⁷ on through dub and mire,⁵⁸
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles⁵⁹ holding fast his gude⁶⁰ blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning⁶¹ o'er some auld Scots sonnet;

50. *Tether*. Tie.

51. *Maun*, Must.

52. *Sic*. Such.

53. *Tacks*. Takes.

54. *As 'twad blawn*. As if it would have blown.

55. *Deil*. The Devil.

56. *Weel*. Well.

57. *Skelpit*. Galloped.

58. *Dub and mire*. Pools of water, and mud.

59. *Whiles*. Sometimes.

60. *Gude*. Good.

61. *Crooning*. Humming or singing.

Whiles glow'ring⁶² round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles⁶³ catch him unawares: Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets⁶⁴ nightly cry. —

By this time he was cross the ford,⁶⁵
Whare in the snaw⁶⁶ the chapman smoor'd;⁶⁷
And past the birks⁶⁸ and meikle staine,⁶⁹
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;⁷⁰
And thro' the whins,⁷¹ and by the cairn,⁷²
Whare hunters fand⁷³ the murder'd bairn;⁷⁴
And near the thorn, aboon⁷⁵ the well,
Where Mungo's mither⁷⁶ hang'd hersel. —

Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll:

When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;⁷⁷
Thro' ilka bore⁷⁸ the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing. —

62. *Glow'ring*. Staring.

63. *Bogles*. Bad spirits.

64. *Ghaists and houlets*. Ghosts and owlettes.

65. Tam crosses a stream called the Slaphouse Burn. Since this stream had bridges and no known local ford, this detail is considered to be imaginative.

66. *Snaw*. Snow.

67. *The chapman smoor'd*. The peddler smothered.

68. *Birks*. Birch trees.

69. *Meikle stane*. A large stone.

70. *Brak's neck-bane*. Broke his neck-bone.

71. *Whins*. Gorse plants.

72. *Cairn*. A heap of stones, often a prehistoric burial site. The cairn still stands, on the Campusdoon estate in Ayr.

73. *Fand*. Found.

74. *Bairn*. A child.

75. *Aboon*. Above.

76. *Mungo's Mither*. Mungo's Mother. St. Mungo's Well, located just west of Alloway Church. The suicide is imaginary, as St. Mungo is associated with Glasgow. The Alloway Church had been dedicated to St. Mungo, since Glasgow Cathedral had owned the land. Mungo here might simply refer to a person born in Glasgow, St. Mungo's See. Doubtless the idea of a saint's mother being a suicide verges on the blasphemous. St. Mungo's mother was herself canonized as St. Thanew (Harvey 64) —BR.

77. *Bleeze*. Blaze.

78. *Ilka bore*. Every crevice.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!⁷⁹
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippeny,⁸⁰ we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae⁸¹ we'll face the devil! —

The swats⁸² sea ream'd in Tammie's noddle,⁸³
Fair play, he car'd na⁸⁴ deils a boddle;⁸⁵
But Maggie stood right sair⁸⁶ astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, vow! Tam saw an unco⁸⁷ sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillion brent new frae France,⁸⁸
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys,⁸⁹ and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker⁹⁰ in the east,
There sat auld Nick,⁹¹ in shape o' beast;
A towzie-tyke,⁹² black, grim, and large,
To gie⁹³ them music was his charge:

79. *John Barleycorn*. The personification of the spirit of ale.

80. *Tippeny*. A weak ale, sold for two pennies a pint.

81. *Usquabae*. Whisky.

82. *Swats*. Fumes.

83. *Noddle*. Head.

84. *Car'd na*. Minded not.

85. *Bodle*. A farthing, a coin worth one quarter of a penny.

86. *Sair*. Sore, seriously.

87. *Unco*. Strange.

88. *Cotillion brent new frae France*. Cotillion brought new from France. The French cotillion, a variety of contredanse, became popular in England in the 1700s. Placing dancers in square formation, it encouraged flirtation, and is the ancestor of the American rural square dance —BR.

89. *Strathspey*. A slow and stately Scottish dance in 4/4 time, slower than a jig or reel. The melody for a strathspey often contains many “snaps,” short notes followed by dotted notes. Strathspeys were composed and arranged both for fiddles and for bagpipes —BR.

90. *Winnock-bunker*. Window seat.

91. *Auld Nick*. Old Nick, the Devil.

92. *Towzie-tyke*. A shaggy dog. Mephistopheles first appears in Goethe's *Faust* in the form of a black dog — BR.

93. *To gie*. Give.

He screw'd the pipes and gart⁹⁴ them skirl,⁹⁵
Till roof and rafters a'⁹⁶ did dirl.⁹⁷ —
Coffins stood round, like open presses,⁹⁸
That shaw'd⁹⁹ the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantrip¹⁰⁰ slight,
Each in its cauld¹⁰¹ hand held a light. —

By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,¹⁰²
A murderer's banes'¹⁰³ in gibbet airns;¹⁰⁴
Twa span-lang,¹⁰⁵ wee,¹⁰⁶ unchristen'd bairns;
A thief, new-cuttet frae a rape,¹⁰⁷
Wi' his last gasp his gab'¹⁰⁸ did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi blude¹⁰⁹ red-rusted,
Five scymitars',¹¹⁰ wi' murder crusted;

94. *Gart*. Made.

95. *Skirl*. Squeal.

96. *A'*. All.

97. *Dirl*. Rattle, shake.

98. *Presses*. Linen closets or wardrobes.

99. *Shaw'd*. Showed.

100. *Cantrip*. A charm or spell.

101. *Cauld*. Cold.

102. *Haly table*. Holy table, the church altar.

103. *Banes*. Bones.

104. *Airns*. Irons.

105. *Twa span-lang*. Two spans in length. A span is the width of the hand from the end of the thumb to the end of the little finger, with the fingers fully-extended. The span was used in the absence of measuring tapes or rulers as a rude unit of measure —BR.

106. *Wee*. Little.

107. *New-cuttet frae a rape*. New cut from a rope.

108. *Gab*. Mouth.

109. *Blude*. Blood.

110. *Tomahawks* . . . *scymitars*. Massive emigration from Scotland began around 1725 and accelerated after English repression of Scots culture after the Battle of Culloden in 1745. Tens of thousands, dispossessed by land “clearances” that resembled “ethnic cleansing,” fled to America. Scots were also prominent in the British armed forces, placing them in the campaigns such as the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War in America), and Scots figured prominently on both sides of the American Revolution. Revolutionary soldiers in America received tomahawks as part of their kit. Burns here reminds his reader that Scots were dying in faraway places, killed by Indians, Colonials, or Turks, and that their ghosts would nonetheless return to Scotland —BR.

A garter, which a babe had strangled,
 A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
 Whom his ain¹¹¹ son o' life bereft,
 The grey hairs yet stack¹¹² to the heft;¹¹³
 [Three lawyers' tongues, turn'd inside out,
 W' lies seam'd like a beggar's clout;¹¹⁴
 Three priests' hearts, rotten black as much,¹¹⁵
 Lay stinking, vile in every neuk.¹¹⁶]¹¹⁷
 Wi' mair¹¹⁸ o' horrible and awefu',
 Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.¹¹⁹

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
 The piper loud and louder blew;
 The dancers quick and quicker flew;
 They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,¹²⁰
 Till ilka carlin¹²¹ swat¹²² and reekit,¹²³
 And coost her duddies¹²⁴ to the wark,¹²⁵
 And linket¹²⁶ at it in her sark!¹²⁷

111. *Ain*. own.

112. *Stack*. Stuck.

113. *Heft*. Haft, handle.

114. *Clout*. A patch in a cloth.

115. *Much*. Muck. Excrement, manure or other rotting organic matter. "Much" appears to be an idiosyncratic Burns spelling, as this does not appear in *OED* —BR.

116. *Neuk*. Nook, small corner or recess.

117. *Three lawyers . . . / . . . every neuk*. Burns suppressed these four lines at the behest of a jurist friend and replaced them with the two lines following. They did not appear in Lewis's edition, or in Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* —BR.

118. *Mair*. More.

119. *Unlawfu'*. Unlawful. A nod to the censorship laws that clamped down on English publishing after the French Revolution —BR.

120. *Cleekit*. Linked together.

121. *Carlin*. A stout old woman.

122. *Swat*. Sweated.

123. *Reekit*. Smoked, steamed.

124. *Coost her duddies*. Cast off her clothes.

125. *Wark*. Work.

126. *Linkit*. Danced.

127. *Sark*. A shirt or shift, an undergarment.

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae¹²⁸ been queans,¹²⁹
A' plump and strapping in their teens,
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,¹³⁰
Been snaw-white¹³¹ seventeen hunder linnen!¹³²
Thir breeks¹³³ o' mine, my only pair,
That ance¹³⁴ were plush, o' gude blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies, ¹³⁵
For ae blink¹³⁶ o' the bonnie burdies!¹³⁷

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie¹³⁸ hags wad spean¹³⁹ a foal,
Lowping¹⁴⁰ an' flinging on a crummock,¹⁴¹
I wonder didna¹⁴² turn thy stomach.

But Tam kend¹⁴³ what was what fu' brawlie,¹⁴⁴
There was ae winsome¹⁴⁵ wench and wawlie,¹⁴⁶
That night enlisted in the core,¹⁴⁷
(Lang after kend on Carrick¹⁴⁸ shore;

128. *Thae*. These.

129. *Queans*. Young women.

130. *Creeshie flannen*. Greasy flannel. Flannel, originally made from wool, was manufactured in Wales starting in the 17th century —BR.

131. *Snaw-white*. Snow-white.

132. *Seventeen hunder linnen*. Fine linen, 1700-thread gauge. Huguenots settling in Ulster, Ireland after 1695 established the linen-making industry there, and the use of linen expanded rapidly after 1700 —BR.

133. *Thir breeks*. These breeches. Men's trousers, extending just below the knee. Would be considered an undergarment, as it is the first item one would put on, and the last one would take off —BR.

134. *Ance*. Once.

135. *Hurdies*. Buttocks, hips — *OED*.

136. *Ae blink*. One look.

137. *Bonnie burdies*. Pretty creatures.

138. *Rigwoodie*. Dried-up and wrinkled, resembling twisted twigs, straw or rushes.

139. *Wad spean*. Lewis footnotes this as "would wean." Weaning foals seems a rather benign activity for ghosts and witches. *Spean* also means "to abort," and "foal" is also used to describe a pregnant mare (*OED*). This is almost certainly what Burns would have wished to express, since witches were accused of causing stillbirths among humans and animals. The euphemism of weaning for abortion is certainly ironic – abortion being premature weaning! Local "wise women" were midwives and many knew the secrets of abortifacients. Scotland had been swept with witch mania in the 1600s, so this lore would be familiar to Burns' readers —BR.

140. *Lowping*. Jumping.

141. *Crummock*. A crutch.

142. *Didna*. Did not.

143. *Kend*. Knew.

144. *Brawlie*. Very well.

145. *Winsome*. Buxom.

146. *Wawlie*. Comely.

147. *Core*. Corps.

148. *Carrick*. An Ayresshire district, earldom of the famous Bruce family — BR.

For mony a beast to dead¹⁴⁹ she shot,
 And perish'd mony a bonnie boat,
 And shook baith¹⁵⁰ meikle corn and bear,¹⁵¹
 And kept the country-side in fear),
 Her cutty sark,¹⁵² o' Paisley harn,¹⁵³
 That while a lassie¹⁵⁴ she had worn,
 In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
 It was her best, and she was vauntie. — ¹⁵⁵
 Ah! little kend thy reverend grannie,
 That sark she coft¹⁵⁶ for her wee Nannie,
 Wi' twa pund Scots,¹⁵⁷ ('twas a' her riches),
 Wad ever grace a dance of witches!

But here my Muse her wing maun cour;¹⁵⁸
 Sic¹⁵⁹ flights are far beyond her pow'r;
 To sing how Nannie lap and flang,¹⁶⁰
 (A souple¹⁶¹ jade¹⁶² she was and strang),¹⁶³

And how Tam stood, like ane¹⁶⁴ bewitch'd,
 And thought his very een¹⁶⁵ enrich'd;
 Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,¹⁶⁶
 And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main;

149. *To dead*. To death.

150. *Baith*. Both.

151. *Bear*. Barley.

152. *Cutty sark*. A short shift.

153. *Paisley harn*. A cotton woven in a distinctive pattern, made in the town of Paisley in the Scottish lowlands. The town had a reputation for radical politics and free-thinking, so the wearing of Paisley probably had a caché of radicalism about it — BR.

154. *Lassie*. Little girl.

155. *Vauntie*. Proud.

156. *Coft*. Spun.

157. *Twa pund Scots*. Two pounds in Scottish currency. The Scots pound was worth only about one-twelfth of the British pound sterling during the period of this poem. It took more than two centuries for the two currencies to merge into one.— BR.

158. *Maun cour*. Must lower.

159. *Sic*. Such.

160. *Lap and flang*. Jumped and flung.

161. *Souple*. Supple.

162. *Jade*. A term of reprobation applied to a woman. Also used playfully, like *hussy* or *minx* — OED.

163. *Strang*. Strong.

164. *Ane*. One.

165. *Een*. Eyes.

166. *Fidg'd fu' fain*. Became very restless.

Till first ae caper, syne anither,¹⁶⁷
Tam tint¹⁶⁸ his reason a' thegither,¹⁶⁹
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz¹⁷⁰ out wi' angry fyke,¹⁷¹
When plundering herds¹⁷² assail their byke;¹⁷³
As open pussie's¹⁷⁴ mortal foes,
When pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreech¹⁷⁵ and hollow.

Ah, Tam! Ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin!¹⁷⁶
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!¹⁷⁷
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig;¹⁷⁸

167. *Syne anither*. Then another.

168. *Tint*. Lost.

169. *A' thegither*. Altogether, entirely.

170. *Bizz*. Buzz.

171. *Fyke*. Mood.

172. *Herds*. Shepherds.

173. *Byke*. Bee-hive.

174. *Pussie's*. A hare.

175. *Eldritch screech*. A frightful scream. The term "elrich screik" dates to 1513, in Douglas' *Aeneis*, VII. 108. Eldritch is a word seldom used outside of the small circle of supernatural writers, but the OED does cite its use by Burns, Hawthorne, Lord Lytton and William Dean Howells. It was one of H.P. Lovecraft's favorite adjectives —BR.

176. *Fairin*. A fairing, a present.

177. *Comin*. Coming.

178. *Key-stane of the brig*. Key-stone of the bridge, i.e., the centermost part of a stone bridge. "It is a well-known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with *bogies*, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back" — RB.



There at them thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail¹⁷⁹ she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;¹⁸⁰
But little wist she Maggie's mettle —
Ae spring¹⁸¹ brought off her master hale,¹⁸²
But left behind her ain¹⁸³ gray tail:
The carlin claught¹⁸⁴ her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha¹⁸⁵ this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk¹⁸⁶ man and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys o'er dear,¹⁸⁷
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

— Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford for *Tales of Wonder*,
Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2012).
Annotations by Burns are marked “-RB.”

179. *The fient a tail.* Fient is a petty oath, as, “The devil a tail.”

180. *Ettle.* Zeal.

181. *Ae spring.* One jump.

182. *Hale.* Whole.

183. *Ain.* Own .

184. *Claupt.* Seized hold on.

185. *Wha.* Who.

186. *Ilk.* Each.

187. *O'er dear.* Too dear.

LORD BYRON (1788 - 1824)

Darkness

I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went — and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires — and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings — the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire — but hour by hour
They fell and faded — and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless — they were slain for food.
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again; — a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought — and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails — men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devoured,

Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress — he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies: they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd, and died —
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful — was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless —
A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal: as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge —
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The moon their mistress had expir'd before;
The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them — She was the Universe.

—1816.

—From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Volume 1*
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2015).

The 1801 Anthology That Launched
The Gothic-Romantic Poetry Movement

Tales of Wonder



VOLUME I

Written and Collected by
MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS
New Annotated Edition by
BRETT RUTHERFORD

OLGA CABRAL KURTZ (1909-1997)

An Old Man in Camden

On the ghost ship of the Brooklyn Ferry
an old man crosses the river
to the far shores of wallpaper
and the December seagulls
filling the room with wingspread
circle his head
intoning
his name's single syllable:

Walt! —

Walt! Walt! Walt!

Walt Whitman no longer thirty-six years
sweet and negligent flesh cleanly joined
but an old man dying
old man come in his sad sick body
to make the last crossing of the Brooklyn Ferry.

Walt! Walt! Walt!

Bird voices in tragic
and rusty chorus —
he shudders at what they know.
The huge birds hover
eyes cold as arctic
wastes but red
red as foundry fires in the night
or as the twenty-five thousand settings
of the sun.
Scavengers
grave robbers
cruel grosbeaks
they have come to see him off.

He is adrift on a vast
oceanic hoard
of paper:
whitecaps, squalls, old packets
of hurricanes
the high seas of his poems.
Words! words! words! words!
Powerful as breakers
boundless
beyond wallpaper horizons
and he is Oceanus of this realm
this kingdom of vast swells.

Lone passenger:
an empty
ferryboat.
Who calls him by his highest name?
Walt! Walt! Walt! Walt!
(Neptune, god of dark undertows.)
There is salt in his beard.
Alone in his room
an old man weeping.

Words! words! words! words!
He has crossed the great ocean:
his endless poem
that will beat and pound
at all the shores and continents of the world.

— From *Group 74: Poems of the Last Bohemia*
(1974, The Poet's Press, 2021).

WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL (1861-1918)

Canadian poet William Campbell makes the Polar region a Dante-esque place of punishment inhabited by werewolves. Born in Canada, he was schooled in Toronto, attended an Episcopal Seminary at Cambridge, MA and then returned to his native country for a succession of government posts. His literary work includes two blank-verse dramas, *Mordred, A Tragedy* and *Hildebrand*. Influenced by Poe and the Romantics, Campbell came to be considered Canada's unofficial poet laureate.

The Were-Wolves

They hasten, still they hasten,
From the even to the dawn;
And their tired eyes gleam and glisten
Under north skies white and wan.
Each panter in the darkness
Is a demon-haunted soul,
The shadowy, phantom were-wolves,
Who circle round the Pole.
Their tongues are crimson flaming,
Their haunted blue eyes gleam,
And they strain them to the utmost
O'er frozen lake and stream;
Their cry one note of agony,
That is neither yelp nor bark,
These panthers of the northern waste.
Who hound them to the dark.
You may hear their hurried breathing,
You may see their fleeting forms,
At the pallid polar midnight
When the north is gathering storms;
When the arctic frosts are flaming,
And the ice-field thunders roll;
These demon-haunted were-wolves,
Who circle round the Pole.
They hasten, still they hasten,
Across the northern night,
Filled with a frightened madness,
A horror of the light;
Forever and forever,
Like leaves before the wind,
They leave the wan, white gleaming
Of the dawning far behind.
Their only peace is darkness,
Their rest to hasten on
Into the heart of midnight,
Forever from the dawn.

Across far phantom ice-floes
The eye of night may mark
These horror-haunted were-wolves
Who hound them to the dark.
All through this hideous journey,
They are the souls of men
Who in the far dark-ages
Made Europe one black fen.
They fled from courts and convents,
And bound their mortal dust
With demon wolfish girdles
Of human hate and lust.
These who could have been god-like,
Chose, each a loathsome beast,
Amid the heart's foul graveyards,
On putrid thoughts to feast;
But the great God who made them
Gave each a human soul,
And so 'mid night forever
They circle round the Pole;
A-praying for the blackness,
A-longing for the night,
For each is doomed forever
By a horror of the light;
And far in the heart of midnight,
Where their shadowy flight is hurled,
They feel with pain the dawning
That creeps in round the world.
Under the northern midnight,
The white, glint ice upon,
They hasten, still they hasten,
With their horror of the dawn;
Forever and forever,
Into the night away
They hasten, still they hasten
Unto the judgment day.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

ROBERT L. CAROTHERS (b. 1942)

Muskrat

The trick was to trap them in deep water.
Let them drown themselves.

Yet often, stumbling up our run,
Still sleepy and shivering in the night before morning,
My high boots shattering the night's new ice
That glazed the still pools between the bigger rocks,
I'd find one in the faint search of my light,
His rich coat smeared with mud and ice,
Twisting in the steel I laid for him,
Praying in his last need that I might accept
The long lamented lamb his father left me,
The splintered bone crying clean and white
His love from the hung matted flesh
In another night.

Too late, too late,
For sharp black eyes and long yellowed teeth,
Under my reigning foot in the rushing waters,
The bubbles of those days rising in silence;
And I looked away, impatient,
Shivering under the stars.

Grandfather

Nineteen he was, when the Wobblies wooed him
With the love of the working wonder,
A decade of the black dust of his death deep in his lungs,
After the soot-smoked sun in Bulger, Pennsylvania.

Welsh, bred under the world's wheel, he rose
In the white-walled night, past the sleeping pits,
Blind with the ache, and the all-bountiful
Thirteen sticks of the great earth mover,
To his hate of haunt of hunger, where the thin yellow scrip
Buried the man before his birth,
He planted his pain, near the stone leg of the
Yellow-stained clapboard of the iron-meshed window.

I cannot speak to him, long back from Lewisburg,
For I have tried to ask him of that night;
But he walks down by the Ohio, coughing up his blood,
Spitting it in to a red rag.

Robert Carothers was blessed by his mother reading poetry to him at the earliest age. The most productive period of his own writing was in the 1960s and 70s. He studied under Donald Washburn at Edinboro and Jacob Leed at Kent State. He lives today with his wife Jayne in Wakefield, Rhode Island, after a long tenure as president of the University of Rhode Island.

His small books include *Poems for the End of Something* (1969), *Freedom and Other Times* (1972), *John Calvin's Favorite Son* (1980) and *Winter Poems* (2008). Individual poems have appeared in many small magazines.

Carothers acknowledges the influence of Dylan Thomas on his work, as well as the storytelling of miners, railroaders, fishermen, and decades of his students.

Letter to the Ghost Of Allison Krause

The times change, Allison.

Where there was the clenched fist
there is the needle,
there is the cross.
The times change.

Your dreams seem strange
just two years to the day later.
But you will be pleased to know
the troops are coming home now.
Missiles that smell flesh
hunt out the small ones
hiding in the caves and tunnels of their own land.
We pull the trigger in Okinawa
in a convergence of computer blips.
Now no one is to blame, Allison.
Even Richard Nixon wants peace.

So we really don't want to see
photos of you and your friends,
of blood running in spring grass.
You are too painful for us
hitching the interstates
to rock concerts,
trying to score some good stuff
or saving our immortal souls.

I'm sorry it turned out this way, Allison.
You couldn't have known.
We both thought the revolution was coming.

But you walked out on a bright May day
to see the sun burst orange in your head,
the terrible truth come home.

God bless you, Allison Krause.
You died for all of us.
In prayer meetings we thank
you for the lesson learned well.
In dark corners we smoke magic
to dispel the last of fears and fury
you taught us to forget.

I cannot ask you to forgive us for it.

Past Midnight

For H. D. Gramley

The mind defines itself
on the thought not to be thought.

Have it your way:
a good dream but wrong,
wrong from the start. ..

yet tonight levy saying
saying while he lived that
as the bullfighter flirts
with death
so the poet flirts
with madness,
brings himself to the brink of it
and knows himself there,
a mad knowing
of a mad self that is the self.

levy at 26 is dead,
his brains spattered on the ceiling
of some tenement in Cleveland.

How did his life feel to him
in the park at University Circle,
in the coffeehouses and bars,
in the Cleveland jails? Did he
taste it like the burnt taste
of the steel in his mouth? Did he
see it as he saw that final room,
the line of wall, the chair, his fingers?
When did he take his life as his own,
apart from rabbi, cop or even friends,
if not then, dizzy with choice?

So, the white whale, the child-woman,
bombs for General Dynamics, the
bright terror itself

Define, render, for once, something:
the me of me, you of you,
the necessary edges of the world.

— From *Freedom And Other Times*, (The Poet's Press, 1972, 2022).

MADISON CAWEIN (1865-1914)



Author of some 1,500 poems and thirty-one books, Madison Cavein was called “The Keats of Kentucky.” Writing in the manner of Shelley and Keats, the American poet depicted his native region, but he also incorporated a true Romantic’s vision embracing both classical mythology and the supernatural. The poems selected here might as well have come from the pen of an Englishman. Cavein lost his home, much of his library, and his life savings in the stock market crash in 1912, and became what poets dread most, an object of charity. He is the most celebrated literary inhabitant of Louisville’s famed Cave Hill Cemetery.

A Dreamer of Dreams

He lived beyond men, and so stood
Admitted to the brotherhood
Of beauty: — dreams, with which he trod
Companioned like some sylvan god.
And oft men wondered, when his thought
Made all their knowledge seem as naught,
If he, like Uther’s mystic son,¹
Had not been born for Avalon.

When wandering mid the whispering trees,
His soul communed with every breeze;
Heard voices calling from the glades,
Bloom-words of the Leimoniäds;²
Or Dryads of the ash and oak,
Who syllabled his name and spoke
With him of presences and powers
That glimpsed in sunbeams, gloomed in showers.

By every violet-hallowed brook,
Where every bramble-matted nook
Rippled and laughed with water sounds,
He walked like one on sainted grounds,
Fearing intrusion on the spell
That kept some fountain-spirit’s well,
Or woodland genius, sitting where
Red, racy berries kissed his hair.

¹ *Uther*. Uther Pendragon, father of King Arthur.

² *Leimoniäds*. Extremely obscure reference to a priestess of Artemis in a ritual re-enactment of the hunt and killing of Leimon, a fratricide.

Once when the wind, far o'er the hill,
Had fall'n and left the wildwood still
For Dawn's dim feet to trail across, —
Beneath the gnarled boughs, on the moss,
The air around him golden-ripe
With daybreak, — there, with oaten pipe,
His eyes beheld the wood-god, Pan¹
Goat-bearded, horned; half brute, half man;

Who, shaggy-haunched, a savage rhyme
Blew in his reed to rudest time;
And swollen-jowled, with rolling eye —
Beneath the slowly silvering sky,
Whose rose streaked through the forest's roof —
Danced, while beneath his boisterous hoof
The branch was snapped, and, interfused
Between gnarled roots, the moss was bruised.

And often when he wandered through
Old forests at the fall of dew —
A new Endymion, who sought
A beauty higher than all thought —
Some night, men said, most surely he
Would favored be of deity:

That in the holy solitude
Her sudden presence, long-pursued,
Unto his gaze would stand confessed:
The awful moonlight of her breast
Come, high with majesty, and hold
His heart's blood till his heart grew cold,
Unpulsed, unsinewed, all undone,
And snatch his soul to Avalon.

¹ *Pan*. The face-to-face encounter with Pan in the woods evokes the raw power of nature and often leads to possession or madness. The word “panic” derives from this disturbance. The Pan experience is often symbolic of a spiritual crisis among those who struggle between Christianity and the allure of Greek myth.

November

The shivering wind sits in the oaks,
whose limbs,
Twisted and tortured, nevermore are still;
Grief and decay sit with it; they, whose chill
Autumnal touch makes hectic-red the rims
Of all the oak leaves; desolating, dims
The ageratum's² blue that banks the rill;
And splits the milkweed's pod upon the hill,
And shakes it free of the last seed that swims.
Down goes the day despondent to its close:
And now the sunset's hands of copper build
A tower of brass, behind whose burning bars
The day, in fierce, barbarian repose,
Like some imprisoned Inca sits, hate-filled,
Crowned with the gold corymbus³ of the stars.

II

There is a booming in the forest boughs;
Tremendous feet seem trampling
through the trees:
The storm is at his wild-man revelries,
And earth and heaven echo his carouse.
Night reels with tumult; and,
from out her house
Of cloud, the moon looks, —
like a face one sees
In nightmare, — hurrying,
with pale eyes that freeze
Stooping above with white, malignant brows.
The isolated oak upon the hill,
That seemed, at sunset, in terrific lands
A Titan head black in a sea of blood,
Now seems a monster harp,
whose wild strings thrill
To the vast fingering of innumerable hands —
Spirits of tempest and of solitude.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 2. (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2016).

² *Ageratum*. A perennial flowering plant, originally from Mexico.

³ *Corymbus*. In Greek myth, the god of the fruit of the ivy.

TOM CHANDLER

Tom Chandler is poet laureate of Rhode Island emeritus. He has been named Phi Beta Kappa Poet at Brown University, and has been a featured poet at the Library of Congress and the Robert Frost homestead. His poems have often been heard on National Public Radio. He is also a songwriter, a short-story writer, and a maker of refrigerator art.

the happiness of clams

there can be no thrill so subtle,
rejoicing in a secret world
between two brittle hemispheres;
the mona lisa stared for hours
at her pursed mouth in the mirror
for an angle of thin-lipped indifference,
the standard in the empty sea
of passion-passed that came to be
known as being happy:
all slightly smirking patience,
surpassed by stones alone
for cracking teeth from pearls
that lie as ulcers
in the gut of all passivity
for thousands of gray centuries
of ancient urge and undertow.

hair

feather of the flightless
last boundary between
thought and the sky,
protector of the crown and
defender of the cave,
nest of future sleep,
a small gift to the wind
on its journey from nowhere,

the one true color that we are,
and fading

— From *The Sound the Moon Makes
As It Watches* (The Poet's Press, 1988).

One Tree Forest

In the dregs of lost afternoons
lolling on the front steps,
reaching through the hours
I thought about it often,
till one August dusk I finally drove
in the overgrowing dark
to the old family plot
at the edge of the asphalt
whose family I'd never met,
whose name had vanished years ago
to distant lives in Bakersfield
or Sioux Falls Junction.
My candle's drip slipped softly down
along the worn headstone words
of faith and consolation.
I eased out chords from a gentle guitar
beneath a frail bone of moon.
What little light it gave the world
somehow drew the vastness closer,
even the hush of crickets listening,
the stars suddenly knowable.
The next morning walking through
the strange new supermarket land
I almost asked the checkout girl
to run away with me forever
and live inside a hollow tree,
a one tree forest, virgin growth,
unexplored and unexplained,
for now I could see clean and plain
that anyone could do anything at all.

Footage of Hitler

Here we see him
at the top of sweeping stairs,
dwarfed by the giant swastika behind him,
boot heels grinding,
familiar cap visor hiding the hitler eyes.

Here he is speaking,
haranguing the vast grey faces
with the famous urgent bark,
familiar funnysad chaplin mustache
hiding the hitler teeth.

And here he is
staring alone in the mirror,
driving to the mall, eating
a sandwich, running for office,
shaking your hand, a good firm grip,
familiar flesh
hiding the hitler heart.

6am

Birds quietly gossip
In the pink brimming light.

A single set of footsteps
Gently clicks the sidewalk.

Someone up early to mail a letter,
The idea of it sleepy and comforting.

The day will age, this light
Drift yellow and break apart.

My body will consume itself, my life
Melt through my hands to a few tired hours.

But the letter is sliding gracefully
Into the darkness of the slot.

The envelope lies waiting, filled
With the voice of ordinary hope.

Even as I am writing this, people
Are buttoning freshly laundered clothing,

Sipping inspiration
From generous mugs.

This poem is a notice from a distant zip code,
Postmarked exactly 6am: a blue world
still reaches

Through the black. Even as you read this
Someone is starting up again clean.

... And Even the Dead Shall See

They spend too much time staring at the sky;
It makes them permanently absent-minded,
It makes their eyes that vacant wash of white,
Little searchlights in an endless night;
They even have lost touch with their own feet,
Which have in turn lost touch with Earth,
Across whose face they like to think they fly:

They spend too much time staring at the sky;
They lie alone inside themselves, waiting
For the death of day, waiting
For the trampoline of dream to spring
Them into bleeding song, a tune
For skeletons in party hats to sing along
While watching for the face of Earth to die:

They spend too much time staring at the sky;
The echoes crawl through caverns
Underneath the city floor, a place
Of doors pushed shut forever by the twisted
Roots of broken trees, of broken promises
That fall from lips of darkness
Which can no longer mouth the standard lie:

They spend too much time staring at the sky;
And from the pleasure dance of tongues,
Through the throat's lost hollow buzz
A sound of distant beating wings
Lifts up the aching faces from the street
And stops the flies from feasting
And gives the dead tears reason to run dry:
They spend too much time staring at the sky.

— From *One Tree Forest*
(The Poet's Press, 1992).

JOSÉ SANTOS CHOCANO (1875-1934)

José Santos Chocano, born in Lima, Peru, had one of the most exciting lives a poet could imagine, putting him in the company of doomed bards like Marlowe and Villon. This poet, who styled himself with the pseudonym “El Cantor de América,” put Peru on the map of world poetry. His writing and diplomatic work for or against various political figures, earned him prison time. He fought with other poets, shot a newspaper reporter, and died at the hands of an assassin. Along the way he wrote lyric poems that are still memorized and recited by his countrymen.

Song of the Road

The way was black,
The night was mad with lightning; I bestrode
My wild young colt, upon a mountain road,
And, crunching onward, like a monster’s jaws,
His ringing hoof-beats their glad rhythm kept,
Breaking the glassy surface of the pools.
Where hidden waters slept.
A million buzzing insects in the air
On droning wing made sullen discord there.
But suddenly, afar, beyond the wood,
Beyond the dark pall of my brooding thought,
I saw lights cluster like a swarm of wasps
Among the branches caught.
“The inn!” I cried, and on his living flesh
My bronco felt the lash and neighed
 with eagerness.
And all this time the cool and quiet wood
Uttered no sound, as though it understood.

Until there came to me, upon the night,
A voice so clear, so clear, so ringing sweet
A voice as of a woman singing, and her song
Dropped like soft music winging, at my feet,
And seemed a sigh that, with my spirit blending,
Lengthened and lengthened out,
 and had no ending.

And through the empty silence of the night.
And through the quiet of the hills, I heard
That music, and the sounds
 the night wind bore me,
Like spirit voices from an unseen world
Came drifting o’er me.

I curbed my horse, to catch what she might say:
At night they come, and they are gone by day —
And then another voice, with low refrain,
And untold tenderness, took up the strain:
Oh love is but an inn upon life’s way —
At night they come, and they are gone by day —

Their voices mingled in that wistful lay.
Then I dismounted and stretched out my length
Beside a pool, and while my mind was bent
Upon that mystery within the wood,
My eyes grew heavy, and my strength was spent.
And so I slept there, huddled in my cloak.
And now, when by untrodden paths I go,
Through the dim forest, no repose I know
At any inn at nightfall, but apart
I sleep beneath the stars, for through my heart
Echoes the burden of that wistful lay:
At night they come, and they are gone by day,
And love is but an inn upon life’s way.

— Translated by John Pierrepoint Rice.
From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem*
Since 1800, Supplement 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet’s Press, 2021).

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1875-1934)

Limbo

The sole true Something — This!
In Limbo's Den
It frightens Ghosts, as here
Ghosts frighten men.
[For skimming in the wake it mock'd the care
Of the old Boat-God for his farthing fare;
Tho' Iris' Ghost itself he never frown'd
blacker on
The skin and skin-pent Druggist
cross'd the Acheron,
Styx, and with Periphlegeton Cocytus, —
(The very names, me thinks, might frighten us)
Thence cross'd unseiz'd — and shall some
fated hour
Be pulveris'd by Demogorgon's power,
And given as poison to annihilate souls —
Even now it shrinks them — they shrink in
as Moles
(Nature's mute monks, live mandrakes
of the ground)
Creep back from Light — then listen
for its sound; —
See but to dread, and dread they know not
why —
The natural alien of their negative eye.

'Tis a strange place, the Limbo! — not a Place,
Yet name it so; where Time and weary Space
Fettered from flight, with night-mare sense
of fleeing,
Strive for their last crepuscular half-being; —
Lank Space, and scytheless Time
with branny hands
Barren and soundless as the measuring sands,
Not mark'd by flit of Shades, —
unmeaning they
As moonlight on the dial of the day!
But that is lovely — looks like Human Time,
An Old Man with a steady look sublime,

That stops his earthly task to watch the skies;
But he is blind — a Statue hath such eyes; —
Yet having moonward turn'd his face by chance,
Gazes the orb with moon-like countenance,
With scant white hairs, with foretop
bald and high,
He gazes still, — his eyeless face all eye; —
As 'twere an organ full of silent sight,
His whole face seemeth to rejoice in light!
Lip touching lip, all moveless, bust and limb —
He seems to gaze at that which seems to gaze
on him!

No such sweet sights doth Limbo's den immure,
Wall'd round, and made a spirit-jail secure,
By the mere horror of blank Naught-at-all,
Whose circumambience doth these ghosts
enthrall.

A lurid thought is growthless, dull Privation,
Yet that is but a Purgatory curse;
Hell knows a fear far worse,
A fear — a future state;
— 'tis positive Negation!

—1817.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press 2015).

ELLEN M. H. CORTISSOZ

On Kingston Bridge

*On All Souls' Night the dead
walk on Kingston Bridge.*— Old Legend.

On Kingston Bridge the starlight shone
Through hurrying mists in shrouded glow;
The boding night-wind made its moan,
The mighty river crept below.

'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

Two met who had not met for years;
Once was their hate too deep for fears:
One drew his rapier as he came,
Upleapt his anger like a flame.
With clash of mail he faced his foe,
And bade him stand and meet him so.
He felt a graveyard wind go by
Cold, cold as was his enemy.

A stony horror held him fast.
The Dead looked with a ghastly stare,
And sighed "I know thee not," and passed
Like to the mist, and left him there
On Kingston Bridge.

'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

Two met who had not met for years:
With grief that was too deep for tears
They parted last.
He clasped her hand, and in her eyes
He sought Love's rapturous surprise.
"Oh, Sweet!" he cried, "hast thou come back
To say thou lov'st thy lover still?"
— Into the starlight, pale and cold,
She gazed afar — her hand was chill:
"Dost thou remember how we kept
Our ardent vigils? — how we kissed? —
Take thou these kisses as of old!"
An icy wind about him swept;
"I know thee not," she sighed, and passed
Into the dim and shrouding mist
On Kingston Bridge.

'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800*, Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021).

HART CRANE (1889-1932)

Fear

The host, he says that all is well,
And the fire-wood glow is bright;
The food has a warm and tempting smell,
But on the window licks the night.
Pile on the logs. . . . Give me your hands,
Friends ! No, it is not fright. . . .
But hold me . . . somewhere I heard demands.
And on the window licks the night.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2021).

TWO RUSSIAN EXILES



SELECTED FICTION OF
MIKHAIL ARTSYBASHEV
&
LEONID ANDREYEV

BRETT RUTHERFORD, Editor

RICHARD DAVIDSON (1930-1993)

The Song of Walt Whitman is a palimpsest begun in 1958, and by the time this book will have been published, will have received at least five different productions, with no two texts exactly alike in its fifteen-year history. This of course parallels Whitman's continuous revision of *Leaves of Grass* over the half-century of that work's composing. "Who touches this, touches a man ..." can apply equally, if not to *The Song of Walt Whitman* alone, then certainly to the entire body of Richard Davidson's gigantic, groping, altogether human work. — Donald Lev.

From "The Song of Walt Whitman"

NARRATOR (*Quietly*)

What makes a man a poet?

What makes a man sit down to write beneath a lamp,
or at a wooden desk

Or write the words after the subway battles or at the office
Whose echoes he wants to forget: the water drunk very fast
from the cooler, the quick trip on the IRT.

The night that brings him back to painted gardens or
Silvered streets, back to ancient empires,
or the stock market report.

Back to the small or large or middle sized room and
The dream that waits; the hopes that wait.

What makes a man hunger for this night, this breathing
moment in the trembling dark? What makes a man a poet?

WHITMAN (*After a pause*)

"This is no book.

Who touches this, touches a man.

Who touches this, touches a man.

Who touches this, touches a man."

NARRATOR

Walt Whitman, out of time and who has no regulated time.

Who stands and listens and touches a book.

Hear him in the roar of black.

Hear him in the great trap of darkness whose lights

Rise and fall like singing women.

Hear him as you lie in bed or drink a beer or

Wrap the evening around a single potato chip.

*** **

It is nearing early night. The city is coming out of the dream of day.

Coming out of the light-touched concrete and the buildings whose wires are on fire.

And the endless chatter in the long elevator shafts
and the names on the bright office doors.

Names that swarmed through Yale or Columbia or finished high school with holes in the seat of the
pants and planned the battle for floor twelve like a well-ordered general crossing a bridge.

It is nearly early night in the city and, poet, you sit at a the desk with the broken blotter or the pencil half-chewed or the phrases pouring over the open cellophane and the lettuce and tomato greeting the blue-black stains on the waiting sheet.

And, poet, you stand before a window or lie on your flat bed or walk around the block or grab a beer or grab for a newspaper,

For the thought, the dream that takes you skyward,

And maybe the rent's not paid and the dentist shoots another bill through the mail and it's "just another week, Mr. Greenberg," or "Christ, that's the fifth rejection in a month."

And so, maybe you try to settle the turning stomach and the mind I that loves its fellow man, but, Jesus, who can love when they're hungry?

But maybe the shadows have a certain kind of music.

And maybe there's a whistle and a hunk of bread somewhere in the dark.

So together can we walk? Together, poet, whose Manhattan rose out of the trembling wheels of horse-drawn cars, whose cries faded in the rumbling bugles of the blue and gray.

Can we walk together now? To see a city that lives in all our dreams.

Whose grass touches now as then the corner tips and the flat, flowing lands of the people's lives.

Poet who taught us the riddle of the first leaf of summer,

Take us by the hand, the city waits for eyes.

*** **

WHITMAN

"I was asking for something specific and perfect for my city.

Whereupon, lo! Up sprang the aboriginal name.

City of hurried and sparkling waters!

City of spires and masts!

City nested in bays!"

NARRATOR

The city lives in hopes. Lives in whispers on

Crowded pavements where houses crush together

Like bundles of clothing. What is your song, Walt?

What does it mean to John and Helen?

To the firm of Baumont, Barsdorf, King and Wilson, Inc.?

Population ... somewhere in the thousands

Maker of better things for better living through

Wilson's powdered ads introducing Schwartz's Hose,

Guaranteed to introduce madame to bank presidents and eligible daughters to their eligible sons.

No, the songs are not for Baumont, Barsdorf, King and Wilson, Inc.

You will not hear melodies on crowded switchboards.

Or will you?

Deep in the dreams of John Doe, will you?

*** **

SECOND VOICE

Up at seven.
Toast and jelly. Newspaper and coffee.
Run for the car. Run for the train. Run for the sweat and smoke of time.
Run and hang your hand on a great brown strap from the toothpaste ad.
Punch the clock. Sit at the desk. Wind your watch.
Pick a date on the calendar. Whisk away the hours
 with the blank pages of ledgers.
And then for a moment you are not here.
For a moment Palm Springs and a flower made of paper.

WHITMAN (Very quietly)
“City nested in bays! My city!”

NARRATOR (Very quietly)
John and Helen, their dreams make a poet.
Their hidden dreams are part of his song!!!

WHITMAN
“The blind sleep, and the deaf and dumb sleep.
The prisoner sleeps well in prison, the runaway son sleeps.
The murderer that is to be hung next day, how does he sleep?
And the murdered person, how does he sleep?
I stand in the dark with drooping eyes by the worst-suffering
 and the most restless.
I pass my hands soothingly to and fro a few inches from them,
The restless sink in their beds, they fitfully sleep.”

*** **

NARRATOR

The moon dreams and the stars remember,
And there is quiet turning in the quiet turning earth.
And the hours of night come to the city sometimes in small doses.
Sometimes the office lights go off and the brown briefcase catches the 8:20.
Or Bob in night school catching up with English 3
 and the life cut momentarily at the base of Vietnamese seas.
Now back, now dreams forming, now Mrs. Talbert at the church choir practice
 where sour notes are allowed and bad harmony is excused for sincerity.
Now the great mass of night. Night to the street corners,
 to the small drug stores, to candy shops opened after nine.
Night, too, to machines. The great human wail of machines.
Night to machines in the high, steel factory
 just this side of the river.
Night to machines and to the men who use them.
The lights in the factory continue in the long, turning night.

— Selected passages from *The Song of Walt Whitman* (*The Poet's Press*, 1975).

FANNIE STEARNS DAVIS (1884-1958)

This remarkable lyric poet, born in Cleveland, Ohio, published just two books, *Myself and I*, and *Crack O'Dawn*, both from Macmillan. *The Boston Transcript* enthused: "Miss Davis has achieved very beautiful and serious poetry. That note of wistful mysticism which shimmers in almost every line, gives her art a distinction, that is bound to make it appeal to those whose unerring regard for the best traditions of English will acknowledge the authentic new voice . . . genuine and fresh and compelling." There are echoes of Poe a-plenty in her rhymed poems, but also a heady amount of Pagan nature-worship and a whiff of the transcendent. Her editors take pains to identify her as "Mrs. Augustus McKinstry Gifford," residing the rest of her days in Pittsfield, MA. Perhaps, like many married women of a certain class, she found her literary freedom stifled. Her earliest published poems may be from 1905. After 1915, when her second book was published, we hear no more of her as a poet.

Ghosts

I am almost afraid of the wind out there.
The dead leaves skip on the porches bare,
The windows clatter and whine. I sit
Here in the quiet house, low-lit,
With the clock that ticks
 and the books that stand,
Wise and silent, on every hand.

I am almost afraid, though I know the night
Lets no ghosts walk in the warm lamp-light.
Yet ghosts there are; and they drift and blow
Out in the wind and the scattering snow. —
When I open the windows and go to bed
Will the ghosts come in and stand at my head?

Last night I dreamed they came back again.
I heard them talking; I saw them plain
They hugged me and held me
 and loved me; spoke
Of happy doings and friendly folk.
They seemed to have journeyed a week away,
But now they were ready and glad to stay.

But oh, if they came on the wind to-night
Could I bear their faces, their garments white
Blown in the dark 'round my lonely bed?
Oh, could I forgive them for being dead?
I am almost afraid of the wind. My shame!
That I would not be glad if my dear ones came!

The Black Witch

Ye have driven me out from your court
 and your kirk,¹
 From your market-square and your mill;
Ye have branded my name,
 ye have wasted my work.
Ye have done me a deadly ill.

Ye have chased me to crags where the eagles cry,
 And the sharp sun swallows the dew.
A Witch and a Devil's Wife am I?
 Then why should I come to you?

The Black Plague walks in your
 shuddering street;
 Your dead like herring lie thick.
With mantles over your mouths ye meet.
 Ye take the dead for the quick.

God's Faith! My witchcraft could help you now;
 My devils could daunt your death!
But I will stand under my rowan-bough
 However ye waste your breath.

I will not come down, I will not come down,
 Nor weave you one wizardry,
Though all the roofs o' the little red town
 Go tumbling into the sea.

Though all the cracks o' the craggy Rock
 Gape wide as the mouths o' Doom,
I will stand at the crest and make you a mock
 Till ye long for the grave's gray gloom.

¹ *Kirk*. Church.

Black Plague! Black Plague!
push open their doors!
Lie down in their beds this day!
Heavy and hard are my ancient scores.
Black Plague! but we make them pay!
Oh, up and up in the face of the sun
My voice like a flame shall flee,
With Curse on you, Curse on you, every one,
Who wrought such a curse on me!

Hoofs in the Dark

I wake in the night, and my heart says, "Hark!"
I lie like a corpse in my cool white place.
For hoofs go by in the dark, in the dark.
I turn on my pillow and bury my face.

The night is a tomb that smothers and sounds.
The night is a cavern uncressted.²
The blood in my ears like a mallet pounds.
My heart goes wild and my eyes see red:

Red and purple with prickling light,
Terrible broken light like glass.³
For your hoofs go by in the breathing night,
And I dare not call you nor see you pass.

² *Uncressted*. A cresset is a niche inside a wall in which a lamp is placed.

³ *Red and purple ... like glass*. These lines are an accurate description of the ocular migraine.

Loud on the bridge and up the hill,
Low and dull on the turfy lawn:
You ride with the wind, at the dark wind's will,
With the alien stars, an hour ere dawn.

When I am dead, and the tapers burn,
As stiff and pale in my place I lie,
What shall I do if I cannot turn
And bury my face when the hoofs go by?
What if my body rose in its shroud,
And leaned like a mist the casement through,
Being no longer mortal and proud, —
Questing you, calling you, claiming you?

Would you draw rein? Would you see my face
Wan with wonder and love and death
Shine out once from the window-space, —
Shine, then fade with the frost's white breath?

Would you draw rein? Who knows? The tide
Of my blood runs high, and my heart
says "Hark!"

I have long to live, while you ride — you ride —
Out in the dark; out there in the dark.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Supplement 1 (Yogh & Torn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021).

MARJORIE DEFAZIO (1933-2020)

“Today I am free”

Today I am free
I've cut all the ties
I don't owe anyone anything
And they don't owe me
It's lonely
out here
If I exchange some of the freedom
To relieve some of the lonely
Am I back where I started?

Exercise in Futility

I see New York with a sober eye
The people smashed and groping home
The buildings overburdened —overblown
I hear New York in a strangled cry
I feel New York and my mouth goes dry
The seeds of greed so carelessly sown
The fires of hate that chill the bone
I must love or shrivel and die
Love insists but with a mangled face
Damaged feelings lost in hazy smoke
People buried by buildings or lost in flight
Can I love within this place
This air, this noise, this joke
Time is out of tune, space is out of sight

Master Plan

I talked to my brother yesterday
He has this *master* plan
He agrees with most of what we say
BUT aren't we asking too much
too soon
And shouldn't we bring the men along
After all, how will we be equal
If the men don't understand
And won't it be a better world
If we all raise the children
And are gentle and caring
As women have always been
Yes, I said, that's what we've been saying
Marveling that he had heard

Ah! Ha! he said, making his point
Then you do agree
You should bring the men along
Help them to understand
Stop staying in little groups
Talking to women only
Help us
And you'll soon be equal
And we'll have a better world
NOW LISTEN, he said, HERE'S WHAT
YOU SHOULD DO

New York City

I love the ocean
and the soft sea air
My feet respond
to wooded trails
and walks upon the sand
The quiet of a Tuesday
summer lake
smoothes out the creases
of my mind
But don't take it all away
I need the people,
the electric
dirty air
The sunset through the buildings
and walks
from here to there

Quiet Noise

I need a public, private place
where I can be alone
with people all about
The quiet noise of people talking
but not at all to me
My flesh absorbs the sounds
and senses
traveling through this space
but my being
is inviolate
Accepting what I need
and filtering out the waste

— From *A Quiet Noise*,
(The Poet's Press, 1972).

WALTER DE LA MARE (1873-1956)



Walter de la Mare had the unlikely career of a statistician until a state pension permitted him to write full-time after 1908. He was a great writer of ghost stories, short stories, and novels, as well as a poet steeped in a dreamlike romanticism. He wrote a great many poems for children, and was also fascinated by fairy lore. (Many English folk who cherish their indoor house ghosts will have no part of outdoor Celtic fairy business.) His work might be seen as part of the last twilight of gentle supernaturalism, still garbed in traditional verse.

I Saw Three Witches

I saw three witches
That bowed down like barley,
And straddled their brooms 'neath a louring sky,
And, mounting a storm-cloud,
Aloft on its margin,
Stood black in the silver as up they did fly.

I saw three witches
That mocked the poor sparrows
They carried in cages of wicker along,
Till a hawk from his eyrie
Swooped down like an arrow,
Smote on the cages, and ended their song.

I saw three witches
That sailed in a shallop,¹
All turning their heads with a snickering smile,
Till a bank of green osiers²
Concealed their grim faces,
Though I heard them lamenting for many a mile.

I saw three witches
Asleep in a valley,
Their heads in a row, like stones in a flood,
Till the moon, creeping upward,
Looked white through the valley,
And turned them to bushes in bright scarlet bud.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume II. (Yogh & Torn Books/ The Poets Press, 2016).

¹ *Shallop*. A light sailboat that can also be rowed with oars.

² *Osiers*. A variety of willow tree whose twigs are used for basket-making.

JACQUELINE DE WEEVER

Orb-Weaving Spider

She huddles at its center
as the moon rides the clouds
spittle silk churned from her belly
trap for beetle, firefly, wasp

testing suspension
between dust-crusting limbs
of an old frangipani
crowded with blooms:

an ancient art of entrapment.

Precision launch
from center to twig
shuttle back to web's navel,
out again in the night dew.

Green lacewings tangle
as embroidery, sphinx moths
flutter in her threads.

Day unravels what
night has woven —

another night a new web
to form a tapestry
of riddles.

Otherworld Ambush

They rolled out of ships
impoverished young men
with cargo — guns, horses, dogs,
almighty smallpox,
fatal for forest dwellers in endless green
of thick vines, turgid rivers
hunting peccary and fish
arrows tipped with stone and curare.
Mother Amazon's defenses:
an arsenal of malaria and typhus
tucked into the anopheles mosquito.

I am the result,
speaking their languages,
with a Dutch name,
my eyes slanted,
gift from my Javanese great grandfather,
my umbilical cord
buried in the lotus-clogged marshes,
to which I shall return.

— From *Trailing the Sun's Sweat*
(The Poet's Press, 2015).

Hunting Orion

I emerge from subterranean white lights
into a blue night, the moon at three-quarters,
a baroque pearl plugged
into the deep indigo void.
I search for Orion,
hunter in the southeast.
He is nowhere.

Threatened by his absence,
I rehearse names I know, those musical sounds:
Betelgeuse, right shoulder,
Rigel in the left leg, alpha and beta stars
learned from Dad's sky atlas,
now talismans hugged
against night's dangers.

But at three o'clock in the morning,
awakened by memory's witchcraft
lurking in dark corners,
I sleepwalk into the kitchen.
The moon has peeled off her pearl-skin
and thrown it on the floor.
Orion hunts in the western sky:
dagger against his leg.

— From *Rice-Wine Ghosts*
(The Poet's Press, 2017).

CLAUDIA DOBKINS DIKINIS (b. 1949)

Actress-poet-feminist-memoirist-astrologer, Claudia Dobkins-Dikinis was the femme fatale of our supernatural poetry circle in New York City in the 1970s. After New York she went West to Santa Monica, California and then on to a decade and a half of world travels, including East Asia, Africa and Mexico. Her life adventures, and studies in history, cultural anthropology and psychology continue to enrich her writing, mentoring and astrological consulting. Her chapbook, *First Poems*, was published by The Poet's Press/Grim Reaper Books in 1974; the poet's poem-cycle, *Nocturnes*, can be read at her website, starcats.com.

writing poetry

each time
the same wringing of hands
and the thought of pills
or music.

sometimes it's a man
or the sharpening of pencils
that detours us.

more often it is
the migraine
or anger that forces
us to do it.

always saying this
is the last time ever.

The Orange Tent

It squats like a pumpkin,
is harmless with its zippers and flaps
but its fat mouth gloats.

what indolence!
it sprawls like a nude with nothing to do
but remember feet and various sized asses.

how smug it is
anchored there with fat stakes.
it stretches to the trees as if it recognized them.

The rubber sides puff with the breeze,
glutted from some remembered dinner,
no doubt.
It sniffs as if anticipating erotica or money.

What does it want if not other arms
and familiar creases?
even the canvas sheds as if it itched
for other people, different years.

a sudden simple song (about love)

that your skeleton fits mine is not enough.
your bones rub me to a chiseled powder.
your touch is electrifying
even when you are not here.

my hair is an aura of questions;
who do you dream behind your eyes?
as if the curve of my pelvis is not enough.

when heat measures its beats across my thighs
it is no more than an aching to be dressed
in skin,

to flow in a milky substance
of honey,
of dandelion wine.

that your skin fits mine is not enough.
your fingers capture my lips
and I am burning for the woman you dream,

that the sound of her voice would leave
me wordless

or alone with a mysterious melody

walking

two kettles drumming,
a boom of legs in skeletal rhythm
grinding from hip to hip.
between our thighs, skin and silk swishing,
the sound of apples eating from the inside out.
our juice is red, blasts of blood bang bones
beating in feet.

we march on rattling sticks.
when we lock fingers, I think splinters
shooting the sun down.

Tulips

stick in the air with nothing to do.
They are receptacles for stares;
one man is in awe of their beauty,
another wants to grab their necks and yank.

Still they remain passive, unafraid.
Even if the wind musters a subversive whisper
they are compliant, they do the right thing.

As for the grass, no one seems to notice.
How it gushes in abundance!
Even now invisible blades of it grunt
against roots moaning with terrible secrets

—From *First Poems* (The Poet's Press, 1974).

Voice

It is pleasant enough here,
I have the window and the wall outside.
I have only to look down and see the rubbish,
that will keep me busy:
there's a milk container
and a discarded mattress, look at the pee stains.
Too, on the fire escape, someone's
 laundry has fallen:
blue pants, a shirt, a printed scarf.
But that is not all,
there are winter trees bare as chicken bones
and animals: the wild cats chase rodents,
hang their souls on the wall.
At sunset the flood lights blink on
like individual migraines.
Across the way the people draw the curtains
shutting me out.
I am looking from someone's head.
She has lent me her eyes. Should I itch
I borrow her fingers. If I pull the blinds
everything is different.
The wall recedes now, it is dark.
I listen for footsteps thinking
there is something I should do.

Resurrection of the Devil

for Aubrey Beardsley

They have made me bear this child
like the others before me
who lay cursed and dead
in boxes suffocated beneath the earth.
They have filled their bodies with drugs
and incisions both vile and murderous
and left them to die,
because of him, the black haired one,
with the sweet tongue talking between
my thighs, his hands, velvet cushions
beckoning me to lay on the bed where
they pushed needles into my arms
 filling me with poison.
I lay by that bowl next to the roses
where I am locked in this bed. My thigh
is a swollen mass of veins and tissues
feeding that hideous child that I tried
to miscarry at the stairs, on the terrace.
Each time I move, the roses scream
and extend their thorns to prick my face,
my empty breasts that they have
 drained of milk.
The bowl sits attentive to the knife
and leaks images of my empty belly
my sleeping eggs wound dead in their sacs.
My womb has been ripped and stitched
in my thigh where it beats, bleeds and
nourishes the demon multiplying in my bone.
I have not seen my midwife's face
but I have seen her hands, gnarled
and knotted as they pick up the pen
and write at the table. She feeds the
roses my milk and they purr, guarding the knife.
I go mad with the sun;
I am blindfolded and fed a nameless raw meat;
I feel someone's breath oozing on me
as the black-haired one has his pleasure
 in my thigh.
Soon this child will be cut from me
as I stand holding the brace,
shrieking as my misguided brain
directs me to lay down with my legs
opened as a woman.
After this, I will be left to die.
They will wrap the child in swaddling
clothes and feed it roses.

Imagined Dinner At Barbara Holland's

So that is how you do it.
I thought you had a kitchen.
That's an awfully strange spoon
and an overly-large pot for a dinner,
isn't it?
I'd rather you put it on the stove,
the fire on the rug could catch the curtains.
Curious you aren't burned when you touch it.
Where is the wood that keeps it going?
Here are the onions. Do you always jab
them with your nails?
I've never seen anyone add paper.
Does it do something for the broth?
What are we having?
 birdhouse stew?
 sautéed ironing boards?
 clouds?
Maybe you'll teach me how to chop up pencils
with my hair. I didn't know you could do that.
It seems to grow longer as you jump through
your whirling dervish dance.
I think you've burned the bread,
or is that the loaf of erasers you baked?
When it is cool and tender, will we eat it
 with the poems?

Horror Story

Everyday it works; the fruit
lipped moon of October opening
its jaws licking midnight.
The blood apples wink from
the dressing table bobbing
like new heads.
Before a wall of mirrors
the lady stands choosing
her reflection,
first skinny then fat.
She peels her image,
rolls it into a ball,
then stuffs it in her gown.
At the witching hour
she will stand,
slap on her latex face,
then go to greet her guests
and talk of unmasking.

— From *May Eve: A Festival of Supernatural Poetry*
(Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press, 1975).

JOHN DRINKWATER (1882-1937)

The Cotswold Farmers

Sometimes the ghosts forgotten go
Along the hill-top way,
And with long scythes of silver mow
Meadows of moonlit hay,
Until the cocks of Cotswold crow
The coming of the day.

There's Tony Turkletob who died
When he could drink no more,
And Uncle Heritage, the pride
Of eighteen-twenty-four,
And Ebenezer Barleytide,
And others half a score.

They fold in phantom pens, and plough
Furrows without a share,
And one will milk a faery cow,
And one will stare and stare,
And whistle ghostly tunes that now
Are not sung anywhere.

The moon goes down on Oakridge lea,
The other world's astir,
The Cotswold Farmers silently
Go back to sepulchre,
The sleeping watchdogs wake, and see
No ghostly harvester.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 2
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2016).

ARTHUR ERBE

Scent of Lilacs

First lilacs bend on late planted bushes,
purple fragrance luring
black and gold bees
who made nests in the garage's moldings.

I tried to exterminate them last summer,
but today one or two hover
near the site.

Is this the longing, melancholy, nostalgia
Johannes Hofer first named: *mal du Suisse*:

Swiss homesickness

mercenaries felt
in 1688 on the plains of France and Italy,
pining for mountain landscapes?

When sent home, many were cured.

I watch the bees circling blooming lilacs
stumble through spring air
confused by a mysterious instinct:
a force driving them
to return home again.

Ritual Rock

under the chokeberry tree
I find a rock

I see embedded
on its side a leaf

not a chokeberry one
but a delicate fern

I hold the rock
close to my ear

it whispers strange
ritual words

I hear drum-beats
swish of feathers

jangle of bracelets
rattle of tinkling bells

chants evoking spirits
praising the earth

I imagine the rock
hidden in my book bag

but know I must not
disturb the delicate balance

even though I cherish
this link to another world

Rain

1.
A child sits by a window
staring at rain beating
against the pane,
reading a story
about a small boy
caught in a thunderstorm
with no umbrella
or raincoat.
Words on the page
melt and drip down
onto the floor:
he believes his chair is a boat —
floats to the ceiling,
doesn't know how to swim.

2.
In the schoolroom
the teacher fears rain
creeping under the cracked door,
rising to the chalkboard,
washing away her written
words about a boy reading
a book in a boat.
She orders the students
to stand on desks —
they refuse, want to swim
have a holiday.
She wades to the window,
jumps from the ledge
flies away.

3.

An elderly woman hears
cold water dripping in her kitchen,
leaking through the roof.
She puts a newspaper
over her head — the obituary
column soaks through;
she sits at the breakfast
table — her tea cup overflows
into a puddle where a small
boy reading a book,
paddling in a boat,
calls out for help.
She has never saved
anyone's life.

4.

Cloudbursts at the cemetery
muddy the grave — mourners
huddle in a soggy tent.
Lightning flashes;
thunder roars,
drowning the minister's
prayer to the heavens.
The boat shaped casket
sinks into the ground.
Words float to the surface.
An elderly woman
weeps for the drowned
boy who can't swim,
who reads too many books.

On Walden Pond with Thoreau

Rain today, a fine mist, fog on the pond —
no bird-calls echo through the dense trees;
we push off together, paddle from the shore.

The boat glides on smooth water, slap of oars
lulls us to ponder: why not laze away
a pristine morning? The loon's not here —

We rest, view the scene — on the shore
a tourist parks his SUV by the road, walks to
the water, paces back and forth, confused.

Music from a boom box: rap rhythm
ripples across the pond. Henry feels the beat,
slaps his thighs — old pagan reviving a ritual.

I turn the boat around, offer another view,
swig spring water from a plastic bottle —
Thoreau cups Walden in his hand, drinks.

He smiles — we are invisible, outside time
and space — the image of his bean-rows
twists into the sky, his hut rises into clouds.

Wind ripples the water, a jet marks a long
smoky
trail in the sky. A flash of light — he is gone.
I paddle to the shore, wait alone in shadows.

Room with No View

I take the express train to Florence
as Richard recommended —

third-class car
riders with bundles
food clothing
bottles in bags
children sleeping

After four hours arriving weary,
I stumble through the thick burning air
over winding cobbled streets.

I am at your favorite pensione:
Maria Guduichi's — three flights up —
antiques crowd the room.

Through shutters disturbing slices
of sunlight on the wall,
a spider's web in the dark corner,
shrill voices echo from the courtyard's well.

You stayed here last year.

By early evening the sky fills
with squeaking bats, soaring over red roofs.
I thought they were birds.

I am here not knowing you will never return.

— From *Continuum*, (The Poet's Press, 2019).

ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN

Writing under one conjoined name, Émile Erckmann (1822–1899) and Alexandre Chatrian (1826–1890), from Lorraine, wrote important historical novels and dramas. They also published novels and stories centered on crime and the supernatural.

The Eye Invisible



THIS WAS THE strange account of my friend Christian, told in his own words: It was the year, when, poor as a church rat, I had taken shelter in the roof-loft of an old house in the Street of the Minnesängers, at Nuremberg.

I had made my nest in an angle of the roof. The slates served me for walls, and the roof-trusses for a ceiling. I had to walk over my straw mattress to reach the window, but this window commanded a magnificent view, for it overlooked both city and country beyond. From it I watched cats gravely walking along the gutter. Storks, with beak-loads of frogs, carried food to their ravenous young ones; and pigeons with their tails spread fan-like, whirled above the depths of the streets below.

In the evening, when the church-bells called the people to the *Angelus*, I rested my elbows on the edge of the roof and listened to their melancholy song. I watched the windows light up one by one. Down below I could see the good townsmen, smoking their pipes on the pavement. The young girls, in short red petticoats, and with their pitchers under their arms, laughed and chatted about the fountain of Saint Sébalt. Gradually all these objects faded from my view as the bats came abroad in the dim air, and I lay myself down to sleep in the midst of the soft quietude.

The old second-hand dealer, Toubec, knew the way up to my little loft as well as I knew it myself, and was not afraid of climbing the final ladder. Every week his goat's head, surmounted by a rusty wig, pushed up the trap-door, his fingers clutched the edge of the floor, and in a noisy tone he cried —

“Well, well, Master Christian, have we anything new?”

To which I answered —

“Come in! Why the devil don't you come in? I'm just finishing a little landscape, and want to have your opinion of it.”

Then his long thin spine lengthened itself out, until his head touched the roof, and the old fellow laughed silently.

I must do justice to Toubec: he never bargained with me. He bought all my pictures at fifteen florins

apiece, one after another, and sold them again at forty. He was an honest-dealing Jew.

This kind of existence was beginning to please me, and I was every day finding in it some new charm, when the good city of Nuremberg was agitated by a strange and mysterious event.

Not far from my garret-window, a little to the left, rose the *auberge* of The Fatted Bull (*Boeuf-gras*), an old inn much frequented by the country-people. Three or four wagons, loaded with sacks or casks, were always standing before its doors, for before going to market the countrymen used to take their nip of wine there.

The gable of this inn was conspicuous for the peculiarity of its form. It was very narrow, sharply pointed, and its edges were cut like the teeth of a saw. Grotesque carvings ornamented the cornices and frame-work of its windows. But what was most remarkable was that the house which faced it reproduced exactly the same carvings and ornaments — every detail had been minutely copied, even to the support of the sign-board, with its iron volutes and spirals.

It might have been said that these two ancient buildings reflected one another; only that behind the inn grew a tall oak, the dark foliage of which served to bring into bold relief the forms of the roof, while the opposite house stood bare against the sky. For the rest, the inn was as noisy and animated as the other house was silent. On the one side was to be seen, going in and coming out, an endless crowd of drinkers, singing, stumbling, cracking their whips; over the other, solitude reigned.

Once or twice a day, at most, the heavy door of the silent house opened to give egress to a little old woman, her back bent into a half-circle, her chin long and pointed, her dress clinging to her limbs, an enormous basket under her arm, and one hand tightly clutched upon her chest.

The physiognomy of this old woman had struck me more than once. Her little green eyes, her skinny, pinched-up nose, the large flower-pattern on her shawl, dating back a hundred years at least; the smile that wrinkled her cheeks, and the lace of her cap hanging down upon her eyebrows — all this appeared to me strange, interested me, and made me strongly desire

to learn who this old woman was, and what she did in her great lonely house.

I imagined her as passing there an existence devoted to good works and pious meditation. But one day, when I had stopped in the street to look at her, she turned sharply round and darted at me a look the horrible expression of which I know not how to describe, and made three or four hideous grimaces at me. Then, dropping again her doddering head, she drew her large shawl about her, the ends of which trailed after her on the ground, and slowly entered her heavy door, behind which I saw her disappear.

“Why, she’s mad!” I said to myself. “She is a malicious, cunning old mad-woman! I ought not to have allowed myself to be so interested in her. But I’ll try and recreate her abominable grimace — Toubec will give me fifteen florins for it willingly.”

This way of treating the matter was far from satisfying my mind, however. The way in which she had sensed my watching her and turned about, disconcerted me. Making eye-contact with the insane placed you in their thoughts, and who knows what obsession they might make of it? The old woman’s horrible glance pursued me everywhere; and more than once, while scaling the perpendicular ladder of my lodging-hole, feeling my clothes caught in a nail, I trembled from head to foot, fancying that the old woman had seized me by the tails of my coat for the purpose of pulling me down backwards.

Toubec, to whom I related the story, far from laughing at it, received it with a serious air.

“Master Christian,” he said, “if the old woman means you harm, take care. I have noted her. Her teeth are small, sharply-pointed, and wonderfully white, which is not natural at her age. She has the Evil Eye! Children run away at her approach, and the people of Nuremberg call her *Fledermaus*!”¹

I admired the art-dealer’s clear-sightedness, and what he had told me made me reflect a good deal; but at the end of a few weeks, having often met *Fledermaus* without harmful consequences, my fears died away and I thought no more of her.

Now, it happened one night, when I was lying sound asleep, I was awakened by a strange harmony. It was a kind of vibration, so soft, so melodious, that the murmur of a light breeze through foliage can convey but a feeble idea of its gentle nature. For a long time I listened to it, my eyes wide open, and holding my breath the better to hear it.

At length, looking towards the window, I saw two wings beating against the inside of the glass. I thought, at first, that it was a bat imprisoned in my chamber. But no — the moon was shining clearly, and it was the wings of a magnificent night-moth, transparent as lace,

¹ *Fledermaus* is the German word for bat.

that were silhouetted upon its radiant disc. At times their vibrations were so rapid as to hide them from my view; then for awhile they would lie in repose, extended on the glass pane, their delicate articulations made visible anew.

This vaporous apparition in the midst of the universal silence opened my heart to the tenderest emotions. It seemed to me that a sylph, pitying my solitude, had come to see me, and this idea brought tears into my eyes.

“Have no fear, gentle captive — have no fear!” I said to it. “Your confidence shall not be betrayed. I will not retain you against your wishes. Return to the heavens — to liberty!”

And I opened the window.

The night was calm. Thousands of stars glittered in space. For a moment I contemplated this sublime spectacle, and prayerful thoughts rose naturally to my lips. But before I could murmur even one solemn platitude, I froze at something else I saw. Imagine my amazement when, looking down, I saw a man hanging from the iron stanchion which supported the signboard of the Fatted Bull. His hair was in disorder, his arms stiff, his legs straightened to a point. The shape of the dead man threw its gigantic shadow the whole length of the street!

The immobility of this figure, in the moonlight, had something frightful in it. I felt my tongue grow icy cold, and my teeth chattered. I was about to utter a cry, but by what mysterious attraction I know not, my eyes were drawn towards the opposite house, and there I dimly distinguished the old woman, in the midst of the heavy shadow, leaning forward out of her window and contemplating the hanging body with diabolical satisfaction. I became giddy with terror. My whole strength deserted me, and I fell down in a heap insensible.

II

I DO NOT KNOW how long I lay unconscious. On coming to myself I found that it was broad daylight. The mists of night, entering my garret, had dropped their fresh moisture on my hair. Mingled and confused noises rose from the street below. I looked out again from my window.

The burgomaster and his secretary were standing at the door of The Fatted Bull. They remained there a long time. People came and went, stopped to look, then passed on their way. Women of the neighborhood, sweeping in front of their houses, looked in the direction of the inn and chatted together. At length a stretcher, on which lay a body covered with a woollen cloth, was brought out and carried away by two men.

Children, on their way to school, followed them as they went.

Then everyone else disappeared.

The window in front of the house remained open still; a fragment of rope dangled from the iron support of the signboard. So, I had not dreamed — I had really *seen* the night-moth on my window-pane — then the suspended body — then the old woman!

In the course of that day Toubec paid me his weekly visit.

“Anything to sell, Master Christian?” he cried, as his hat and nose became visible above the edge of the floor.

I did not hear him. I was seated on my only chair, my hands upon my knees, my eyes fixed on vacancy before me. Toubec, surprised at my immobility, repeated in a louder tone, “Master Christian! — Master Christian!” then, stepping up to me, tapped me smartly on the shoulder.

“What’s the matter ? — what’s the matter ?” he asked.

“Ah! is that you, Toubec?”

“Well, it’s pleasant for me to think so! Are you ill?”

“No — I was thinking.”

“What the devil about?”

“The man who was hanged.”

“Aha!” cried the old broker. “You saw the poor fellow, then? What a strange affair! The third in the same place!”

“The *third*?”

“Yes, the third. I ought to have told you about it before. But there’s still time if you are thinking of a painting — for there’s sure to be a fourth, following the example of the others, though someone may make it more difficult for imitators.”

This said, and unperturbed by my silence, Toubec seated himself on a box, struck a light with the flint and steel, lit his pipe and sent out a few puffs of tobacco-smoke with a thoughtful air.

“Good faith!” said he, “I’m not timid; but if any one were to ask me to sleep in that room, I’d rather go and hang myself somewhere else! Nine or ten months back,” he continued, “a wholesale furrier, from Tübingen, put up at The Fatted Bull. He called for supper, ate well, drank well, and was shown up to bed in the room on the third floor which they call the ‘green chamber.’ The next day they found him hanging from the stanchion of the signboard.

“So much for number one, about which there was nothing to be said. A proper report of the affair was drawn up, and the body of the stranger was buried at the bottom of the garden. But about six weeks afterwards came a soldier from Neustadt. He had his discharge, and was congratulating himself on his return to his village. All the evening he did nothing but empty

mugs of wine and talk of his cousin, who was awaiting his return to marry him. At last they had had enough of him, and carried him to bed in the green chamber, and, the same night, the watchman passing along the Street of the Minnesängers noticed something hanging from the signboard-stanchion. He raised his lantern: it was the soldier, with his discharge-papers in a tin box hanging on his left thigh, and his hands planted smoothly on the outer seams of his trousers, as if he had been on parade!

“It was certainly an extraordinary affair! Everyone swore the man had been in a near-stupor, and had done nothing more than sing good-natured songs. Not a trace of gloom about him. So the burgomaster declared it was the work of the Devil. The chamber was examined. They replastered its walls. A notice of the death was sent to Neustadt, on the margin of which the clerk wrote — *Died suddenly of apoplexy*. Pull a medical term off a list, and many crimes and mysteries just vanish into thin air.

“All Nuremberg was indignant against the landlord of The Fatted Bull, and wished to compel him to take down the iron stanchion of his signboard, on the pretext that it put dangerous ideas in people’s heads. All the students had gotten wind of it, and they would, on certain nights, toss lengths of rope over the stanchion just to stir up an alarm. But old Nickel Schmidt didn’t give ear on to the complaints and warnings.

“That stanchion was put there by my grandfather,” he said. “The sign of The Fatted Bull has hung on it, from father to son, for a hundred and fifty years. It does nobody any harm, not even the hay-carts that pass under it, because it’s more than thirty feet high up. Those who don’t like it have only to look another way, and then they won’t see it.”

“People’s excitement gradually cooled down, and for several months nothing new happened. Unfortunately, a student of Heidelberg, on his way to the University, came to the inn and asked for a bed. He was the son of a pastor.

“Who could suppose that the son of a pastor would take into his head the idea of hanging himself to the stanchion of a public-house sign, because a furrier and a soldier had hanged themselves there before him? It must be confessed, Master Christian, that the thing was not very probable — it would not have appeared more likely to you than it did to me. And then —”

“Enough! Enough!” I cried. “It is a horrible affair. I feel sure there is some frightful mystery at the bottom of it. It is neither the stanchion nor the chamber.”

“You don’t mean that you suspect the landlord? — as honest a man as there is in the world, and belonging to one of the oldest families in Nuremberg?”

“No, no! Heaven keep me from forming unjust suspicions of any one. But there are abysses into the which one dares not look.”

“You are right,” said Toubec, astonished at my excited manner. I spoke hastily about a painting,” — he paused — “although *such* a painting, seen from *this* vantage, I can imagine, *in your manner*, would fetch a pretty penny.”

I did not answer this suggestion. It was too morbid.

Toubec let it pass. He smiled. “Then we had much better talk of something else. By the way, Master Christian, what about *our* landscape, the view of Sainte-Odile?”

The question brought me back to actualities. I showed the broker the commissioned picture I had just finished. The business was soon settled between us, and Toubec, thoroughly satisfied, went down the ladder, advising me to think no more of the student of Heidelberg.

I would very willingly have followed the old broker’s advice, but when the Devil mixes himself up with our affairs he is not easily shaken off.

III

IN SOLITUDE, ALL these events came back to my mind with frightful distinctness. The old woman, I said to myself, is the cause of all this. She alone has planned these crimes, she alone has carried them into execution — but by what means? Has she had recourse to cunning only, or really to the intervention of some dread and invisible powers?

I paced my garret, a voice within me crying, “It is not without purpose that Heaven has permitted you to see Fledermausse watching the agony of her victim. It was not without design that the poor young man’s soul came to wake you in the form of a night-moth! No! all this has not been without purpose. Christian, Heaven imposes on you a terrible mission. If you fail to accomplish it, fear that you yourself may fall into the clutches of the old woman! Perhaps at this moment she is laying her snares for you in the darkness!”

During several days these frightful images pursued me without cessation. I could not sleep. I found it impossible to work: the brush fell from my hand, and, shocking to confess, I detected myself at times complacently contemplating the dreadful stanchion. At last, one evening, unable any longer to bear this state of mind, I flew down the ladder four steps at a time, and went and hid myself in a shadowed passageway next to Fledermausse’s door, for the purpose of discovering her fatal secret.

From that time there was never a day that I was not on the watch, following the old woman like her

shadow, never losing sight of her, but she was so cunning, she had so keen a scent, that without even turning her head she discovered that I was behind her, and knew that I was on her track. I would stop, sketchpad in hand, and taking out a crayon, would pretend to be drawing some detail of the street. Cat and mouse we went. She pretended not to see me — went to the market, to the butcher’s, like a simple housewife, only she quickened her pace and muttered to herself as she went.

At the end of a month I saw that it would be impossible for me to achieve my purpose by these means, and this conviction filled me with an inexpressible sadness.

“What can I do?” I asked myself. “The old woman has discovered my intentions, and is thoroughly on her guard. I am helpless. The old wretch already thinks she sees *me* at the end of the cord!”

At length, from repeating to myself again and again the question, “What can I do?” a luminous idea presented itself to my mind.

My chamber overlooked the house of Fledermausse, but it had no dormer window on that side. Moving to another corner of my loft, I carefully raised one of the slates of my roof, and lo! I discovered that by this means I could command a view of the entire antique building. Now I could study the suspicious house front and back.

“At last I’ve got you!” I cried to myself. “You cannot escape me now! From here I shall see everything — the goings and comings, the habits of the weasel in her hole! You will not suspect this invisible eye — this eye that will surprise the crime at the moment of its inception! Oh, Justice! it moves slowly, but it comes!”

As for the part of the house hidden from the street, nothing was more sinister than this den. It had a large yard, paved with moss-grown flagstones, and a well in one corner, the stagnant water of which was frightful to behold. A wooden staircase led up to a railed gallery, from whose balustrade hung the tick of an old mattress. To the left, on the first floor, a drain-stone indicated the kitchen. To the right, the upper windows of the house looked into the street. All was dark, decaying, and dank-looking. Where the mirror-image auberge across the street was a house of cheer and food-spirits, the back-of-the-mirror house of Fledermausse, with its shadows and perhaps bottomless well, was a vortex of crime and evil. It was a stage-set for unspeakable crimes. Of this I was certain.

The sun penetrated only for an hour or two during the day into the depths of this dismal sty. Then the shadows again spread over it — the light fell in lozenge-shapes upon the crumbling walls, on the moldy balcony, on the dull windows. Clouds of motes danced

in the golden rays that not a motion of the air came to disturb.

Oh, the whole place was worthy of its mistress! I began making sketches of it after each viewing, and it took only a small leap of imagination to add in a few goblins and demons lurking in the dead branches, or peeping up from the dank-watered well.

One day, as I had just finished the darkest-yet of these sketches, I saw the old woman enter the yard on her return from market. First, I heard her heavy door grate on its hinges, then Fledermausse, with her basket, appeared. She seemed fatigued — out of breath. The border of her cap flung down upon her nose, as, clutching the wooden rail with one hand, she mounted the stairs.

The heat was suffocating. It was exactly one of those days when insects of every kind — crickets, spiders, mosquitoes — fill old buildings with their grating noises and subterranean borings.

Fledermausse crossed the gallery slowly, like a ferret that feels itself at home. For more than a quarter of an hour she remained in the kitchen, then came out and turned her mattress-tick, swept the stones a little, on which a few straws had been scattered. At last she raised her head, and with her green eyes carefully scrutinized every portion of the roof from which I was observing her.

By what strange intuition did she suspect anything? I know not, but I gently lowered the uplifted slate into its place, and gave up watching for the rest of that day.

IV

THE DAY FOLLOWING, Fledermausse appeared to be re-assured. A jagged ray of light fell into the gallery; passing this, she caught something in her hand — a fly, I presumed, and delicately presented it to a spider established in an angle of the roof. The spider was so large, that, in spite of the distance, I saw it descend round by round on its ladder, then, gliding along one thread, like a drop of venom, seize its prey from the fingers of the dreadful old woman, and remount rapidly. Fledermausse watched it attentively; then her eyes half-closed, she sneezed, and cried to herself in a jocular tone —

“Bless you, my beauty! — bless you!”

For six weeks I could discover nothing else regarding the power of Fledermausse. Sometimes I saw her peeling potatoes, sometimes spreading her linen on the balustrade. Sometimes she brought her spinning wheel out into the yard and I saw her spin in the dim light, but she never sang, as old women usually do, their quivering voices going so well with the humming of

the spinning-wheel. Silence reigned about her. Old stories came to my mind of the Norse crones who wove and spun and cut the threads of destiny for human lives.

She had no cat — the favorite company of old maids — and not a sparrow ever flew down into her yard. The pigeons seemed to hurry their flight over her shadowed space. It seemed as if all beings were afraid of her glance.

The spider alone took pleasure in her society. I now look back with wonder at my patience during those long hours of observation. Nothing escaped my attention, nothing was indifferent to me. At the least sound I lifted my slate. Mine was a boundless curiosity stimulated by an indefinable fear.

Toubec complained.

“What the devil are you doing with your time, Master Christian?” he would say to me. “Formerly, you had something ready for me every week — now, hardly once in a month. And what are these gloomy sketches thrown about? They are nonsense. Oh, you painters! People may well say, ‘Idle as a painter!’ As soon as they have a few kreutzer saved up, they put their hands in their pockets and go to sleep! At least you are not a drunkard!”

I myself was beginning to lose courage. With all my watching and spying, I had discovered nothing extraordinary. I was inclining to think that the old woman might not be so dangerous after all — that I had been wrong, perhaps, to suspect her. If, in her misery, she cast glances indicating her happiness at others’ misfortune, what business was it of mine? In short, I tried to find excuses for her. But one fine evening, when, with my eye to the opening in the roof, I was giving myself up to these charitable reflections, the scene abruptly changed.

Fledermausse passed along her gallery with the swiftness of a flash of light. She was no longer herself. Now she was erect, her jaws knit, her look fixed, her neck extended. She moved with long strides, her gray hair streaming behind her.

“Oh, oh!” I said to myself. “Something is going on — attention!”

But the shadows of night descended on the big house, the noises of the town died out, and all became silent. I was about to seek my bed, when, happening to look out of my skylight, I saw a light in the window of the green chamber of The Fatted Bull — a traveler was occupying that terrible room!

All my fears were instantly revived. The old woman’s excitement explained itself — she scented another victim!

I could not sleep all that night. The rustling of the straw of my mattress, the nibbling of a mouse under the floor, sent a chill through me. I rose and looked

out of my window — I listened. The light I had seen was no longer visible in the green chamber.

During one of these moments of poignant anxiety — whether the result of illusion or of reality — I fancied I could discern the figure of the old witch, likewise watching and listening.

The night passed, the dawn showed grey against my window-panes, and, slowly increasing, the sounds and movements of the re-awakened town arose. Harassed with fatigue and emotion, I at last fell asleep; but my repose was of short duration, and by eight o'clock I was again at my post of observation.

It appeared that Fledermausse had passed a night no less stormy than mine had been, for, when she opened the door of the gallery, I saw that a livid pallor was upon her cheeks and skinny neck. She had nothing on but her chemise and a flannel petticoat. A few locks of rusty gray hair fell upon her shoulders. She looked up musingly towards my garret, but she saw nothing — she was thinking of something else.

Suddenly she descended into the yard, leaving her shoes at the top of the stairs. Doubtless her object was to assure herself that the outer door was securely fastened. She then hurried up the stairs, taking three or four steps at a time. It was frightful to see! She rushed into one of the side rooms, and I heard the sound of a heavy box-lid fall. Then Fledermausse reappeared in the gallery, dragging with her an artist's dummy the size of life — and this manikin, of the sort used by painters and clothiers, was dressed like the unfortunate student of Heidelberg!

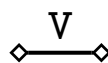
With surprising dexterity the old woman suspended this hideous object to a beam of the overhanging roof, then went down into the yard, to contemplate it from that point of view. A peal of grating laughter broke from her lips — she hurried up the stairs, and rushed down again, like a maniac. Each time she did this she burst into fresh fits of laughter.

A sound was heard outside the street door. The old woman sprang to the figure, snatched it from its fastening, and carried it into the house. Then she reappeared and leaned over the balcony, with outstretched neck, glittering eyes, and eagerly-listening ears. The sound passed away — the muscles of her face relaxed, and she drew a long breath. The passing of a vehicle had alarmed the old witch.

She then, once more, went back into her chamber, and I heard the lid of the box close heavily.

This strange scene utterly confounded all my ideas. What could that full-dressed manikin mean?

I became more watchful and attentive than ever.



FLEDERMAUSSE WENT OUT with her basket, and I watched her to the top of the street. She had resumed her air of tottering agedness, walking with short steps, and from time to time half-turning her head, so as to enable herself to look behind out of the corners of her eyes. For five long hours she remained abroad, while I went and came from my spying-place incessantly, meditating all the while — the sun heating the slates above my head till my brain was almost scorched.

Gazing down at his window, I saw the traveler who occupied the green chamber at The Fatted Bull. He was a peasant of Nassau, wearing a three-cornered hat, a scarlet waist-coat, and having a broad, laughing countenance. He was tranquilly smoking his Ulm pipe, unsuspecting of anything wrong. I felt impelled to call out to him, "My good fellow, be on your guard! Don't let yourself be fascinated by the old woman! — don't trust yourself!" But he could not have understood a word I said, even if he had heard me.

About two o'clock Fledermausse came back. The sound of her door opening echoed to the end of the passage. Presently she appeared alone, quite alone, in the yard, and seated herself on the lowest step of the gallery-stairs. She placed her basket at her feet and drew from it, first several bunches of herbs, then some vegetables — then a three-cornered hat, a scarlet velvet waistcoat, a pair of plush breeches, and a pair of thick worsted stockings — the complete costume of a peasant of Nassau!

I reeled with giddiness — flames passed before my eyes.

I remembered those precipices, in dreams, that drew one towards them with irresistible power. And such places existed in life. One heard of wells that had to be filled up because of persons throwing themselves into them — trees that have had to be cut down because of people hanging themselves upon them — a certain high cliff in England where multiple thwarted lovers have thrown themselves to death on the stony shore below — the contagion of suicide and theft and murder, which at various times has taken possession of people's minds, by means well understood. There was even that book of lost love — *The Sorrows of Young Werther* — that was said to induce scores of young men to suicide. It was, writ large, that strange inducement, for example, which makes people yawn because they see others yawn — kill themselves because others kill themselves. My hair rose upon my head with horror!

But how could this Fledermausse — a creature so mean and wretched — have made her own discovery of so profound a law of nature? How had she found

the means of turning it to the use of her sanguinary instincts? And what did she gain from it? This I could neither understand nor imagine. Did she offer their souls to the spider? Without more reflection, however, I resolved to turn the fatal law against her, and by its power to drag her into her own snare. So many innocent victims called for vengeance!

VI

THERE WAS NO time to waste. I began at once. I hurried to all the old clothes-dealers in Nuremberg, and by the evening I arrived at The Fatted Bull, with an enormous parcel under my arm. The innkeeper Nickel Schmidt had long known me. I had painted the portrait of his wife, a fat and comely dame.

“What! — Master Christian!” he cried, shaking me by the hand. “To what happy circumstance do I owe the pleasure of this visit?”

“My dear Mr. Schmidt, I feel a very strong desire I to pass the night in that room of yours up yonder.”

We were on the doorstep of the inn, and I pointed up to the green chamber. The good fellow looked suspiciously at me.

“Oh! Don’t be afraid,” I said, “I’ve no desire to hang myself. I live quite near, you see —”

“I thought as much, as you pass by frequently.”

“Nearer than you think, Herr Schmidt. As it happens, I have been sketching the street, the auberge included, and I see a series of paintings I might do, but I need to view everything, for a day and a night, at a different angle.”

“I’m glad that’s all it is! I am glad of it! for, frankly, I should be sorry — an artist of your talent. And you may make The Fatted Bull even more famous! Why, crowds will come to see it one day because some print of it is in their parlor! Who would have thought! When do you want the room, Master Christian?”

“Tonight.”

“Ah, that’s impossible — it is occupied.”

“The gentleman can have it at once, if he likes,” said a voice behind us. “I shall not stay in it.”

We turned in surprise. It was the peasant of Nassau, his large three-cornered hat pressed down upon the back of his neck, and his bundle at the end of his traveling-stick. He had just learned the story of the three travelers who had hanged themselves.

“Such chambers!” he cried, stammering with terror. “It’s — it’s murdering people to put them into such! You — you deserve to be sent to prison!”

“Come, come, calm yourself,” said the landlord. “You slept there comfortably enough last night.”

“Thank Heaven! I said my prayers before going to rest, or where should I be now? — where should I be now?”

And he hurried away, raising his hands to heaven.

“Well,” said Master Schmidt, stupefied, “the chamber is empty, but don’t go into it to do me an ill turn. I don’t need any more of *that kind* of publicity.”

“What you call giving you an ill-turn, Herr Schmidt, would be a worse one for me,” I replied. “It might do you a good turn,” I whispered, “to have a conspicuous guest who *survives*.”

The innkeeper nodded to this, and called loudly to his servants: “This *gentleman*, to the Green Chamber, at once!”

Giving my parcel to the servant-girl, I went and seated myself provisionally among the guests who were drinking and smoking. Some, who knew me casually, nodded. A few, nervously, unconsciously put their hands to their throats. An ill atmosphere had already formed, and the drinkers and talkers were an audience already attuned to anticipated horrors.

But I was not to be pulled into such a mood. For a long time I had not felt more calm, more happy to be in the world. After so much anxiety, I was approaching my goal — the horizon seemed to grow lighter. I know not by what formidable power I was being led on. I lit my pipe, and with my elbow on the table and a jug of wine before me, listened to the Hunting Chorus from von Weber’s supernatural opera *Der Freischutz*, played by a band of gypsies from The Black Forest. The trumpet, the hunting-horn, the oboe, by turns, plunged me into vague reverie. Sometimes, rousing myself to look at the woman’s house, I seriously asked myself whether all that had happened to me was more than a dream. But when the watchman came, to announce the legal closing-time and to request us to vacate the room, graver thoughts took possession of my mind, and I followed, in meditative mood, the little servant-girl who preceded me with a candle in her hand.

We mounted the winding flight of stairs to the third story. Once we were there, she placed the candle in my hand, and pointed to a door. She would not open it, and she would not enter. “That’s it,” she said, visibly shuddering, and hurried back down the stairs as fast as she could go.

I opened the door. The green chamber was like all other inn bedchambers: the ceiling was low, the bed was high. After casting a glance around the room, I stepped across to the window.

Nothing was yet noticeable in Fledermausse’s house, with the exception of a light, which shone at the back of a deep obscure bedchamber, — a night-light, doubtless.

“So much the better,” I said to myself, as I re-closed the window-curtains. “I shall have plenty of time.”

I opened my parcel, and from its contents put on a woman’s cap with a broad frilled border; then, with a piece of pointed charcoal, in front of the glass, I marked my forehead with a number of wrinkles. My face was my canvas, and I painted it from memory. This took me a full hour to do; but after I had put on a gown and a large shawl, I was afraid of myself: the ghastly Fledermausse herself looked at me from the depths of the mirror!

At that moment the watchman announced the hour of eleven. I rapidly dressed the manikin I had brought with me like the one prepared by the old witch. I then drew apart the window-curtains.

Certainly, after all I had seen of the old woman — her infernal cunning, her prudence, and her address — nothing ought to have surprised even me — yet I was positively terrified.

The light, which I had observed at the back of her room, now cast its yellow rays on *her* manikin, dressed like the peasant of Nassau, which sat huddled up on the side of the bed, its head dropped upon its chest, the large three-cornered hat drawn down over its features, its arms pendent by its sides, and its whole attitude that of a person plunged in despair.

Managed with diabolical art, the shadow permitted only a general view of the figure, the red waistcoat and its six rounded buttons alone caught the light; but the silence of night, the complete immobility of the figure, and its air of terrible dejection, all served to impress the beholder with irresistible force. Even I myself, though not in the least taken by surprise, felt chilled to the marrow of my bones. How, then, would a poor country fellow, taken completely off his guard, have felt? He would have been utterly overthrown; he would have lost all control of will, and the spirit of imitation would have done the rest.

Scarcely had I drawn aside the curtains than I discovered Fledermausse on the watch behind her window-panes.

She could not see me. I opened the window softly, the window over the way softly opened too. Then the artist’s dummy appeared to rise slowly and advance towards me. I did the same, and seizing my candle with one hand, with the other threw the casement wide open.

The old woman and I were face to face — for, overwhelmed with astonishment, she had let the manikin she was operating like a puppet fall from her hands. Our two looks crossed with an equal terror.

She stretched forth a finger, I did the same. Her lips moved — I moved mine. She heaved a deep sigh and leaned upon her elbow — I rested in the same way.

How frightful the enacting of this scene was I cannot describe. It was made up of delirium, bewilderment, madness. It was a struggle between two wills, two intelligences, two souls, one of which sought to crush the other, and in this struggle I had the advantage. I felt the force of will passing back and forth between us, a tug-of-war of mental power. But I prevailed. I had youth and strength of mind, and the dead were on my side.

After having for some seconds imitated all the movements of Fledermausse, I drew a cord from the folds of my petticoat, reached out of the window, and tied it to the iron stanchion of the signboard.

The old woman watched me with open mouth. I passed the cord around my neck. Her tawny eyeballs glittered. Her features became convulsed —

“No, no!” she cried, in a hissing tone. “No!”

I proceeded with the stone-cold demeanor of a hangman.

Then Fledermausse was seized with rage.

“You’re insane! Insane!” she cried, springing up and clutching wildly at the sill of the window. “Madness!”

I gave her no time to continue. Suddenly blowing out my lamp, I stooped like someone preparing to make a vigorous spring, then seizing my manikin figure, I slipped the cord about its neck and hurled *it* into the air.

A terrible shriek resounded through the street. Then all was silent again.

Perspiration bathed my forehead. I listened a long time. At the end of an hour I heard far off — very far off — the cry of the watchman, announcing to the inhabitants of Nuremberg that midnight had struck.

“Justice is at last done,” I murmured to myself. “The three victims are avenged. Heaven forgive me!”

This was five minutes after I had heard the last cry of the watchman, and when I had seen the old witch, drawn by the example of her *doppelgänger*, with a cord about her neck, hanging from the iron stanchion projecting from her own house. I saw the thrill of death run through her limbs, and the moon, calm and silent, rose above the edge of the roof, and shed its cold pale rays upon her disheveled head.

As I had seen the poor young student of Heidelberg, I now saw Fledermausse.

The next day all Nuremberg knew that “the Bat” had hanged herself. It was the last event of that kind in the Street of the Minnesänger.

THIS MUCH CHRISTIAN had told me, over less wine than what induces exaggeration. He repeated his tale, without variation, and usually only when implored to do so in the company of men relating droll or terrible events to which they had been witness, or participant.

One time, and one time only, and only in the company of three, Christian told us one more thing about Nuremberg in his starving-artist days. He said:

I have not told this to anyone, and as I am not one to read too much into a small thing, there still is one further horrible incident I feel I must tell *someone*.

In the days after they cut old Fledermausse down, there was a lot of tumult and rumor about how two houses, one the very mirror of another, were both magnets for self-hanging. Herr Nickel was in a bother, and insisted that the old witch must somehow be made accountable for all the deaths, and that her house should be pulled to the ground.

I was there with a small crowd of men who accompanied the Burgomeister and the inspector of police, when they broke open the door to the Fledermausse's dwelling. That she had lived alone in such a large house was no mystery, as she was the last daughter of a now-extinct family. Herr Nickel would be free to buy the place and tear it down if he cared to.

I roamed the rooms that were already so familiar to me from my rooftop eyrie, and there was nothing exceptional. The courtyard behind the house was given only a cursory inspection. There was talk of bones at the bottom of the well, but no one wanted to pursue that line. The herbs in her kitchen were found to be commonplace and nothing seemed either narcotic or poisonous.

I did not like the small, desiccated garden plot at the end of the yard, which I had not been able to see before, and there were some perfunctory efforts to dig there, again in the thoughts that the old woman had buried the fruits of some illicit dealings. After some argument, they decided not to pursue the matter.

At the end, they could find no connection, aside from coincidence, between the suicides in The Fatted Bull and the house of old Fledermausse. I said not a word about the way in which I had discovered her secret, and effected justice from a distance. There was no reason to make myself a criminal.

I stayed on in the loft for another year, until old Taubec died. To my surprise, he had left me a small sum, and a referral to an agent in Paris. So I moved on to better things.

But this is the one thing I have never told anyone.

On my last night in the loft, as I lay in my bed contented, and repeating in my head the Hunting Chorus of Weber under the full moonlight, I heard the faintest sound from above the slate roof.

It was ever so little more than a sound of stone moving against stone, and then of the influx of outside air.

Then there was a small thud, like that of a dead sparrow falling from its nest.

I lit the lamp hastily and moved to the corner where I had spied upon Fledermausse, and found that the very same loose slate tile had been raised and pushed aside.

And there, at my feet, regarding me with its hundred emotionless eyes, was the black spider!

I reached for the nearest thing I could find — anything! anything of sufficient weight — and hurled it down, crushing the evil arachnid once and forever.

I roamed the streets until dawn, evading the watchman, huddling in alleys, and taking a fitful pre-dawn nap in a small cemetery. Not until it was full light did I return, to remove my canvasses, paint, clothing, and a few books from the loft. I avoided that corner where I had crushed the spider, and I never returned.

I pray to God that I killed it, for it was the witch's *familiar*, and with its death I may have released her victims' souls to the rest they deserve.

—Adapted, expanded, and modernized
by Brett Rutherford, from Erckmann-
Chatrian's *Popular Tales and Romances*. (1872).
Original translator unknown.

Published in *Wake Not the Dead!*:
Continental Tales of Terror,
(Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021).

JAMES ELROY FLECKER (1884-1915)

From "The Bridge of Fire"

IV.

Shadows there are that seem to look for home
Each spreading like a gloom across the plain,
Voiced like a great bell swinging in a dome,
Appealing mightily for realms to reign.
They were the slow and shapeless gods of Rome,
Laborious gods, who founded power on pain,
These watched the peasant turn his sullen loam,
These drave him out to fight, nor drave in vain:
 Saturnus white and old
 Who lost the age of gold,
Mars who was proud to stand on the deep-piled slain,
 Pomona from whose womb
 Slow fruits in season come,
And, tower-crowned mother of the yellow grain,
 Demeter, and the avenging dead,
The silent Lemures, in fear with honey fed.

V.

Belus and Ra and that most jealous Lord
Who rolled the hosts of Pharaoh in the sea,
Trolls of the North, in every hand a sword,
Gnomes and dwarfs and the shuddering company,
Gods who take vengeance, gods who grant reward,
Gods who exact a murdered devotee,
Brahma the kind, and Siva the abhorred
And they who tend Ygdrasil, the big tree,
 And Isis, the young moon,
 And she of the piping tune,
Her Phrygian sister, cruel Cybele,
 Orpheus the lone harp-player
 And Mithras the man-slayer,
And Allah rumbling on to victory,
And some, the oldest of them all,
Square heads that leer and lust, and lizard shapes that crawl.

VI.
Between the pedestals of Night and Morning,
Between red death and radiant desire
With not one sound of triumph or of warning
Stands the great sentry on the Bridge of Fire.
O transient soul, thy thought with dreams adorning.
Cast down the laurel, and unstring the lyre:
The wheels of Time are turning, turning, turning,
The slow stream channels deep and doth not tire.
 Gods on their Bridge above
 Whispering lies and love
Shall mock your passage down the sunless river
Which, rolling all its streams,
Shall take you, king of dreams,
— Unthroned and unapproachable for ever —
 To where the kings who dreamed of old
Whiten in habitations monumental cold.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Volume 2*
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2016).

GEORGE FLYNN (1926-2007)

About the Teenagers

About the teenagers
We may ascertain
That they have eyes
That they have thick lips
That they have transistors
That they break balls
That they sometimes wax
Poetic waxing the floors
Rarely are they longhairs
Yokels in fact
That they like Levis
That they are loud bastards
That they die on the battlefield.

Emilie Glen

Emilie Glen
Wears green shoes
Every Tuesday evening
She wears a red coat
To match her feelings
For everything under the sun
She writes poems
About fallen stars, she sings
All the original words.

The Doctoral Candidate

Sidney's eyeballs
In fact, resemble
Black balloons
Of fear, ferocious
His buck teeth, terrible
His tempers, toils.

In-Between

In-between the Latin and the Greeks,
Caressed by Chinese and Welshmen too,
I ponder on the mysteries,
I give my soul her head,
I make allowances for pain.

Across the field the leaves make exchanges:
They wave hellos and farewells ...
And the wind avoids distinctions.

Words for Judy Garland

Judy, you made it
Over the rainbow
With rain rushing down
Your life your revenge complete
You took the pills the nightingales
Sang in London Town
You beat the rap
You remembered the trolley song
Forgot the pain, got happy
Over the rainbow
You found your bluebird, love

Barbara's Dream

For Barbara A. Holland

Fame, she wants
A moonflight, flowers
Smells of the good green
Applause in her ears
A government grant, by God
She's earned it, she thinks
She writes as well as Wakoski
As well as Plath, better
Than Bishop or Sexton, Good Jesus
Find her a publisher, somebody big.

A Good Spiritual Foundation

The battle began
The first day of parochial school
When he wore a beige shirt
And long green trousers
(A little Catholic soldier in the ranks)
And he came home shouting
That the nun was old and strict
And he was afraid of tomorrow.

— From *The High Ground:*
A Collection of New Poems
(The Poet's Press, 1972).

ALICE FURLONG (1866-1946)

Irish poet and activist Alice Furlong began publishing her writing at the age of 16. One of her several poetry collections was titled *Tales of Fairy Folk* (1907). She was a founding member of Maud Gonne's revolutionary women's group.

The Warnings

I was milking in the meadow, when I heard the banshee keening:
 Little birds were in the nest, lambs were on the lea,
Upon the brow o' the Fairy-hill a round gold moon was leaning —
 She parted from the esker¹ as the Banshee keened for me.
I was weaving by the door-post, when I heard
 the Death-watch beating:
 And I signed the Cross upon me, and I spoke
 the Name of Three.
High and fair, through cloud and air, a silver moon was fleeting—
 But the night began to darken as the Deathwatch beat for me.
I was sleepless on my pillow when I heard the Dead man calling,
 The Dead man that lies drowned at the bottom of the sea.
Down in the West, in wind and mist, a dim white moon
 was falling —
 Now must I rise and go to him, the Dead who calls on me.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume 2, (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

¹ *Esker*. A long, winding ridge of sand or gravel.

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811-1872)

With its voluptuous sound and its atmosphere of suppressed dread, this piece is one of the master-works of French poetry, evoking a cemetery specter in almost water-color subtlety. The ghost who frightens you away, only to beckon you back, leaves a sense of unfulfilled tension not easily forgotten. Hector Berlioz set this poem to music in his *Nuits d'Été*, a haunting song-cycle for mezzo soprano and orchestra.



Moonlight in the Cemetery

Adapted from "Au Cimetière: Claire de Lune"

That white tomb — do you know the one
and whose it is? — where in the yew's shade
there floats a plaintive sound?
Upon the yew, always the same pale dove
lonely and sad at each sun's setting
utters his night-long threnody:

an aria tenderly morbid,
as charming as it is fatal,
a song that gives you pain
yet which you long to hear forever;
an air like the other-worldly sigh
of a love-sick angel.

One imagines the dead soul wakes
to weep down there in unison
with the forlorn lament, and in the misery
of being forgotten, it too complains
as soft and sweet as dove-song.

On the wings of this melody
all kinds of recollections return.
Whose shade is that? What form
angelic hovers in a beam of light?

O veil of whiteness! Yet linger not,
beware the night-bloom beauty,
closing and opening, rich
in hypnotic scent around you; beware,
in yew-shade cast in moonlight
upon that white tomb inescapable
the phantom's outstretched arms,
the gesture vaguely beckoning,
and just as vaguely warning you away,
the almost inaudible murmuring:
Flee now! But will you not
come back again in moonlight?

O never again when night
drops its black mantle
upon the yew, the tomb,
and the obsessive-singing
dove who is its captive, never
shall I return to hear
that plaintive, mourning song!

— Adapted by Brett Rutherford, from
*Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800, Supplement 1*
(Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2021).

DOLORES GILES (1919-2005)

Irregular Lyric In Re Fear

As a child, Fear — nearly did me in.
Everyone and everything
so tall . . . so threatening . . . so — *all!*

Then came the Kaleidoscope years
when hope with its cute utopian mirages
held me so high — that, any brief low
never caught me below
the 90th floor.

Ah, but now, when I've lost more than
a bit, of my greenhouse crispness . . . and
hope seems to have left me — permanently
Fear, Fear — once more — *looms* LARGE.

(Somehow, time never got around
to handing me
any of his defenses, but it is possible he
doesn't issue them to everyone: "Oh, Fear, if
you only could melt calories!")

Just so as Fear can numb me
it also makes terrible excursions into the
arena of my bowels; they become spastic and
treacherous: disgrace hangs by a nylon thread
looped casually around my colon.
Fear is also — the sudden, swift source
of that emergent lake, which presses
so alarmingly
on — my vulva.

If love taketh away all Fears
could just *one* person's love . . . do it?
Shall I investigate commune living, loving?
Are fat and fifty explorers tolerated fully
or briefly . . . or just — never?

You, out there, I beg you — *please*
never fear the commitment of warm
kisses, well-timed; the cooling of
a hot tear ... the calming of the
providential embrace: *commitments are*
for burning ... and did you know, not
all burns leave scars? With a *good* love
you've got a living graft. Don't you
secretly love saying,

"I gave" ... have I talked you into anything
a casualty of
Fear, could swim to ... ?

I Don't Apologize

Only a washed-up, tired-blood woman could
cooly sip Postum as Billy Eckstine, purrs
salty /sultry through — "Blues You're
the Mother
of Sin" . . . 3:54 seconds of smokey meanness!

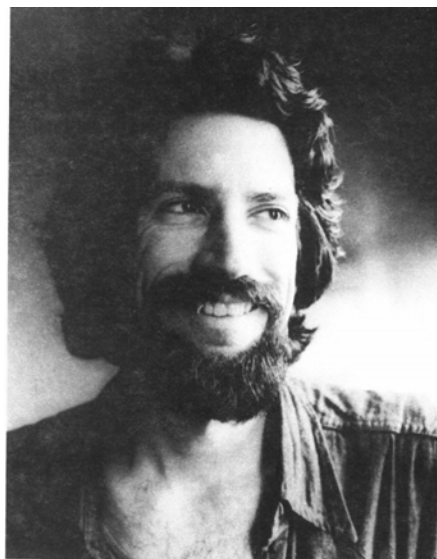
Worse yet, it's a far-gone, long-departed woman
who listens to 16:51 seconds of Billy Eckstine
over and over again, without lighting one
cigarette . . . or (restlessly) toy with ice
cubes — in a sinful measure
of growler-rushing gin.

Only thing keeping that woman
glued together is that she thinks
'She' — holds Billy captive, anytime
she puts that needle in that groove.

— From *Group 74: Poems of the Last Bohemia*,
(1974, The Poet's Press, 2021).

BORUK GLASGOW

You have to read a lot and know a lot to “get” Boruk Glasgow’s poetry, so it was largely over the heads of audiences who saw his multi-media shows or attended readings at his loft on Fourteenth Street in Manhattan. It is dense with philosophy, religion, science, and politics, with a Beat, or Ginsbergian stream-of-consciousness manner. The Poet’s Press published five of his books in the 1970s. Although these are long out of print, Boruk has continued to expand and revise his work, a huge Whitmanesque ball-of-string that gets denser as it goes, with his lived history, and the history of dire times. His collected poems are now available in a six-volume boxed set from Quasar Lilith Press.



Rare Book Renegade

Rare book renegade,
Imprisoned in Plexiglass case,
Dares a demolition
Rubbing, A phosphorescent
Pachyderm fossil paté
Spread over
Fresh flaky filo dough,
Glowing in the dark
Like a batik rose,
Enshrouds Ozone layer's
Puncture wounds
With balm of Gilead screen savers
Startled out of sleeper mode,
Favors a generous lay-away policy for
Yves St. Laurent, Gucci, Versace, Ralph Lauren
Clothes,
Roundly boos
Aficionados
Of chorus line
Goose step control,
Hosts a *Nader's Raiders* ballet premier,
"Pas.de-deux without airbags or condoms unsafe in any sphere,"
At the Kennedy Center
for the Performing Arts
Lifetime Achievement Awards,

Teaches
 Relaxation therapies —
 Breath of fire, heel, toe,
 Exorcise those demons
 Blow by blow,
 Ferments a time travel luxury tax with a
 Karaoke version of
Tenderly,
 Balks at the conversion of pristine flower meadows into landscaped
 Sand-traps, manicured putting greens,
 Promotes a rearview mirror fern forest gazing through crystal balls,
 Scores New World Order's solipsistic battle cry
 Claiming 'moral supremacy'
 In a fog-lifting special edition
 Of *Paris Vogue*,
 "An all-time low,"
 Next to ethnic cleansing, and transparent self-serving hype
 For one-sided nuclear non-proliferation treaties and
 Arms control,
 Bargain hunts at
 Backlot yard sales
 Flush with Hollywood pipedreams, feel-good endings.
 Future shock flies to the rescue,
 Tweaks eternal nexus,
 Seeks reclamation of ancient wisdom buried treasure
 Forsaken long ago,
 Fertilized and forgotten with repressed memory manure,
 Much amnesiac mulch,
 Much myth,
 More gore,
 Pray to be rediscovered,
 Re-harvested, re-buoyed,
 Before it's too late,
 Before the very moment vanquished conquistadors abhor —
 Advent and ascension of
 Saintly ghostly authoritative whispers echoing
Nevermore Nevermore Nevermore

— From *Rare Book Renegade* (The Poet's Press, 1977),
 revised version published in 2009 in *Abracadabra Taps* (Quasar Lilith Press).

Shmuel Tiger Cat Revisited

No longer stalks ice cubes
stashes 45 record adaptors
or dances with flashlight beams

too wily and ancient at four
for comparison with feline
adolescence of frenetic age one

greet instead the renowned
tooth and cardboard sculptor
gnaws elegant Frank Lloyd Wright houses
Pueblo cliff dweller structures
frontier sawtooth fortifications
from the boxes i present him
his work habits diligently intense
someday i will spraypaint his pieces
with bright metallic colors like forest green
curate an exhibit for a one-cat show

Shmuel still is wont to piggyback
foxy lady Solo leaving a wake
of shrieks of tufts of silky fur

shares my bed while I sleep
camps out on my desk during the day
vulnerable as an altered male
to ureter tube blockage
his weight diet-maintained
on catfood with a low-ash content

forest ranger lookout
for unwanted intruders
he cranes and tilts his ears
to fathom noise on far side of wall

the ubiquitous olfactory function
sniffs every new shoe and bag that enters
smell is the lead sense
the chief weapon of feline epistemology

those huge yellow green eyes put
Bette Davis & Eddie Kantor to shame
spotting a handicap for blackhole boogie
his pronounced swish as he traverses the hall
places in jeopardy the relatively stiff Racquel

then there are the remnants of a neurotic past
kneading the soft pink blanket gets back
to mother cat
terrified of dogs flying frisbees small children

with their shrill voices and unpredictable
movements
Shmuel tell me you're not just playing
out the string:
my kid brother follows me through the loft
cares where i'm going and where i've been

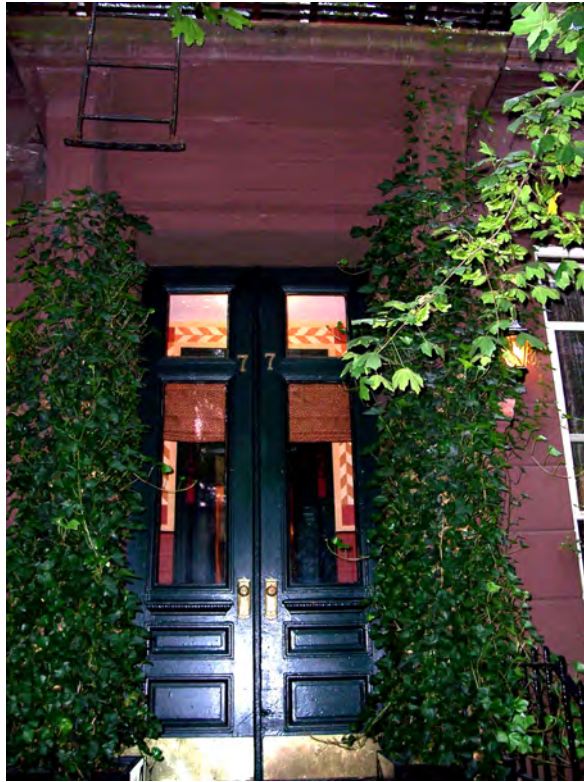
— From *Adventures of Little Self*
(The Poet's Press, 1976).

Tale Of A Sufi Surfer

Riding on the train
They call
In the belly of the whale,
In the hollow
Of a green water vortex,
Got my Mojo and Magnus force
Working for me.
Carried away in Dorothy's house,
Bareback on Poe's maelstrom descent,
Angel stardust swirling in a
Hydromagnetic plasma paradise,
A thermonuclear think-tank
They call
In the hollow glass container,
In the cascade showers,
Specter of Aurora Borealis —
High-diving hard-driving
Lapsed Cartesian
Born again beach boy
East-West body-mind
Synthesis
Cosmic ray Sufi Surfer:
And the trail I weave,
And the wake I leave,
Put the pressure on or
Take the pressure off me,
Is the forest and the gold,
Is the shared bosom told,
Is the abiding love of a
Wide wide wide wide
Beckoning world

— From *Tale of A Sufi Surfer*
(The Poet's Press, 1974)

EMILIE GLEN (1906-1995)



77 Barrow Street, where Emilie Glen ran her famed poetry salon.

Emilie Glen (1906-1995) was a staggeringly prolific New York City-based poet, whose published work spans five decades with thousands of little magazine and newspaper credits worldwide. Glen's long-time friend and publisher Brett Rutherford has assembled five definitive volumes of her work.

The Writings of Emilie Glen 1 comprises the complete text of all the poet's chapbooks, including hand-bound mimeograph productions from her Greenwich Village coffeehouse days. From the 1960s through the early 1990s, Glen was also famed for hosting the longest-running poetry salon in Manhattan, so some of the eccentrics of the New York poetry scene also make an appearance in the editor's foreword, which includes both a description of the West Village poetry scene of that time, as well as everything we are likely to know about Emilie Glen's early life.

First recognized by H.L. Mencken and published in his *American Mercury*, Glen started as a fiction writer and then gravitated to narrative poetry, writing and publishing thousands of poems in magazines around the world. In Volume 1, the editor has gathered the texts of more than 300 poems — all the chapbooks Glen published from her coffeehouse days through her last years: *77 Barrow Street*, *Mad Hatter*, *Coffee House Poems*, *Paint and Turpentine*, *Dark of Earth*, *Late to the Kitchen*, *Up to Us Chickens*, *Twat Shot*, *Glenda's Ark*, *Roast Swan*, *Hope of Amethyst*, *Rails Away*, and *Glenda and Her Guitar*, *Emilie and Her Piano*. Some early self-published leaflets and productions from several other presses are also here.

Glen's poems are a narrative saga of New York high and low, as well as a poignant saga of family sorrows. The best of them are intimate character portraits, short stories compressed into a dramatic,

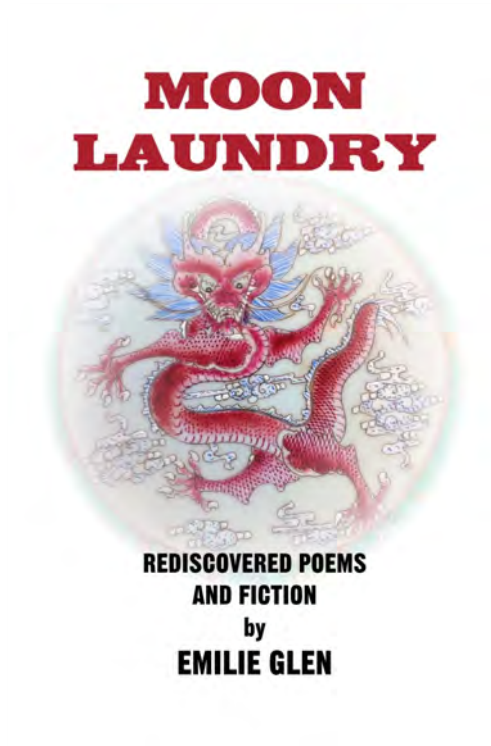
reader-friendly style, poetry the untrained reader need not fear. A keen observer of nature as well as of humanity, Glen delights with her informed short poems on cats, birds, and the occasional mermaid; she is just as much a naturalist in describing life among the tormented actors and actresses in an off-off-Broadway nude theater company. A strong musical thread runs through this collection as well: Glen was a child prodigy pianist and came to New York City to study at The Juilliard School before the poetry Muse asserted her primacy, so Glen's Manhattan is an island of pianos, guitars, harps and orchestras.

The Writings of Emilie Glen 2: Short Stories and Prose Poems contains all of Glen's fiction discovered so far, and "From This Window," her experiment in prose poetry, which appeared in *New Directions* in 1953.

The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines, presents the 193 recovered poems that appeared in magazines and newspapers, but were not included in Glen's many chapbooks. None of these poems exist in manuscript. This volume also includes the full text of an out-of-print chapbook from 1963 titled *Laughing Lute and Other Poems*.

The Writings of Emilie Glen 4: Poems from Manuscripts, collects all the poet's surviving unpublished manuscripts. These 180 poems, lyric and narrative, far from being the "bottom drawer," have the same urban savor as her longer works. As always, her most engaging poems are miniature short stories, all set against a noir Manhattan that includes both shocking murders as well as moments of unexpected beauty among fire escapes, trash cans, alley cats, and the migratory birds in Central Park. The book includes several surprisingly experimental works and a true account of a horrifying psychopath who ran a Greenwich Village coffee house.

All four volumes feature cover art by the revered American wood engraver John DePol.



More published poems by Emilie Glen appear in this 2019 collection.

Of the Night

In the watches
 the watches of the night
Why not listenings
 listenings of the night
creaks and snappings of an old house settling
startlement of windows
 in the teeth of wind lions
city that never
sleeps a car starting up
 siren in crescendo
 late night typewriter
faint grumblings of an electric clock
traffic river beginning to flow
 neighbor coughing
 baby crying
in the listenings
 listenings of the night

Named Emily

Named Emily, playing Emily
 Emily Brontë,
I swim the timeless sea
 to her heathered shore,
Climb the hill to the parsonage
not telling her I am from
 the Twentieth century
 where I breathe her to life stage nights,
Know better than to startle her
 with the terrible Twentieth.
(Still the Twentieth could cure her TB.)
This too might alarm her
in her gathering of death like heather

 Emily offers me tea
at the table where the Brontës
 write of an evening,
The two of us sit in Emily shyness,
our words in leaf bracts on separate trees,
 I am keeping her from the moors,
 from the fires of her white page,

I would suggest we go out to the “lone green
lane that leads directly to the moors”
only I can’t let on how well I know her life,
her death on the very horse-hair sofa
 across from us

Ellen Nussey¹ says she plays the piano
 with brilliance and precision,

¹ Ellen Nussey (1817-1897), a childhood friend of Charlotte Brontë, and a lifelong correspondent.

I chord into Debussy,
 swiftly finger back to Bach
expecting her to sit down at the piano too,
but she has nothing to play to me say to me,
I might as well be in the graveyard

Death’s Hotel

Yesterday’s rain
Down through the remains
 Dismaling down
Yesterday’s rain
 Through the wreckage
 Of yesterday’s hotel
The old Broadway Central² fallen of age
 Hotel once faceting
Jim Brady’s diamonds among
 prismed chandeliers
 Now death’s hotel
Hotel of welfare caseloads
 Collapsed under the weight of misery
Ambulances for the dying have sirened off
 New pine boxes for the dead removed
Crane gone fire engines police cars
 No more turret lights spot beams
 Only the street-lamp dark
As the remains wait for whatever
 Is to be done
Rain belated inspector of the walls
 Rain doing the digging
Down to the cluttered pit of death
 Yesterday’s rain in a variety of strums
Gurgling burpling cascading
 Drip drip dripping

 Down wrecked stories
Allegro adagio
 Raindrop postlude
 Through bricks and plaster and rotting wood
Wet earth the smell of a thousand
 Decaying mushrooms

Yesterday’s rain
 Down the tottering cornices
 No exit exit signs
 Banging doors upended floors
 Crutches furniture beat icebox
 Cracked mirrors
Rain in final statement

² The Broadway Central, on Broadway at Bleecker Street, was built in 1870, and was once the largest hotel in the world. Decayed into a flophouse called The University Hotel, it collapsed in 1973.

Late to the Kitchen

My husband purples
 When I'm late preparing his dinner,
Each night I'm at the stove later,
 He fears I have an afternoon lover,
A lover is not what I have,
 But love,
 A love powerful of voice,
A love from the beginning of globe time,
 A zillionaire handsome beyond men;
The sea is my love,
 Its rhythming waves,
Tugging tossing seething rocking,
Waters sec waters mellow
Satin ribbon waters sparklers

I am late to the kitchen
 For swimming the glory sea,
And I'm learning how to stay under longer
 Without a snorkel,
The air spaces are there for my finding,
 And I'm developing my rudimentary gills:
Each day I swim out farther,
 Come to the kitchen later,
 The sea wants me,
I swim across the continental shelf
 To a drop so deep
I have yet to pressure
Two miles down to the night of the sea floor,
The globigerina ooze of diatoms and radiolari-
an,
 And the dust of shooting stars:

I am discovering mountains and valleys,
 Sea meadows blooming
 with lilies and anemones,
Sea palms sea grasses,
Whenever I like I can go down
 Into the dark red belly of a whale:
Fierce fish pass me by,
 I'm not their food and they're not mine,
I hear the sea creatures,
 And they seem to note my bubbling voice:
Plankton always plankton,
 I nibble on diatoms and sea lettuce,
 Nothing needs cooking in the sea

My husband complains I taste like a salt stick;
 Am cold to the touch;
 Smell like a fish market:
Track kelp and seaweed around the kitchen,

And scatter sand in the bed:
He still suspects I have a beachboy lover
 When I'm building a blue pearl grotto
 Out among the anemones:
When I'm beginning to pressure down
 To the neon'd night
Of fish with lighted portholes like ships,
 Fish carrying lanterns on their heads:

When I swim to the sun-green upper waters
 To fly with the flying fish,
 Ride the backs of dolphins,
I snap the hooks of fishermen,
 Rip their nets,
 Bend harpoons and marlin spikes:

Mermaid that I now am
 I surface to a rock island,
My sea-green hair about my breasts,
 A rainbow sea pearl hanging from my
forehead
 By a strand of kelp;
My sea collar is crimsoned with algae:
 I confound sailors as I sit
 Waving a sea fan:
My husband may come upon me one day,
 And be troubled by the resemblance
To a wife who came late to the kitchen,
 As I slide off the rock
 Into the sea

Up to Us Chickens

Chicken that I am,
White of feather,
A leghorn,
Descended from the jungle flyers
 Of India
I can see we're nothing but egg machines
 In the third-degree glare
Of our well-kept coops
Laying eggs white eggs
White eggs white eggs

Slick feel,
Eggs rolling out of me,
Like eating in reverse,
But they're always being grabbed
Out from under my warming feathers

Sometimes I just can't lay,
I roost wondering how it was
 With jungle flyers,
I can flutter flap about the yard,
But we chickens laze around
On over-rich food too easy to come by.
What poor wingers we are,
Flap flap flutter flap,
While birds small enough
To tuck under our wing,
Fly over our heads

Separating myself from the others
 I go off into the woods,
And flex my wing muscles,
Exercise them until they ache
Toward the flight of our ancestors
When white flocks flew over the jungles,
Over cane brakes and bamboo thickets

I may not be an eagle
But I will learn to fly
As well as a finch,
When I'm with the others,
I keep it a secret,
The new strength of my wings

With the Spring South wind
I rise on a spiral of warm air
 To the height of warblers
Flying North,
I a flutter-flap chicken
 In full flight,
I sleep in the night
Instead of laying eggs to light bulbs,
Sit only the eggs I choose to lay
Warming them to new birds for flight,
And I will return with the North wind
To teach the flocks how to fly,
Wild free

Crypt 63

White rose pink,
 Cuddle toy,
Concoction,
 Nature's surprise package,
Imp in a bottle,
 Sunbursts beyond the Louis',
More power than Pompadour,
 Puffed into being down smoke rings,
Public flesh a yummy bit,
 World flesh in a pink cloud around,
Screen flesh real as runway,
 Touchable,
Popcorn, cotton candy, thrill rides,
 Body empire,
So lives is lived,
 The body
Crypt 63, Case 118572,
 The body found naked in her lone bedroom,
Flesh blue-spotted from the sleeping pills,
 The body wrapped in her own rose blanket,
Strapped to the stretcher,
 Wheeled out the front door
Of the house that flesh built,
 First to the mortuary, then to the morgue,
The morgue in the hall of justice,
 Locked in the storeroom with the brooms
and pails,
Mirror to morgue
 All in one night of the body,

News blackprints the papers of the world,
 Flesh universal,
Flesh account,
 Blue-splotched, drugged,
Body in poor condition,
 Dirty fingernails, dirty toenails,
 brown hair roots,
But never old,
 The young body, pin-up body,

Strapped to the stretcher,
 Quivering jelly in the carrying out,
The body in the black of the storeroom,
 Tagged for Crypt 63,
Lived as she died,
 The body,
The public body

Cato's Midnight

Little Cato sitting
on the midnight doorstep
of café street
waiting for his mother to leave
whatever bar
waiting to see her up the stairs
If his name weren't Cato
If his glasses weren't quite so owl
I wouldn't care to bursting
There he sits into midnight
on the doorstep of their walk-up
waiting for his mother
his reeling-lurching lid-heavy
mother
who may be with one of his many uncles
There he will always sit
whatever desk may be his
whatever steering wheel
with whatever tools in whatever art
whatever night room
he tries to take his rest
he will be waiting to help her
up the midnight stairs

Open Reading

Poets in open readings
shuffle their papers
shuffle their papers
shuffles that would never win at cards
shuffles that distinguish us from theater
scrap papers legal size
triptychs notebooks
ledgers fit for Uriah Heep³
mostly hand written
the particular poem they want
buried as in leaves for a bonfire
or a bonfire for leaves

Poets' papers a band of urchins
in need of baths
might better write on oysters
and dive for the pearls
Papers papers
a rustling of poets' wings
bringing the word

³ Uriah Heep. A villainous clerk in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*.

Willard

Willard
there was a boy named Willard
Willard
I speak your name after five years,
leap you alive,
my brother alive,
Lord of the lake for the poise, the plunge
powered strokes to the far out.
You stand in ropes of light,
blond hair sun-streaked,
shoulders jeweled by lake water,
sixteen to my water-scared nine,
strongest swimmer of the shore

Willard
I speak you alive
after years of no remembering,
alive to drown in the stone-green lake
blackened by storm,
no chance in your hunting boots,
bound by slimed reeds,
through weeks of dragging the bottom,
Held my breath in the night
to see if drowning is as easy as they say

Willard
You would be middle-aged by now
hair thinning body thickened.
You would be settled off some place,
an engineer in Venezuela
or a lawyer in Oregon.

I wouldn't like your wife much
nor reunions at the shore,
You would be teaching
your own children to swim

Willard
There was a boy named Willard
You taught me to trust the waters,
hands in come-on,
You can do it You can swim,
Even the black seal ring
found on your finger
lasts in my jewel box,
helmeted head of a warrior.
You never grew up to be maimed in a war
but the coffin had to be closed,
I saw it from the window
being carried down the steep steps,

Willard

Drowned these many years
in the stone-green lake
of no remembering
You struggle up through the binding reeds,
the muddy bottom,
struggle up to breathing,
stand for the speaking of your name,
shoulders jeweled by lake water,
strongest swimmer of the shore

Please

Daughter little daughter
please please
stay around long enough
to see me through your your
I can't bear to say
your funeral

When it was your Father
you planned the least detail
How can you leave me like a paper doll
left out in the rain
don't let the metal skies fall on me
the earth close over
worms through eyeholes
Please please
you have an infinity of time
stay around long enough to see me through
the service

Educated

Educated taste
Liszt dubious
Want him want Liszt
Want to play him tear flowing grandiose

Grieg I am supposed to scorn
Scriabin a mere rehash of Chopin

I button into Bach
respect Beethoven's Quartets
Curtsy to Mozart
but Liszt Liszt I must have
cadenzas and all
forests of velour ruby rain lava-lit purple
Liebstraume all the way
Let me wallow let me soar
let me yearn let me burn
into Liszt

Mills Time

Old men Mills Hotel⁴ time
Sleeping through inflation
For a dollar and a quarter a night
A dollar fifty deluxe
Living on welfare and pensions and scrounge
Men in moldy rooms down long corridors
Round a voice-ghosting light well,
Balconies round and round like a wedding cake
Beat old big-rooted tree the Mills
Hundred year bricked among quick curtain
walls,
Men at Mills
Can't afford watches to ignore on the wrist,
Chain gold linking across a vest,
Nor electric pulsing clocks in their rooms,
Nor Big Ben alarms,
Their calls down the corridor,
Round and round stories balconies
Are sometimes heard
By one job-hunting young man or another,
What time is it?
Hey, have you the time?
Tell a guy the time,
You got the time?
What time is it?

Window Cats

Showcase city
Window in sky huddle,
Offices in glass suspension,
Store windows great-stage the night,
Plate glass miniatures lens world jewels,
Glass contains toys and goodies,
Everything wantable.
Dimmer glass like twilight waters
Shines treasure for the cupped hand.
Window cats the city purrs with them.
Down a side street a bar and grill
Has its Tortoiseshell
Among the liquor bottles.
A black Tom fur-balls into the window
Of a shoe repair shop,

⁴ *Mills Hotel*. The Mills Hotel was built in 1890, at 160 Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village. It was a men-only hotel with 1,500 minuscule rooms. It closed during the day so its occupants could go out and look for employment. Hotels like this, and rooming houses, were once part of the social fabric of New York City. The Mills Hotel survived into the early 1970s before being demolished and replaced with luxury co-ops. The famed jazz club, The Village Gate, was also in the building.

Bats the glass at anyone staring in.
A grocery-store tiger spits.
Shale grey cat in the delicatessen
Winks a gold-fire eye.
Day windows have their tuck-paw sleepers,
Delight of the city,
Its fur and fire,
Always there for the cupped hand
of the connoisseur,
Street on street of window cats

Stair Builders

STAIR BUILDERS OF AMERICA
Factory sign almost alchemist
The feel of the stairs American stairs
We build the stairs you climb
And the stairs you don't
Mansion stairs for grand entrance
Cellar stairs attic
Stairs to the observatory
Altar stairs
Marble stairs of the courthouse
Stairs to jump from
Two three a time
Tenement stairs stairs to the penthouse

Fire stairs beach stairs
Doll-house stairs
Housework stairs
Stairs to the lower garden
Spiral stairs to secrets
Stairs of an old mansion being demolished
Broken-off above the rubble
On their way up space
Stair Builders of America
Stairs to the stars

— Selected from *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks* (The Poet's Press, 2009) and *The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines* (The Poet's Press, 2016).

Our Greece

Greece to Jackie
Greece to Isadora
Greece to me
Jackie's Greece
adjusting to Onassis:
too late for Phidias,
she goes up in flashbulbs.
Isadora's Greece
moon-white
to be danced.
Her tears watered its red earth,
her laughter curled the cypresses.

Greece to me:
the blackened caves of shepherds
in the cliffs beneath skyed eagles,
Byron swimming the Hellespont,
club-foot whitely finning;
white worm curled in a bowl of currants;
olivewood dog in my palm.

Jackie could buy a seat on Olympus,
Isadora the wealth of Maenads.
I am rich in Euripides.
He lit my fires.

Toward

Rivers toward
more than from
sea toward
even in the backup of rapids
the Hudson down from Lake Tear
the muddy Danube past gypsy fires
The Arno the Vltava wherever they go
Mississippi ghosting paddle wheels
in the laughter of Mark Twain
Castanet waters of the Rio Grande

Through polluted and pure
rivers taking the earth continents with them

Nile still in the scent of Cleopatra's sails
Rhine of *Götterdämmerung*
Blood of the Volga
towards always towards

The Girls from Fifty-Ninth Street

Bunch of girls
come to the Coney sea
in their bathing-suit best
under toreador pants,
feel about as exclusive
as oranges in a crate,
keep their high-teased hairdos
out of the fright-wiggling sea,
move their beach towels downshore
to sands a bit more exclusive,
same difference as between
a ninety-nine cent
and dollar ninety-nine item —
who knows who might spread towel nearby?

Bunch of boys
beached in tighter than sand fleas
step over people
push sands toward a shoreless Coney,
sunglass the girls elbowing up
from their nautical towels,
cast off with
Oh shit! The girls from Fifty-Ninth Street!

Moon Laundry

Mr. Moon,
always there
like a nursery rhyme,
MOON LAUNDRY
lettered in pink plastic.
There late at night
bending over a bowl of rice
from his one burner.
He opens to us,
with no ticket finds our bundle of wash;
climbs a ladder and feather dusts it
down;
fingers at his count beads
rhythmed as wind through marsh grasses.

Pale jade figure into the night,
moon pale:
we hear he sends his money home
to his sons in China.

He is our holy man,
our Buddha,
his door opens to temple bells,
a watch of the hours;
he lifts us up out of the whirlpool of life,
to the lotus-pond of contemplation;
teaches us to desire less,
to sit with our souls;

Cleanses more than our clothes:
the odor of sanctity,
rice, starch, steaming iron,
clothes clean arid soiled.

In his cave of wisdom
eating too little,
working too late,
he comes to us slower of step,
sits more often at his ironing;
should not be climbing the ladder;
needs a boy to help him.

Alone in there,
behind his pink plastic sign,
Mr. Moon alone into a night
of drug addicts,
killers.
We fear for him.

— From *Moon Laundry: Rediscovered Poems
and Fiction* (The Poet's Press, 2019).

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1832)

Movie-goers know well the story of “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” (“Die Zauberlehre”), but few today realize that the animated cartoon was adapted from this poem by Goethe. The following uncredited translation appeared in *Blackwood’s* in May 1838. This amusing supernatural lyric may also be what suggested H. P. Lovecraft’s admonition, “Do not call up that which ye cannot put back.”

The Sorcerer’s Apprentice

1.
Since at once the Master Wizard
Forth has gone, I’ll try my skill:
Now his spirits at my summons
Shall awake and work my will;
Magic word, and sign, and spell,
I like him have noted true,
And with strength of heart, as well
Wonders I may do.
Wander, wander,
Here and yonder,
From the spring
Water bring,
Fill the bath up till it swim,
Bubbling to the very brim.

2.
Now step forth, thou ancient broom-stick,
Don thy ragged garb anew,
Drudging long has been thy portion,
Now prepare my will to do:
On two legs erected, stalk:
Let a head above them sprout,
Take the water-pail and walk
To thy task without:
Wander, wander,
Here and yonder,
From the spring
Water bring,
Fill the bath up till it swim,
Bubbling to the very brim.

3.
See, he hurries down — already
In the stream his pitcher laves,
And with lightning speed returning
Empties here the foaming waves;
There, and here again, I vow —
Fast he fills the basin’s sides,

Every inch and cranny now
See the water hides!
Tarry, tarry,
Cease to carry,
Pour no more —
Give o’er, give o’er:
Woe is me! He heeds me not,
And the word I have forgot.

4.
Woe is me! the word which uttered
Makes him what he was before,
How he flies, and fills, and empties —
Would he were a broom once more!
Still the wicked sprite keeps pouring
Water, though the trough runs o’er,
And a hundreds streams are pouring
Down upon the floor.
Cease to tease me,
Or I’ll seize thee!
Worse and worse,
The goblin flees me,
Terror seizes on my soul!
What grimaces! what a scowl!

5.
Birth of Hell, accursed broomstick,
Must the house be drowned by thee?
See where over floor and threshold
Streams the water like a sea!
Art thou deaf, confounded broom —
Wilt thou not obey my will?
Once again thy shape resume,
Once again be still.
Wilt not cease
And go in peace?
I can catch thee
And despatch thee;
This sharp hatchet here beside me
Shall in pieces twain divide thee.

6.
Soft! The Goblin is returning,
Soon she he his master know —
Soon shall he be *laid* in quiet,
Fell’d beneath my hatchet’s blow.
There I had him — fairly floor’d —
Cut, by Jupiter! in twain;
Now I feel my hope restored,

Now I breathe again:
But woe is me,
Now I see
Both the halves
Will carriers be.

Pail in hand, both rise and move,
Aid me! aid me, powers above!

7.

How they hurry! wet and wetter
Grow the staircase and the hall;
What a deluge dashes 'round me —
Master, master, hear my call!

Hark! he listens, heaven be praised!

“Aid in my distress bestow —
For the spirits I have raised,
Will not let me go” —

— “Back, old Broom,
To thy room,

Once again thy shape resume;
But remember, spirits own
But *the Master's* rule alone.”

— 1797. Anonymous translation
from *Blackwood's*, Vol. 42 (1837), featured in
Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800,
Supplement 1 (2021)

The Erl-King

O who rides by night
thro' the woodland so wild?
It is the fond father embracing his child;
And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.
“O father, see yonder! see yonder!” he says;
“My boy, upon what dost thou fearfully gaze?”
“O, 'tis the Erl-King with his crown
and his shroud.”
“No, my son, it is but a dark wreath
of the cloud.”

The Erl-King Speaks:

“O come and go with me, thou loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she pluck
for my boy.”
“O father, my father, and did you not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?”

“Be still, my heart's darling — my child,
be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it sung
thro' the trees.”

Erl-King:

“O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with care
and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro' wet
and thro' wild,
And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing
to my child.”

“O father, my father, and saw you not plain
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past
thro' the rain?”

“Oh yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;
It was the grey willow that danced
to the moon.”

Erl-King:

“O come and go with me, no longer delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away.”
“O father! O father! now, now, keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me — his grasp
is so cold!”

Sore trembled the father; he spurr'd
thro' the wild,
Clasping close to his bosom
his shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,
But, clasp'd to his bosom, the infant was dead.

—Translated in 1799 by Sir Walter Scott,
From *Tales of Wonder, Volume 1*
(Yogh & Thorn Books, The Poet's Press, 2010).

ROBERT GRAVES (1895-1985)

These World War I-era poems are early productions of Robert Graves, better known to most readers for his World War I memoir (*Good-Bye to All That*), his novels about the Roman Emperor Claudius, and his explorations of The White Goddess concept in mythology. An indispensable reference work for all poets working with gods and monsters is Graves' two-volume set on *The Greek Myths*.

Sorley's Weather

When outside the icy rain
Comes leaping helter-skelter,
Shall I tie my restive brain
Snugly under shelter?
Shall I make a gentle song
Here in my firelit study,
When outside the winds blow strong
And the lanes are muddy?
With old wine and drowsy meats
Am I to fill my belly?
Shall I glutton here with Keats?
Shall I drink with Shelley?
Tobacco's pleasant, firelight's good:
Poetry makes both better.
Clay is wet and so is mud,
Winter rains are wetter.
Yet rest there, Shelley, on the sill,
For though the winds come frorely,
I'm away to the rain-blown hill
And the ghost of Sorley.¹

I'd Love To Be A Fairy's Child

Children born of fairy stock
Never need for shirt or frock,
Never want for food or fire,
Always get their heart's desire:
Jingle pockets full of gold,
Marry when they're seven years old.
Every fairy child may keep
Two strong ponies and ten sheep;
All have houses, each his own,
Built of brick or granite stone;
They live on cherries, they run wild —
I'd love to be a Fairy's child.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume II (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2016).

¹ *Sorley*. Charles Hamilton Sorley, a young poet who died in the trenches at the age of nineteen. Some of Sorley's poems are full of rain images. Graves called Sorley one of the three best poets killed in the War.

THOMAS GRAY (1716-1771)

Thomas Gray (1716-1771), a shy, reclusive poet, was bullied by his fellow students at college. He was given to passionate male friendships and spent a great deal of time playing the harpsichord. He produced only 13 poems, many of them gestating for years, including his masterpiece graveyard poem, "Elegy in a Country Churchyard." He wrote his two Norse Odes in 1761, but they were not published until 1768. His life's work in poetry consists of less than 1,000 lines.

The Fatal Sisters

From the Norse Tongue. [THOMAS] GRAY

To be found in the *Orcades* of Thormodus Torfaeus, Hafniae, 1691, folio; and also in Bartholinus.¹

Vitt er orpit fyrir valfalli, &c.

In the eleventh century Sigurd, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships and a considerable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of Sigtrygg with the silken beard, who was then making war on his father-in-law, Brian, King of Dublin. The Earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and Sigtrygg was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss in the death of Brian their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle),² a native of Scotland saw, at a distance, a number of persons on horseback riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song; which, when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve



¹ *Darraðarljóð*, as this poem-song is titled, remained in Orkney oral tradition until the 18th century. *The Saga of Burnt Njal* contains the song and its framing narrative. Gray found the material in Latin and Icelandic in Bartholin and in Torfaeus's *Orcades*. The curious reader can find the Icelandic, Latin, and a comparison between Gray's and Percy's versions in Wawn, *Vikings*, pp. 28-29.

² The Battle of Clontarf, April 23, 1014 CE, not Christmas Day as Gray indicates. The battle effectively ended the Viking kingdom in Ireland. *The Saga of Burnt Njal* places the Valkyrie sighting on Good-Friday. Good-Friday, among the superstitious, has often been regarded as a time of spiritual darkness during which the powers of pagan magic might be more prone to break through.

pieces, and (each taking her portion) galloped six to the north, and as many to the south. These were the Valkyriur,³ female divinities, servants of Odin (or Woden) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies Choosers of the Slain. They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to Valhalla, the hall of Odin, or Paradise of the Brave, where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale.

Now the storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare,)
Iron-sleet of arrowy shower⁴
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glittering lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow!
(Tis of human entrails made)
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipp'd in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista, black terrific Maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda, see!
Join the wayward work to aid:
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

³ These women are a combination of Valkyries, who carry off the chosen slain, and the Norns, who spin the web of destiny and determine, in advance, who will die.

⁴ An allusion to Milton: "How quick they wheel'd, and flying, behind them shot/ Sharp sleep of arrow'y show'r—" *Paradise Regained* III, 323-24.

As the paths of Fate we tread,
Wading through th' ensanguin'd field,
Gondula, and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful King your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill, and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live.
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless Earl is laid,
Gor'd with many a gaping wound:
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a King shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin⁵ weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep;
Strains of immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
Sisters, weave the web of death:
Sisters, cease: the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing!
Joy to the victorious bands;
Triumph to the younger King!

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed:
Each her thundering falchion wield
Each bestride her sable steed.
Hurry, hurry to the field.

— From *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 2
(Yogh & Thorn Books, The Poet's Press, 2012).

⁵ Eirin. Ireland.

EMILY GRECO (? - 1972)

At Fifty-One

Each, looking at the same, sees differently.
In different moods, looking at the same thing,
Each sees different things.
Even I, looking at myself, across the room
At that same mirror
See a different face than

I saw two hours back:
Used, misused and gross,
The cheeks too broad, the lids too dropped,
The brows pendant.

Now, after talking silently
to an adolescent dream,
The lips like a fairy-tale comma,
The brows a question,
The cheeks, jeweled age
The skin, opal-like, tinted with evening rose.

All lightly dusted with
the childish veils of trust and hope.

Illegal Entry

I found them there, the old, the mad, the lone
Pushing against my doors
Opening them by their weight.
A yellow-toothed, gray tweed old woman chant-
ed:
"You don't understand, he needs this room,
John Carter has no place to go."

His belongings were already there.
He had changed the placing of my bed.
His boots were against the wall.
The ripe tomato was gone
From my window-sill — broken the pot of
marigolds/ Her hat hid her straggly hair.

I complained to the management.
They replied: "You don't understand.
John Carter has no place to go."

I protested, "It's my room.
They are my belongings.
You must put John Carter elsewhere."
The manager shrugged.
His radio played *La Vie en Rose*.

They all looked at me, stooping,
Gray coats, white thin hair,
Gray skin, pressing, pressing forward.

"He has no place to go."

It

It loosely crawls about the slush
trying to scoot away from the sewer opening.
It leaps before the snow-removal truck, catches
a pigeon and eats a peanut,
throwing the husk away.
It evanesces with the wind and street light.
It is a slinky rose on a pedestal,
with a twining stem.
It revolves around a metal circle, dialing a
number which makes a dial tone sometimes.
It is an ugly, impersonal, uninspiring word.
It bursts open to a sun-ray, and closes
to a moon-ray.

It lies, white and inanimate, until the blue blood
of ink gives it pulsing life.
It leaps up the tree, breaks off a twig,
molests a leaf and opens up an acorn.
It leaves some part of the nut inside
for the sparrow.
It twists the bedclothes, blots up perspiration,
and flies out the window,
returning to the ceiling below.
It meets each day with doubting, each noon
with ennui, each nightfall with relief and
It hopes the silver rings around the stars
will melt into opals and diamonds
and spring up from the walks.

It flies in the face of adversity,
lingers in the paths of hesitation
and perpetually pores into pools of pride.
It is nothing, and, therefore, everything.
It is derived from the Id.

It, it, it, it, it.

Things To Do in the Office

Take a ball-point pen
from your neighbor's desk.
Put Modigliani nudes over the boss's desk.
Refrain from asking the boss a question
that will make him think.
When you must make a decision,
go to the cafeteria for coffee.

Burn some matches.

Type a personal letter on the secretary's
electric machine.
Write a birthday card to someone in Geneva.
Call up Carnegie Hall.

Write a report and interrupt it
to go to the washroom.
Sharpen your pencil.
Pretend to listen to your neighbor discussing
her son's broken engagement.
Discuss the religious implications of Medicaid.

Arrange piles of forms and envelopes,
small and No. 10 in your desk drawers.
Sip a miniature flask of scotch.
Call up Carnegie Hall.

Consider what the guitar mass is doing
to Gregorian chants.
Dust the desk. Move the philodendron
closer to the cactus,
for better nature relations.
Comb your hair, dust your shoes,
pare your nails.

Call up Carnegie Hall and ask the program.

Wonder if LSD would improve your feelings
towards the office.

Things to Do When Dead

Haunt the dreams of my friends,
especially the critical ones.
Lie in the casket and listen to mourning words.
Rise up and rebel if the services are not sung.
Try not to say, "It's too late for that now."
Listen to the rain seep through the earth
and drape the coffin wetly.
Listen to the grass pushing up above me.

Listen to the worms boring through the wood.
Wonder, *How could it happen to me?*
Plan to write a threatening letter
to the doctor who said,
"Everything's going to be fine."
Try to investigate the possibility of
reincarnating
as a mushroom.
Send a message to mother in
St. Raymond's Cemetery, asking
"What do I do next?"
Be surprised to find I have
a soul and not know what to do with it.
Be avant garde and not wear chains
when I walk out of the grave.
Find out if my dead relatives
are still telling the same anecdotes.
Be sure to cause morning sickness
to my ex-husband.
Try to con St. Peter into allowing
me to visit Purgatory.
Regret all those prayers I did not say
to gain indulgences.
Find ways to make my friends feel guilty
and pray for me.

Strike up optimistic conversations
with my fellow-lodgers in the plot and
consider how closely it all resembles
hotel living,
except for the hot running water.
Ask St. Peter if it's true there are many
popes in Purgatory and what the status
symbols there are.

If Shakespeare and Rudolph Valentino
are in Purgatory, consider advisability
of visiting there.
Chute through air spaces in the sky and billow
out like a cloud, and fall like rain
on the sod below.

— From *Things To Do When Dead*
(The Poet's Press, 1976).

FRANCES H. GREEN (1805-1878)

Song of the North Wind

From the home of Thor,¹ and the land of Hun,
Where the valiant frost-king defies the sun,
Till he, like a coward, slinks away
With the spectral glare of his meager day—
And throned in beauty, peerless Night,
In her robe of snow and her crown of light,
Sits queen-like on her icy throne.
With frost-flowers in her pearly zone —
And the fair Aurora² floating free,
Round her form of matchless symmetry —
An irised mantle of roseate hue,
With the gold and hyacinth melting through;
And from her forehead, beaming far,
Looks forth her own true polar star.
From the land we love — our native home —
On a mission of wrath we come, we come!
Away, away, over earth and sea!
Unchained, and chainless, we are free!

As we fly, our strong wings gather force.
To rush on our overwhelming course:
We have swept the mountain and walked the main.
And now, in our strength, we are here again;
To beguile the stay of this wintry hour.
We are chanting our anthem of pride and power;
And the listening earth turns deadly pale —
Like a sheeted corse,³ the silent vale
Looks forth in its robe of ghastly white,
As now we rehearse our deeds of might.
The strongest of God's sons are we —
Unchained, and chainless, ever free!

We have looked on Hecla's⁴ burning brow,
And seen the pines of Norland bow
In cadence to our deafening roar,
On the craggy steep of the Arctic shore;
We have waltzed with the maelstrom's⁵ whirling flood,
And curdled the current of human blood,
As nearer, nearer, nearer, drew
The struggling bark to the boiling blue —
Till, resistless, urged to the cold death-clasp,
It writhes in the hideous monster's grasp —

¹ *Thor*. Norse god of thunder.

² *Aurora*. Not Aurora, the goddess of dawn, but the Northern Lights, Aurora Borealis.

³ *Corse*. Archaic variant of "corpse."

⁴ *Hecla*. Famous volcano in Iceland, long believed to include a gateway to Hell.

⁵ *Maelstrom*. Any one of many famous oceanic whirlpools, strong enough to dash ships to destruction. The most famous are in Scandinavian waters. The date of composition of this poem is not known, but Frances Green would certainly have read Poe's tale, "Descent into the Maelstrom."

A moment — and then the fragments go
Down, down, to the fearful depths below!
But away, away, over land and sea —
Unchained, and chainless, we are free!

We have startled the poisoning avalanche.
And seen the cheek of the mountain blanch,
As down the giant Ruin came.
With a step of wrath and an eye of flame;
Hurling destruction, death, and wo.
On all around and all below,
Till the piling rocks and the prostrate wood
Conceal the spot where the village stood;
And the choking waters vainly try
From their strong prison-hold to fly!
We haste away, for our breath is rife
With the groans of expiring human life
Of that hour of horror we only may tell —
As we chant the dirge and we ring the knell,
Away, away, over land and sea —
Unchained and chainless — we are free!

Full often we catch, as we hurry along,
The clear-ringing notes of the Laplander's song.
As, borne by his reindeer, he dashes away
Through the night of the North, more refulgent than day!
We have traversed the land where the dark Esquimaux
Looks out on the gloom from his cottage of snow;
Where in silence sits brooding the large milk-white owl,
And the sea-monsters roar, and the famished wolves howl;
And the white polar bear her grim paramour hails,
As she hies to her tryste through those crystalline vales.
Where the Ice-Mountain stands, with his feet in the deep.
That around him the petrified waters may sleep;
And light in a flood of refulgence comes down,
As the lunar beams glance from his shadowless crown.
We have looked in the hut the Kamschatkan⁶ hath reared,
And taken old Behring⁷ himself by the beard,
Where he sits like a giant in gloomy unrest,
Ever driving asunder the East and the West.
But we hasten away, over mountain and sea.
With a wing ever chainless, a thought ever free!

From the parent soil we have rent the oak —
His strong arms splintered, his sceptre broke:
For centuries he has defied our power.
But we plucked him forth like a fragile flower,

⁶ Kamchatka, a peninsula in Siberia.

⁷ *Behring*. Vitus Bering, the discoverer of the Bering Strait, which separates Russia from Alaska.

And to the wondering Earth brought down
The haughty strength of his hoary crown.
Away, away, over land and sea —
Unchained and chainless — we are free!

We have roused the Storm from his pillow of air,
And driven the Thunder-King forth from his lair;
We have torn the rock from the dizzying steep,
And awakened the wilds from their ancient sleep;
We have howled o'er Russia's desolate plains.
Where death-cold silence ever reigns,
Until we come, with our trumpet breath,
To chant our anthem of fear and death!
The strongest of God's sons are we —
Unchained and chainless — ever free!

We have hurled the glacier from his rest
Upon Chamouni's⁸ treacherous breast;
And we scatter the product of human pride,
As forth on the wing of the Storm we ride,
To visit with tokens of fearful power
The lofty arch and the beetling tower;
And we utter defiance, deep and loud.
To the taunting voice of the bursting cloud;
And we laugh with scorn at the ruin we see
Then away we hasten — for we are free!

Old Neptune we call from his ocean-caves
When for pastime we dance on the crested waves;
And we heap the struggling billows high
Against the deep gloom of the sky;
Then we plunge in the yawning depths beneath,
And there on the heaving surges breathe,
Till they toss the proud ship like a feather,
And Light and Hope expire together;
And the bravest cheek turns deadly pale
At the cracking mast and the rending sail,
As down, with headlong fury borne,
Of all her strength and honors shorn.
The good ship struggles to the last
With the raging waters and howling blast.
We hurry the waves to their final crash,
And the foaming floods to phrensy lash;
Then we pour our requiem on the billow,
As the dead go down to their ocean pillow —
Down — far down — to the depths below,
Where the pearls repose and the sea-gems glow;
Mid the coral groves, where the sea-fan waves
Its palmy wand o'er a thousand graves,
And the insect weaves her stony shroud,
Alike o'er the humble and the proud,

⁸ Chamouni. The famous glacier in Switzerland, part of every Romantic's "grand tour."

What can be mightier than we,
The strong, the chainless, ever free!
Now away to our home in the sparkling North,
For the Spring from her South-land is looking forth.
Away, away, to our arctic zone,
Where the Frost-King sits on his flashing throne,
With his icebergs piled up mountain high,
A wall of gems against the sky —
Where the stars look forth like wells of light,
And the gleaming snow-crust sparkles bright!
We are fainting now for the breath of home;
Our journey is finished — we come, we come!
Away, away, over land and sea —
Unchained and chainless — ever free!

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume I (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2015).

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

The Leveled Churchyard

“O passenger, pray list and catch
Our sighs and piteous groans,
Half stifled in this jumbled patch
Of wrenched memorial stones!
“We late-lamented, resting here,
Are mixed to human jam,
And each to each exclaims in fear,
‘I know not which I am!’
“The wicked people have annexed
The verses on the good;
A roaring drunkard sports the text
Teetotal Tommy should!
“Where we are huddled none can trace,
And if our names remain,
They pave some path or p-ing place
Where we have never lain!
“There’s not a modest maiden elf
But dreads the final Trumpet,
Lest half of her should rise herself,
And half some local strumpet!
“From restorations of Thy fane,
From smoothings of Thy sward,
From zealous Churchmen’s pick and plane
Deliver us O Lord! Amen!”

—Written in 1882.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet’s Press, 2016).

ANNETTE HAYN (1922-2004)

Exits

After sharing the bathtub
with drowning ants
I attempt a graceful exit.

Can each life revise the universe
the way future rovers
may revise Mars?

I marvel at the cleverness
of Jeopardy contestants.
But what about unfathomable

questions, the saints who
disappear under the earth,
their non-return?

I've missed my exit, so
I'm growing old. In windless seas
the sailboats are asleep.

A group of children passes me
on their way to a restaurant
in the next century.

Lightning disrupts a field of fireflies.
Each of their moments is eternity,
their wedding on a borrowed planet.

The Girl Who Hid From Death

All her life she has avoided
the dying and the dead.
When asked to funerals she found
excuses in the morning air,

let herself be led away
from her own dying mother
to hide among the landmarks
of her house.

While working as a nurse
whenever Death came near
she found something to do
at the other end of the ward.

What a macabre game
of hide and seek. —
When Death confronted her at last
she found she liked him,

his eyes transparent, calm
his voice a chanting stream,
the kind she used to wade in
as a child.

She touched his cloak of rain,
his hand of night,
and said, "Take me away." —
"Since you have spurned me,"

answered Death, "and hidden from me,
I will hide from you."
And he condemned her to
an endless life.

On Holidays I Don't Observe

In order to placate
an ever growing population
God had to allocate
some of his tasks to angels:
dark silhouettes in a white sky,
the dead who never truly died,
someone next door unrecognized,
the rescuers and referees.

On holidays I don't observe
I tell myself their stories,
ignoring gurus, rabbis, priests,
the rigid and exclusive.
Each ritual is the only
true one. Each crowded wind,
in one prescribed direction,
shouts its demanding song.
And God, besieged,
with a celestial headache —
What will become of Him?

Unlikely Marriage

In the dusty dollhouse
John Ashbery and Emily Dickinson
man and wife
have been asleep for years
with their six children
(one is lost)
that won't grow up
assorted dogs and cats
a wooden mouse and artificial flowers

In their colonial bed
turned to each other
they look uncomfortable.
Picasso prints are pasted on the walls

(The real John Ashbery
with a moustache
may not like
Dickinson's life style;
but here they are. They have no choice)

After an interlude
of climbing ladders and being hugged
they wait
he in a flannel suit
she with long hair
their arms outstretched

for the next generation.
A glass of plastic beer
on the red kitchen table
and manuscripts.

Painted Windows

Artists are hired
to paint the windows
of abandoned buildings
in the South Bronx.
Storm clouds keep filing

past armed guards
and pastel images —
Once I liked the witch's house
and Spanish houses
painted on the set
of Verdi's opera
— Rodrigo in his armor
Don Carlo in despair

The Grand Inquisitor intends
to burn them all —

Imagine owning nothing after the fire
while your apartment
the one you used to live in
shows neatly painted shutters
and simulated smiles.

All winter feelings flare
and cars pass by.
Like homeless people
old leaves fly up to haunt
their former trees.

— From *Chamber Music: New and
Selected Poems* (The Poet's Press, 2009).

High Holy Day

On Yom Kippur I feel
left out.
People around me
are dressed up.
So are their children's dolls.
I light a candle, don't
fast, see Dallas.

The leaf I touch has not
yet turned. Will next year's
earth be safe?
All this is written down
and sealed today.

I'm thinking of the girl
in the photo
(the mother-in-law I never knew)
deported to a Polish ghetto.
Did she learn to pray
or die for a religion
she did not believe in?

No lake to throw my sins into
only stirred up circles
in the puddle
of pale leaves shining
like injured angels.

Where Dragons Sang

1

What I remember has
no beginning and no walls.
each fragment hangs like a cloud
without a sky. slowly
as I practice the
piano, a crystal chandelier
falls from the cloud
slowly it keeps on
falling like snow —

2

I can recall
a door that didn't open
a child I wouldn't
play with, the play I missed
not what I kept on seeing
through the window
(blue out of nowhere, suns
out of sequence) thinking
I'll always remember this

the door was on a mountain
the play about a virgin
who chopped off someone's head —
when the carriage overturned
the child I wouldn't play with
picked up my four dolls
from the grass spitefully
left me an evil image of myself.

3

Now I'm walking backwards on
this German avenue (I feel quite
safe) in boots under a narrow
moon, past the mysterious fire —
walking to where my mother
knew I loved her
to where the Stürmer printed
lies on giant columns on every
street — a Jew with crooked nose and
evil eyes. some boys
cornered me —
walking to where our dog hid from
the birthday party where dragons sang
and shadows carried guns
to where the *Nibelungen*,
the wronged dwarfs —
I stepped on the white berry
made a popping sound. The lady in the

moss house drifted down the river.
I held four dolls. Siegfried revived
his dragon. The street signs marched
saluted, turned around

Marianne

Years later I came across her
German letters, assertive, questioning
written in '37
after six months of strolling:
a Berlin schoolyard, arm in arm.

Striving for some storybook
perfection we sent our lives
from Italy to England and
back again. There was that singer,
unrequited love, "quite normal at
our age," she said

remembering how we had once waited
for hours in a hallway
across the street from Dr. Löwenthal,
the teacher we had a crush on
who never got away.

Politics were, like paintings
in our houses, important only when
one looked at them. We looked
at new lights on the edge of seas.
One day all those events
will step out of their frames.
Married one day we won't know
each other's names.

The Game

Edith and I, the only
girls in the battle. Flushed,
out of breath, we piled snow bullets
on a sled while our mothers
looked for us all over Breslau.
Another time
we threw our dolls downhill
to see if they could fly (they did
for a moment)
but hers was made of porcelain
and had to have new eyes.

It was all a game:
the enemies in boots parading
down the street, fathers
losing their jobs, getting arrested.
But that came afterwards. First

we were six —
Nazis and Jews together
in a garden. I can't remember
who was who
— flinging snow bullets
at enemies across the fence
until the sun went down
and our mothers found us.

A Song

We played by the river
gave it two letters from each
of our names so it became
Evanlireha Bach

Lisbeth made up a song about the river
We built islands for creatures
with tree bark eyes. Italian
soldiers on maneuvers
used them for their tent

That was before the cook
was married and the dog grew lonely
before we moved from Breslau to Berlin

Soldiers stole rocks from our dam, opened
flood gates — Back home
men streamed
in mud brown uniforms
through the streets
and sang *Die Fahne hoch* —

I was proud to be the enemy
on my way to school.

Idols

Branches tremble —
a sky white, hot and far away
as in the vestibule of mirrors

perfume in the air
Kulturbund in Berlin in '36
Jewish artists (I had a crush
on one of them) in their
last theater
performing melodramas
from yet another time

confident, like super heroes —
In a green gown
Amelia sang Verdi's score
as they tore off her veil

(groups of Nazis in the street)

dim lights, the painted gallows
all of us elegant and doomed
in *A Masked Ball*

Wrapped in applause and awe
next to my mother, small
I watched them disappear
in all directions

The Crossing

(from England to the U.S.)

I like your teeth
said a Norwegian sailor
under the British flag
during the blackout.
but I grew up

in Germany
Schiller's heroes
Hitler's jails
and didn't want to be

rescued by ship
shadowy moon behind
eleven passengers
zigzagging to the other side
of my life.

— From *Enemy On the Way to School:
Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*
(The Poet's Press, 1994).

HEINRICH HEINE (1797-1856)

From "Germany: A Winter's Tale" Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz

In sad November's clouded gloomy days, when the wind
was tearing the leaves
from the trees, I set out for Germany. As I came to the border,
my heart thumped my ribs, my eyes really brimmed with tears;
the sound of German spoken gave me such a strange feeling —
a delicious pain in the soul, a wound of love.

A girl with a harp was singing, very sincerely and out of tune
(even so I found it quite touching), of lovers' sufferings,
of sacrifice and re-uniting above in that better world
where all pains vanish and fade.

She sang of this earthly vale of tears, of joys that melt away
all too soon,
of the place beyond, where transfigured souls feast in eternal bliss.
She sang of the pie we'll have in the sky, the ancient holy lullaby
they use to rock the People to sleep when that great stupid
baby whines.

I recognized these melodies and even the authors,
and I know they drank secret wine while publicly
preaching water.

But I'll compose for you, my friend,
a new and better song:
we want to be happy here,
not have to live poor any more.

We shouldn't let fat lazy guts gulp down
what others' hardworking hands have earned,
when there's wheat enough in the ground
to make bread for all the children of men,
not to mention roses and myrtle, and beauty and truth
and fresh asparagus!
Yes, asparagus! And avocados too, in fact the whole
produce section.

Let's leave the eternal heavens to the angels and the pigeons,
and if we *do* grow wings after death,
we'll be only too happy to visit you all up there
and help you eat the angels' cookies and cakes.
A new and better song — I seem to hear a band playing it now —
the holy old groans of the Church's chants
and their grim clangy bells fall silent.

The maiden Europa's engaged to the splendid new god, Freedom!
They're lying entwined and getting down to some
really serious kissing.
So what if no priest blesses them? The marriage is just as valid.
Long live the bride and groom and all their children to be!

My new and better song is a wedding anthem for them,
they're married under a new constellation
made of the stars that shoot
across my soul in fireworks of excitement,
burning so wild they burst apart spraying flame!
I feel suddenly, miraculously strong,
the second I step on German soil.
I could snap ash-trees with my hands!
Magic power gushes up through my veins.
Like the giant Antaeus,
my strength renews as I touch my mother-earth.

II

While the little lady warbled and strummed
about heaven's pleasures
the Prussian customs officers paid an official visit to my luggage.
They sniffed and pawed through it all — shirts, socks, hankies,
looking for lace, for jewelry, and for forbidden books.

Fools, you're not going to turn up anything in my suitcase,
the contraband that travels with me is packed inside my head;
the lace that's woven there is finer than any
from Belgium or Holland,
because it was woven with far sharper needles
— needling is something I know a lot about.

I've got a whole hatful of untaxed gems, the crown jewels
of the future,
the treasures of the "unknown god" Freedom,
who'll evict the old Lord from his temple.
I've got books tucked in there too, I assure you, many a volume;
my skull is a twittering birds-nest of contraband pamphlets.
You couldn't find worse — trust me on this —
in Satan's own library,
far more dangerous than the tepid quibbles of your radical poets!

— From *Germany: A Winter's Tale*, Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz,
(Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

RONALD HOBBS

Ronald Hobbs is best known as a poet and as co-founder of *Sanskaras* poetry magazine with Robin Matthews, and one of the leaders of The New York Poets Cooperative in the 1970s. He has lived in San Francisco for many years. His poems are collected in *Lama Poems* (1971), *Songs for Fillmore Street* (1980), and *Beadstringer: A Poet's Diary* (1985).

Lama Poem

(Sangre de Christo Mountain Love Song)

In front of your little house
where you can stand and watch the blood of Christ
pour upon the mountains of his blood's name
there is a memory of a night
we hurled our hammers at the sky
and threw our arms about the moon, and each other.

What to do but appraise eyes,
disappear into the sphere of oval candle
and re-emerge lovers?

Some night soon, when the world is rock still —
when there is not even the tinkling of a glass —
when the last echo of the last laughter of the last joke
totally unwinds and drifts like a web onto the night snow
— when stars are shy girls dropping their light through space
you might see a form, a naked ghost,
pilfering beer cans and cow bones.

There's no guessing just how you will see it.
Surely you will not see him as clearly
as the huge women who recline in blankets
about your horizons and sleep now as cold as ice.

In summer no one is surprised
when they lean up on sunset elbows
to look into the desert mirror
and later, in moonlight, dance.
Now they will not even notice
as you inspect the snow while peeing;
as you pause in awe of night's oranged trees
and wonder at the something that is not quite there
but is — like the Kiowa spirits, or the
summer rain that falls on Ute Mountain.

— From *Group 74: Poems of the Last Bohemia*
(1974, *The Poet's Press*, 2020).

Interstice, The Poem's Own Time

Something has entered through a crack in the heart's window,
Sentimental, but what the hell?

Why not allow the moment in its swell and sigh
Evoke the smells of limestone and shale,
Stand a Dogwood tree on the mind's hill
And let the fingers of the fiddler blend
The sage and fennel of his strings into a perfect harmony,
A singer sing before the blossoms on the Dogwood die?

Has it not been, as you have said,
A time of puke and swill,
A season of bastards?

But here where this nocturne forms itself,
Molecules of long forgotten joys emerge
From the walls of your dark city; Fireflies rise
And swarm like opals
Above the splendid kingdoms of the grass.

And if you should pour another cup of wine
And begin to weep for the sake of this respite,
Think nothing of it. It is only the smoldering of the wish
Of the verb to be,
It is only the smoke from the song.

But listen and try to hear what the tears spill to tell:
That the fruit of our tree has been picked clean
By the idiot sparrows of our passions,
That too often the tail
Has wagged the dog,
That the cause of love is hard.

Stand with me for a little while
here in this beam of purgatorial light
cast to ease the pilgrim suffering of the long climb home;
Keep with me until, inevitably, the sucking world returns
With its scary drums and whistles
and hangs its leech on you!

Run! While there is still this time to crest and dive
With the snipe and plover,
Bathe yourself in the clear water of this moment
And in the amethyst and rhodolite
Of tides.

— From a Guest Poet page on The Poet's Press website.

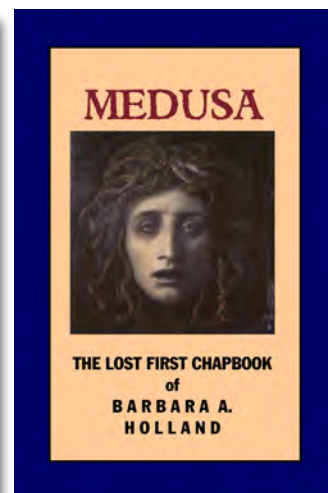
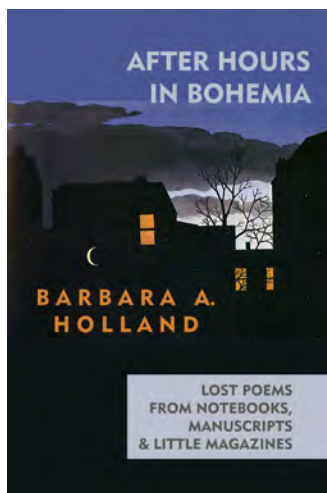
BARBARA A. HOLLAND (1925-1988)

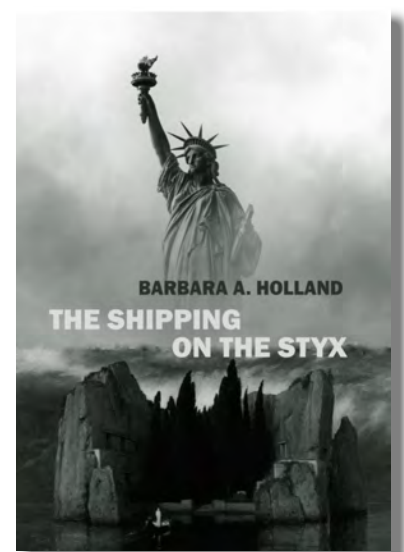


Barbara Adams Holland, born in Philadelphia and a graduate of University of Pennsylvania, made her entrance into the New York poetry scene around 1961 with a self-published chapbook, *Medusa*. The reaction to its up-front mix of witchcraft, Satanism, and Chthonic mythology among friends, family, and fellow poets must have been discouraging, for the book vanished and never referred to it again. But the haunting title-poem was published and read aloud frequently, and by the early 1970s, the poet was regaling her audience with other alarming and terrifying myth-infused poems, always recited from memory.

She became known as “The Sybil of Greenwich Village.” By 1970 she had published work in over 700 magazines. Her poems of Manhattan’s Bohemia in its last decade are sharp and surreal takes from an outsider, a “full-time poet” when such a choice was a guarantee of neglect and poverty. She is the flaneur of streets and harbors, of coffeehouses and lofts, always “alone in my voice” but eager to share her sharp and biting images and visions.

She began to overlay her New York vistas with images and ideas from the paintings of Belgian surrealist René Magritte, culminating in a connected cycle of some 90 poems entitled *Crises of Rejuvenation*. No fewer than 14 of her books and chapbooks came from The Poet’s Press, including the posthumous volumes of lost manuscripts, poems from magazines, and poems reconstructed from her notebooks. The largest of these volumes, *After Hours in Bohemia* (2020) also includes all the contemporaneous reviews and articles about Holland and her work. *The Barbara Holland Reader* (2021) makes the critical material available alongside all the poems referred to by reviewers and critics, making it a great starting point for students and new readers.





Medusa

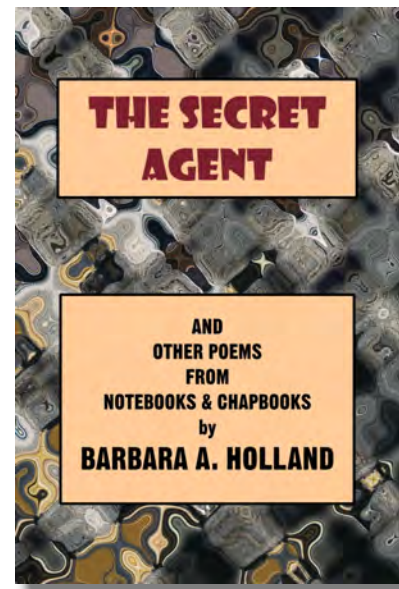
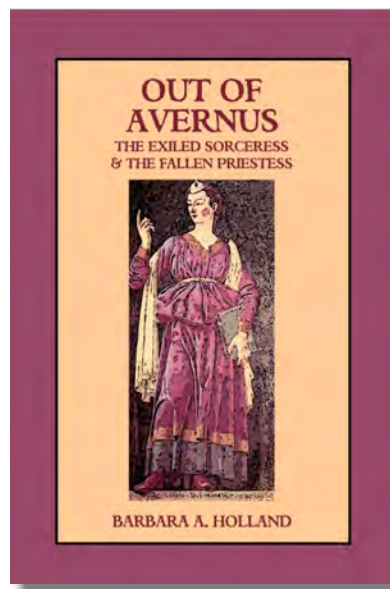
Spray. Thick and heavy dawn. A day
clouded, sucked, swirled, exploded, pouring back
into the sea. The hiss of serpents rising from my head
as mist in streamers writhing across this rock.
The night with horrors rising on the wind,
flung by the breakers at my feet, their jaws gnashing.
Tentacles half-hidden in the beards of weed
hanging above the down-pulled anger,
the recoil, and massing force.

Even these golden wings and iron talons
are little help against the full attack
constantly made, withdrawn, and reasserted
against this rotting molar in the sea.

If you could watch the quiet centered
in the eddy of my eyes, if you could peel away
the roughened hood of granite shrouding your own,
if you could bear to see, as I, my hideous companions;
the desolation of the night,
far from the promise of Hesperides;¹
my madness; my sallow and emaciated face
framing my desperate eyes, [it] would make you see
my inner nightmare
as so much greater than the nightmare that I am.

Mercy spares you, turns you to stone,
that you may not see me, see [how] beauty in a face
mortal and more than human calls forth no love;
[how] any love of mine is walled around
in igneous hardness,

¹ *Hesperides*. The distant location, far in the West, where dwelt the nymphs of the evening, in a garden of golden apples.



or torn from me, blown in shreds of icy spume.
Kill me. Life waters at the eyes.
 Swing back your sword.
Look elsewhere, lest your arm remain
 upraised forever.
I must resign myself, in death,
 to a singular condition,
to darker places, caves loathsome, crawling
with sluggish saurians, cold in the deep recesses
of the cess-pits of the gods.

The Inevitable Knife

I must look incredibly foolish.

You will have to admit
that a handle midway between
the shoulder blades
seems curious.

I know it's there. I feel it;
the humiliating wag of it in bend
of steel to weight of handle;
the glint of metal
yet unburied, triumphant
in the wink of stealth;

the chill of ice edge
encroaching on the sovereignty of spine,

and the nausea,
just as it always has been,

in the tempting availability
of a useful excrescence
for any type of push or pull,

and as it always will be.

I can never get used to it.

High on Three Cups of Tea

Street lights drown
in wine. The ambered dark
breathes an unpeopled festivity,
as if the city had been recently
deserted by a circus
that left the lights on.

This has been
but the end of a day of it.

Five persons,
whose faces had never been anything
more than basically facial
came down
with serious cases
of beautiful eyes.

I was embarrassed.

A warehouse appeared
as a Venetian palace. A limp
banana lily languished
on the lip of a garbage can
and I,
 an occasional iconoclast,
stood breathless before
the perfection
of a parking meter.

Now,
 I go home
to delight in the cracks
in my ceiling while the light
outside my window
rinses layers of grime
on glass
 with claret.

Autumn Wizard

For Ray Bradbury

When he fed your adolescence
on the youth of his poems,
 do you remember
his fireplace releasing
his personal Octobers
 in sendings
of unusual leaves; that they were crimson,
indigo, coral and turquoise
 when they streamed
a spiral from the hearth grate
out and once around him
on their long glide to the ceiling?

Do you remember that his house
was a gaunt spinster with a rhomboid eye
browed under angle of a gable; that the raw
dawns of the crows had galled
 its clapboards?

He was a poet then, as thin and angular
as his house, and of a desperate season,
when the sky screams and the clouds
become impulsive. Not for all his summers
has its bite diminished,
 even when the green-up
hit him and his wallet swelled with May.

He has been poet still,
despite the blockage of a moveable screen.
The Autumn stuffs the yawning
of the fireplace and the flue packs solid.

The screen is a wall of gems,
but even so, he sometimes
removes it and the room is brawl
of burst October when the crush
crumbles and the whole belch of it charges
the dining room door. Then he burrows
through the heap of his poems for air
while his house leans on the wind.

The Apples of Sodom And Gomorrah

I have her name,
here in my fist, to riddle
with my nails.
I have her hair,
which I extracted from the teeth
of a comb I stole.
I have her footsteps,
embodied in mud, which I shook
from her shoes one day.
I have the parings
of her nails, which I swept
from her bedroom floor.
I was her houseguest
and ate my food unsalted,
that my efficiency
might not be impaired.

Now I shall take all her identity,
rolled in a bit of rag,
and I will make her a tree
like those that gasped salts
from the soil of Sodom and Gomorrah,
for their fruit are leather bladders,
vesicles that have no core,
no substance and no seed,
that loose a puff of dust when once
you break their casings open.
Such shall she be; so shall she bear.

Her fruit will fall and drop from her,
wind in a husk of rind. Her children
shall be born perfect, but two
weeks after birth each one
shall die strangled before the sun
rises upon her arid acres.
Her children are not hers.
They are mine, as he is, and always
shall be mine. Therefore
her children have been usurped
I should have borne them,
but his seed has been misplaced.
Thus I shall take from her
that which was never hers.

The Autumn of my anger
closes in, scorching the edges
of the meadow, calling
a yellow challenge

from the heart of a stand
of hemlock, and I would
throttle her, driving my drift
of clouds into her windpipe.
I would send flights
of arrow-headed geese into her gullet.
She shall have no success.
One by one the offspring
he has sired shall fall curled,
brown and brittle on the grass.

But as for me, I shall be delivered
of a *diabolus*, for now a maple
blaze exfoliates within my womb.
Acorns of hatred spatter
from my eyes upon her roof top,
making the sounds of half-crazed footfalls
of horned and shriveled imps.
They will not let her sleep.
Their lidless eyes will watch her,
lying beside my lover, pressed
into a cast iron stupor,
will watch my arms elongate
through the window until my hands
have touched her baby's throat.

Three have already
been extinguished. One more
means nothing. Since these
four are not mine,
they have no right to be.

They will tell her to be prepared,
to hold a silver knife
in readiness, to slash at my wrist,
to search the markets daily
for a woman with a bandaged arm,
but my blood does not flow
when I command it to hold back.
My arms shall be bare and whole.
She will not find me.

But I shall come again upon her next
delivery. My shadow arms and hands
will flow through keyholes.
I have her name, a handful
of mouse-brown hair, her toenail clippings,
even a loosened, spewed out filling.
I am a scavenger
with a special use for gold.

Not Now, Wanderer!

Evening by evening
your shadow lengthens,
but with this
Autumn, as with others past,
it is a lie.

Never does it lengthen
sufficiently to fall on me.
Never does the dark grasp
at the end of your reach
fasten upon me and lift me
to the crags where you stand guard
and listen to my waiting.

Still, the high howl of my hunger
for you swoops, a lost bird,
between your messenger ravens.
I walk at night, expecting their brush
of blackness across my cheek,
but no feather of them tells me
by contact that you are nearer.

Not now, Old One. Not at any
other now do I need you
less than in previous Autumns,

for the familiar and delectable tearing
in the ring of my pelvis
and the hot cloud
fattening under my ribs, merge
with the leaves' urgency
and the moon's tight-fisted tension.

With this suspense and the concentration
of desire, I make my instrument
of destruction and creation.

When Time shall bring my arms above
and around the granite
of your shoulders, and I am lost
in the folds of your cloak;

my waiting assuaged in the cavern
left vacant by your eye
beneath your hat brim,

my extension will shorten,
my aim will quirk, my concentration
will sputter and the old work
of will and incantation
will dry up,
forgotten.

I need *you*,
but even
more than that,
the need *for* you. Love,
lust, or the inevitable conquest
by thunderbolt,
penetration by cast
of lightning on the bare slopes
browning above the fever of foliage:

our predestined collision
and the coiled sleep
in the crater of your vacant eye
must be withheld as many years
have kept them
pocketed for the conservation
of power.

Your beard
gathers grayness. Your face hardens
with the weather as thunder
rehearses its yearly promises
among the hills. Somewhere beyond
a number of Autumns, or even beyond
all Autumns ever,

you will become a receptacle
for my remnants, pieced,
at the last, among your bones.
Wait, Wanderer, till then.

Not now!

Black Sabbath

*Thou shalt not suffer
a witch to live.
Thou shalt not suffer a witch,
or witches are dangerous
merely in their existence.
Four hundred years ago
you burned us at the stake.
Now in this steel-
stitched century, you freeze us.*

How often have I been aware
of you; your comings
and your goings to that great bare rock,
but until the night
when I saw the pack
of you, a vine-snarl
of writhing limbs
and naked bodies,
coiling about one another,
slithering over one another in the
grey-wet light of Candle Mass,

until I saw some of you,
beard-clogged with wine,
bloated with overeating,
greasy mouthed, foul fingered,
until I saw you drinking
the reeking blood of a baby
who was born by accident,
until I saw you stumbling
and fawning before that goat-headed
one, to whom you pledged me
on pain of strangulation,

I had not summed up fully
the implications of the whispers
in my hair that made sleep
a horror for me, when whining,
creeping voices, like tiny hands,
clutched at my fear
receptors, saying that I knew
that in my loneliness
the silences carried your footfalls
on ridgepoles, on spruce treetops,
that I had seen the rush
of brooms blow wide
the mottled dust-mice from the sky.

I swear I did not see them,
but on clear, still nights

a sudden wind would blow my candle
out, and send a rattling skeleton
of chalk cold bones
down my cringing spine,
harp fingering bones,
plucking a fleshless music
from my vertebrae.

It was *you*,
not I, who set me here.
It was you who stripped me and stretched
me supine as priestess-victim for the
hollow Black-Mass throng,
and it was you
who gave me in marriage
to the Black Master,
setting the death-white wedding ring
upon my finger, peeling a circlet
of skin from it
at knuckle top,
and it was one of you,
who administered those vows
which I must not remember.

And now I am here,
in dark of woods, an exile
mid juniper and fern,
living on lambs' tails
and huckleberries,
stewing reindeer moss
and ginseng,
cowering in caves,
walled in by fallen trees,
quick-felled by lightning,
guarded by gouts
of mud against the wind,
setting a watch
against snake and spider,
a dispenser of potions,
of herbs, narcotics,
of the unchanging lore
set down in the books I read
once in the winter
firelight of my cottage.

Now rings and amulets
send through my nerves impulses
from their owners'
personalities, as on the surfaces
of rain barrels and ponds,
I see the faces of the dead.
The tornado-voiced pine tree

roars through my understanding
and fills out words of portent,
of prophecy, of hidden knowledge.

And for my tithe,
I give my core to cold,
as my raw-boned Master holds me,
filling me length-full
of marrow snow, here on this high,
treeless, earth-bare
altar to moon-scoured emptiness,

I am the offering
to the denial of love,
world old, my flesh age cast away
for the joy of a ring dance,
(forbidden) which beat
in the fire that used to bring
goblins to the walls
of my cottage.
I grow hard and wind-bitten.

If I extend my hand,
fear grasps the fingers
of him who takes it. Terror
trips the feet that enter
my door, and my hunger for warmth
is a fist clenched upon fright
at the pit of my brain.
I reach out
and my hand snaps
at rain-lash, holds nothing
is wet and is clean.

Here
on this height with this book
and the type
which goes blank as my eyes
run from each word to each line,
which erases itself
as each page is leafed over,
with this deluge of light,
hot on my shoulders,
in front of those eyes
out in that void,
before this microphone,

as ever when I was casting
spells to the crows,
as ever when I was cooking
tripe on the hearth
I am removed
from the world-rush, an exile
in floodlight,
at lectern
alone in my voice,
alone on the stage
alone in this cupful of space
and time, naked
to thought and unspoken phrase,
unprotected from wish-forms
and still alone.

*Thou shalt not suffer
a witch to live.*

*Thou shalt not suffer a witch,
for witches are dangerous
merely in their existence.*

*Four hundred years ago
you burned us at the stake.*

*Now in this steel-
stitched century, you freeze us.*

The Breaker

In the grasp of a wave
you were gone;
by a wave flung back.

Where are you?
After the wave withdrew
the beach was wet with stars.

But now the stars
are dried and you
are out of reach.

Speak to me
from all the many voices
in this whispering sand.
Somewhere the sun must find you.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-1894)

The Comet

The Comet!¹ He is on his way,
And singing as he flies;
The whizzing planets shrink before
The spectre of the skies;
Ah! well may regal orbs burn blue,
And satellites turn pale,
Ten million cubic miles of head,
Ten billion leagues of tail.

On, on by whistling spheres of light
He flashes and he flames;
He turns not to the left nor right,
He asks them not their names;
One spurn from his demoniac heel, —
Away, away they fly,
Where darkness might be bottled up
And sold for “Tyrian dye.”²

And what would happen to the land,
And how would look the sea,
If in the bearded devil’s path
Our earth should chance to be?
Full hot and high the sea would boil,
Full red the forests gleam;
Methought I saw and heard it all
In a dyspeptic dream!

I saw a tutor take his tube
The Comet’s course to spy;
I heard a scream, — the gathered rays
Had stewed the tutor’s eye;
I saw a fort, — the soldiers all
Were armed with goggles green;
Pop cracked the guns! whiz flew the balls!
Bang went the magazine!

¹ This poem was published in 1832, in anticipation of the return of Halley’s Comet in 1835. Every re-appearance of Halley’s Comet was accompanied by superstitious panic worldwide, and since the earth sometimes passed through the tail of the comet, rumors were rife that the comet’s “burning” tail could extinguish life on Earth. In 1910, scientists detected poisonous cyanogen gas in the comet’s tail, but the gas is so diffuse that it can have no effect on the planet’s atmosphere. The poem is skeptical, and its horrors are attributed to bad digestion.

² *Tyrian dye*. A deep purple dye made since classical times, from boiled snails.

I saw a poet dip a scroll
Each moment in a tub,
I read upon the warping back,
“The Dream of Beelzebub;”
He could not see his verses burn,
Although his brain was fried,
And ever and anon he bent
To wet them as they dried.

I saw the scalding pitch roll down
The crackling, sweating pines,
And streams of smoke, like water-spouts,
Burst through the rumbling mines;
I asked the firemen why they made
Such noise about the town;
They answered not, — but all the while
The brakes went up and down.

I saw a roasting pullet sit
Upon a baking egg;
I saw a cripple scorch his hand
Extinguishing his leg;
I saw nine geese upon the wing
Towards the frozen pole,
And every mother’s gosling fell
Crisped to a crackling coal.

I saw the ox that browsed the grass
Writhe in the blistering rays,
The herbage in his shrinking jaws
Was all a fiery blaze;
I saw huge fishes, boiled to rags,
Bob through the bubbling brine;
And thoughts of supper crossed my soul;
I had been rash at mine.

Strange sights! strange sounds!
Oh fearful dream!
Its memory haunts me still,
The steaming sea, the crimson glare,
That wreathed each wooded hill;
Stranger! if through thy reeling brain
Such midnight visions sweep,
Spare, spare, oh, spare thine evening meal,
And sweet shall be thy sleep!

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1 (The Poet’s Press, 2015).

DENNIS HOLT (b. 1942)

Spring Beetles

I've begun to get bothered
by the treatment I've been giving to the beetles.
I am not normally a cruel man and
they probably deserve much better
(the fact that they're turning
the rose-leaves to lace notwithstanding).
I marvel again at the metallic sheen of their bodies,
that dark green that gradates
to coppery red at the edges.

These genuinely jewel-like creatures,
were hoping for merely a solitary tryst
with a single lover on a rose leaf
swaying in the breeze,
not this miasmic slave-ship orgy
at the bottom of a Mason jar,
this final furious humping-spree
before the atmosphere occludes,
a cross between Plato's Retreat & the gas chamber.

And I, the titanic engineer of their annihilation
(a curious blend of Al Goldstein & Adolf Hitler),
now after this additional crime against the order of Insecta
(how many prior hundreds or thousands
of ants & flies?)
am assured my special place in Taoist hell.

— From *Poets Fortnightly*, Volume 1 No 3 (Providence).

VICTOR HUGO (1802-1885)

The Cemetery at Eylau, 1807

The Battle at Eylau, East Prussia
(now Bagrationovsky, Kaliningrad, Russia).
As told to Victor Hugo by his uncle Louis-Joseph Hugo.

1.
Eylau, the graveyard in Kaliningrad, Eylau in East Prussia:
Eylau, the battle rather. Louis-Joseph was then
just Captain, and had earned the Cross, not that
it mattered in '07 when men in war were naught
but shadows and numbers to those who counted.
He would never forget Eylau, a quiet spot
(East Prussian then), mist-clotted fields,
scant woods. The regiment before a ruined wall,
an angry old belfry frowning down Lutherly,
gravestones one could not read, slabs a-crumble
and flat, sunken and swelling in humps of grass.

Beringssen, superstitious, shuddered to stay here,
but the Emperor would not retreat, not now, while
the threat of blizzard hunched in the clouds.
Napoléon himself went by, sunglassing the sky,
calling orders as he ant-scanned the horizon.
The word spread fast in spiderweb gossip, soldier-
to-soldier: "A battle, for certain, tomorrow."
They saw the shapes of women and children, fleeing,
huddled forms with knapsacks, potato-brown.
He looked along the ditches' edge, anxious to hear
the rumble of horses and wagons — but silence.

In the wall's shelter they made a campfire.
They made giant soldier-shadows, coming and going.
The colonel summoned him: "Hugo!" — "Present!" —
"How many men are with you here?" — "A hundred." —
"A plague! That's far too few. No matter then —
You take them all." — "Where, Colonel?" — "Go down *there*
and get yourselves all killed in the graveyard."
The captain laughed. "Down there! That is
the very place to die."

He had a gourd, a decent wine. He drank.
He passed it to the discerning colonel,
who savored, nodded. Their eyes met. Each understood.

A chill breeze harrowed the empty branches.
“We’re never far from Death,” the Colonel conjectured,
“Much as I love my life.” He raised the gourd again.
“Much as I love the *real*, we who know wine like this
know very well how to die.” Grimly, he laughed,
then swept his hand over the graveyard slope.
“Yours is the point they will menace the most.
No matter the cost — hold on. The battle’s real crux
is here.” Climbing to the wall-top, he scanned the ground.
“Have you some dry straw, at least, for bedding?” —
“None, sir.” —
“Then on the ground it is.” Soft graves, headstones,
a sunken spot or two, they’d find a way.
— “My soldiers can sleep no matter where,” he boasted.
— “And how’s your drummer-boy?” —
“As brave as a rooster!” —

“That’s good. So let him crow, and beat the charge
at odd times, day and night, run to and fro
so it sounds like an army is crowded in here.” —
“Did you hear that, boy?” called Hugo. A tow-head raised
from a snow-bank and cried, “Yes, sir! Fear not!
I can make enough noise for a Roman legion!”

Taking him aside, the Colonel ordered:
“It is imperative you hold this graveyard
till six tomorrow evening. Hold ground,
be you alive or dead. And thus, farewell.”
He gave a swift embrace and firm salute.

2.
Leaving behind the merry fire, they scaled
the crumbling wall to down-slope cemetery.
The old gravestones and their death-headed mounds
peaked with snow-clumps, rolled on and on like waves.
The snow was far deeper than they expected.
In tattered cloaks they sank to its chill-bed.
They slept well, as men of war learn slumber
without a thought of waking, or dying.

He woke at dawn. New snow had covered him
and made his lips icy. He sat up like a revenant
from the grave-mound he had chosen, poor *Johan H-*
who, dead, had no choice in the manner of bunking.
He was head-to-foot in a snowy shroud.
He stood up and shook it off, shivering.
A bullet breezed by his ear. “Ho!” he shouted.
“Lookout, what see you?” — “Nothing, sir! Nothing!”
“That nothing was no housefly. Sound the reveillée!”

Up popped the nine-and-ninety heads of men
from the Lutheran ground that had never seen
such an Easter rising. The sergeant called, "To arms!"
Red dawn was split in two by inky clouds,
a bloody-mouth leer at humanity,
sun-rise, Death-rise, the lamp of War. "To arms!"

For all the horn-call and drumming, the pots-
and-pans clamor of readiness, they in their turn
got only silence from the unseen enemy.
The shot he heard was but a random thing,
much like a ballroom orchestra player
who by chance picked up a horn and blew it.

Though blood was iced, they were warm for battle.
On the plains, the silent armies waited.
The graveyard-men were set as bait and lure,
on which the enemy might spend and waste.
They gathered along the protecting wall,
each one prepared to bleed for every foot deterred.

3.
And then it came on: six hundred field guns
roared their iron mouths, booming and thundering.
Lightning and fire-burst flashed from hill to hill.
Then Hugo's drummer beat the charge, in answer.
A colossus of trumpets answered back.
Down came the leaden shots upon the graves,
as if the very tombs were their targets.
Starlings and crows exploded in black clouds
from the shaken church's crumbling steeple.

One corpse but lately dead popped up half-height
as a mortar exploded his fine monument,
a preacher from the look of him, black-raimented
with a bony hand stretched out in admonition.
Skulls rolled through the snow like aimless billiards.

Then a day-defying darkness seized them.
Dawn would not give to day, the sun was shamed,
smoke rolled onto and up the slope, to wall,
o'er-reaching it, up to the church itself.
And then, in clot of gun-cloud came more snow,
a steady, head-pounding downfall of heaviness.
Soldiers against the wall were whitened ghosts,
others upon the ground a rose-burst of bleeding.
Down on the plain, fires rose from the smoke-sea —
villages now plundered were set a-light.
'til the whole horizon seemed one vast torch.

They stood against the wall, and they waited.
Till six o'clock tomorrow! the Colonel had said:
How could they make their shivering presence matter?
Not crouching this way like hares before a hunter!
“Morbleau!” said the lieutenant next to him,
“Our chance may come, and may come but once.
Let us advance *now* —” and then a bullet
ripped through his throat and he fell trembling, dead.

Napoléon, the Emperor, had set them here,
they knew not why, except to be a puppet show
of easy things to shoot at, a hundred armed men
pretending to be a thousand, by dint of din.
What would he tell the men? Their only goal
was to survive until a gold watch clicked on six.

He raised his sword, swinging it this way-that way.
“Courage!” he bellowed, choke-full of rage and manhood.
Out and apart from the others he stood.
He felt it not – not the thing that ripped him,
his hand limp, sword on the ground before him.
“No matter, for I have another hand,” he laughed.
He used his good hand to shake the numb one,
counting fingers, all there, thanks be to God!
He took up the sword again. Soldiers’ faces blurred;
some seemed to sink and falter. “Ah, my friends,
we have left hands for the Emperor, too!”

Too soon, the boy’s drum-beating stopped. He found
the staggering drummer. “No time for fear!” —
“Six hours I’ve drummed. Six! I’m not afraid.
I’m *hungry*,” the drummer boy protested.
The ground rose up — like an earthquake, it seemed —
the drummer was gone — Hugo’s sword was gone.
A cry went up to heaven, coarse like crows:
Victoire, it cawed. *Victoire! Victoire! Victoire!*

“Let anyone who lives, stand up! Report!” —
The drummer stood. “I’m here. I didn’t die!”
The sergeant from behind a tree: “I’m here!”
The Colonel rushed in on horseback, red sword
edged with the blood of retreating Russians.
He approached, saluted. “Who won the battle, sir?” —
“You did, you, Captain Hugo. How many still live?”
And Hugo answered, “Three!”

— Translated and adapted by Brett Rutherford.
From *The Doll Without A Face* (The Poet’s Press, 2019).

The Black Huntsman

“Who goes there? You, passer-by,
why choose these somber woods,
vast crowds of crows a-flutter —
no place to be with a rainstorm coming!”

“Make way! I am the one
who moves in shadow.
Make way! — for the Black Huntsman!”
The leaves on the trees,

 which the wind has stirred,
are whistling, and I have heard
that all this forest

 will be a-shiver with shrieks
when the storm-cloud clears
and the moon shines down
on the Witches’ Sabbath!

Why tarry here? Go chase the doe,
run down the fallow deer,
out of the forest to the unplowed fields.
And more than deer: this is your night
to bag a Tsar, or at least,
an archduke of Austria,
 O Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees —
 Hasten, Black Huntsman,
 to sound your horn-call,
 fasten your leggings
 for a long ride.

The easy stag who comes grazing
in plain sight by the manor?
Ah, no, ride down the King,
ride down a Bishop or two,
 Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees —
 It rains, the thunder
 roars, the flood
 sends rivers raging.
 Refuge engulfed, the fox
 flees this way, that way,
 no shelter anywhere, no hope!
 Take not the easy prey:
 there goes a spy on horseback,
 there a judge in his carriage —
 take *them*, Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees —
 Do not be moved
 by those monastic flutterings
 in the wild oat-fields,
 those spasms of St. Anthony’s
 Satanic possession.
 Hunt down the abbot,
 spare not the monk,
 O Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees—
 Your hounds are on the scent.
 Go for the bears;
 leave no wild boar unslaughtered.
 And while you’re at it,
 doing what you do so well,
 Black Huntsman,
 hunt down the Pope, the Emperor!

The leaves on the trees —
 The wily wolves side-step you,
 so loose the pack upon them.
 A stream! The track is lost
 in a teeming waterfall.

But what is this? A president
 without his secret service men!
 And there in that cave,
 a vice-president cowering!
 Run, hounds! Bring them to ground!
 Well done, O Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees,
 which the wind has stirred
 are falling, and I have heard
 that the dark Sabbath
 with all its raucous shrieks
 has fled the forest.
 The cloud is pierced
 by the cock’s bright crow:
 the dawn is here!

All things regain their original force.
My nation becomes herself again,
 so beautiful to behold,
a white archangel robed in light,
 even to you, Black Huntsman!

The leaves on the trees,
which the wind has stirred
are falling, and I have heard
that the dark Sabbath
with all its raucous shrieks
has fled the forest.
The cloud is pierced
by the cock's bright crow:
the dawn is here!

— From Victor Hugo's *Chatiments*:
"Le Chasseur noir," translated and adapted
by Brett Rutherford, 2008. From *Anniversarius*:
The Book of Autumn (The Poet's Press, 2011).

Dance of the Witches' Sabbath

Adapted from Victor Hugo's La Ronde du Sabbat, 1825

Just as in a mystery, behold now
how the moon veils itself in cloud
before the black monastery's walls!
Spreading its fright, the midnight spirit
passes, swaying twelve times where once
a bell tolled (no more!) in the un-peopled
belfry. Long resounding comes the noise,
the air shakes, the roll and rumble stifled
as if locked up beneath the bell itself.
A shadow, and silence falling — listen!
Who thrusts these clamors upon the quiet
night? Who casts these phantom lights?
Dear God! The ruined vaults, the jagged doors
seem to be enveloped by filaments of fire.

Do we not hear, where boxwood branches dip
into the Holy Water, an agitated tide of waves,
a tiny troubled lake a-boil in its granite urn?
Commend our souls to those who look down
upon us! Down here, among the blue rays,
among the scarlet flames, with cries and songs,
with human sighs and inhuman barking,

now everywhere, waters, mountains, woods,
larvae, dragons, vampires and gnomes,
monsters whose hell dreams only phantoms,
the witch, set free from the deserted tombs,
her silver birch broom whistling through air,
Necromancers tiara'd with mystical caps
above whom cabalistic symbols glow,
the no-nonsense demons, the crafty goblins,
all welcomed by the jagged line of roof,
by the broken hinge of the abandoned gate,

children of de-sanctified waste places come;
they come right through, a thousand lightnings,
the airy gaps in the stained-glass windows.
They enter the old cloister as a swirling wave.
He stands amid them, Lucifer, he, their Prince,
his bull's forehead concealed beneath
the high-capped miter of heavy iron.
The chasuble has veiled his diaphanous wings,
as on the crumbling altar he places
his cloven foot.
O terror! Now they are singing,
here in this place
where day and night the Eternal's eye
should watch!

Now hand or claw reaches out for its kindred —
or, horror to behold, for nothing like itself —
they join, the form the immense circle,
the Antipode to the Cross, the bottomless!
Like a dark hurricane, the whirling begins.

To the eye that could not encompass the whole,
each hideous guest appears in his turn;
Hell spins, it seems, within the darkness,
its dreadful Zodiac all emblems of death.
The wind-force makes all fly, no need for wings!
They are carried 'round, and Satan conducts
the choral bursts of their beastly voices.

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

"Change partners randomly!"
As the demon mass around him rolls,
Satan and his joyful minions
press in on the altar and the Cross.
It is the cardinal night of autumn
The hour is solemn.

From Satan's fingers rise
the ancient flame that does not die,
that pale winged fluttering
fringed with the purple of kings —

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“Yea, Children of Darkness,
rejoice in our triumph!
Brothers and Sisters, come
from a hundred dimensions,
from funereal places,
dens dank and deep.
Hell will escort you!
Come as a cohort
on griffin-powered
chariots! Come now!”

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“We welcome deformity and crime!
Come without remorse,
goat-footed dwarfs and suicides!
Come, Ghouls, whose lips
have never weaned from carrion,
and the black blood of the dead.
Infernal women,
outdo your rivals
in lust and vengeance,
outlast your lovers
to the point of death
and join us, exultant!”

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“Thrice-hounded Jews,
you are welcome among us!
Gypsies, Bohemians,
charged with anathema —
all may join us! Welcome!
Will o’ the Wisps, we know you!
Pale specters who escaped by night
after an avenging patricide,
glide on the breeze, catch hold
of the frieze above the broken wall,
fly, or crawl!”

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“Come, wicked goats,
eaters of everything.
Come, slender-bodied lice,
eaters of Everyman.
Come down, seducing Sylphs,
fall as a stream of hail,
and melting, bedew the field.
Take hands again, with one
of your own kind or kindred!
Follow the beat. Expand
the dance. Repeat the chants!”

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“Now at this beautiful moment
experts in magic shine
in the orgy, their blood-red beards
puffed out with smoke and lightning.
What did you bring? What offering?
What innocent soul is your prey?
or better yet, what unsaved sinner
did you kidnap from a confessional?
The victim with a victim in his mouth!
The fire of evil craves them all!”

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

Laughing in the holy place
(for who would know?
who’s watching there?
be still, if you would live to tell!)
Satan now parodies a chant
after Saint Matthew,
and in the chapel where his king
calls upon him, a demon sings
from the book of God!

The dead
in their vaults below, if they could feel
beneath the paving stones, and hear this rout,
how they would tremble!

“Bring them out of their resting place.
Open, ye tombs. Up, flagstones, up,
lidded vaults! Bring out the monks
who once worshipped here. Arise!

And in each stall let a false monk spread
the fatal robe that burns his bones
and let a black chamberlain
attend to the burning of the cursed flame.

“Satan will see you now!
With your coarse hands
among the monk-dusk,
make ink and write,
Sorcerers, write your
Abracadabra!

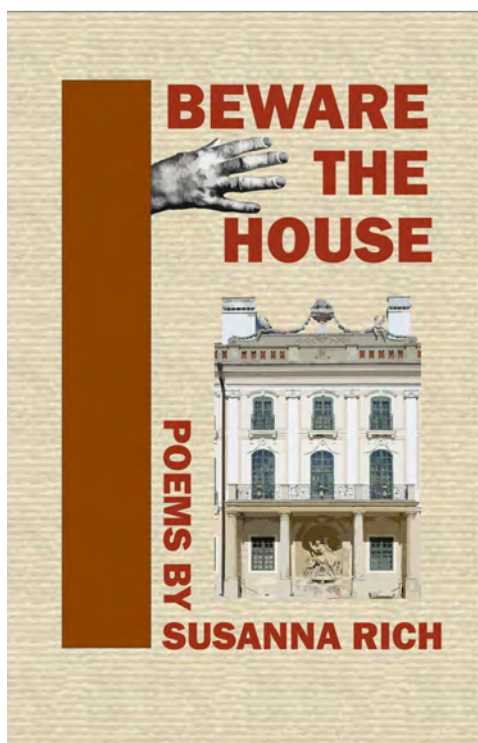
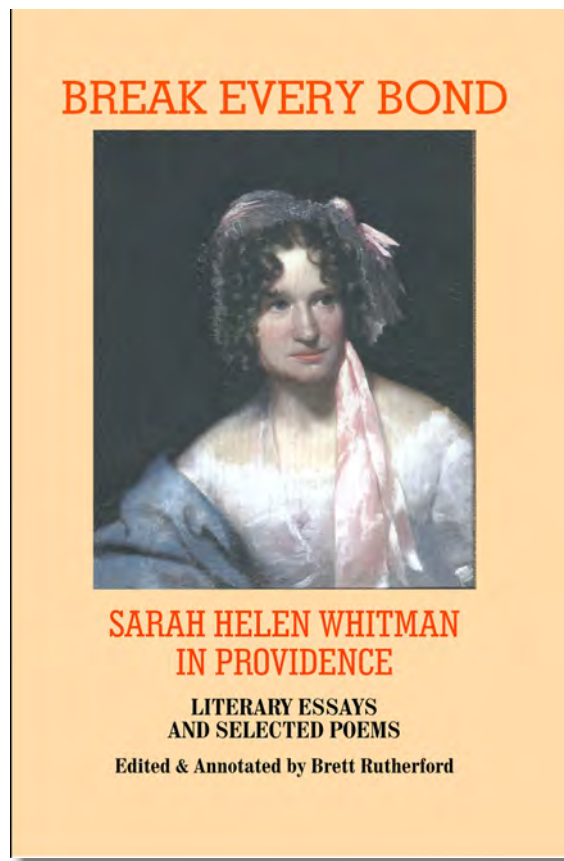
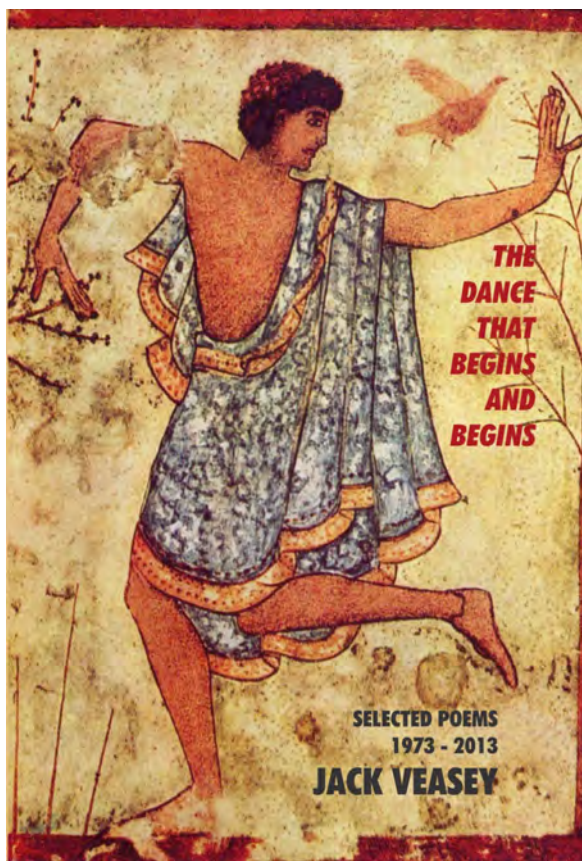
“Fly away first, ye wild furred birds
of magic and curses,
dictate a whole new alchemy
of forbidden metals. Tear
the very fabric of matter to shreds!
This is what Satan is all about!
Fly away first, ye wild furred birds,
whose bald wings hang
from the alcoves of Smarra¹
where the vampire dwells.

¹ *Smarra*. A vampire-like creature is portrayed in Charles Nodier’s 1821 tale, “Smarra, or The Demon of the Night.”

“Here is the signal!
Hell reclaims us.
The sun draws near! The time
may come when all souls know
no other flame than my black
lantern. May our dancing round
in the profound shadow
open the whole world
to an infernal circle!”

As I emerged from my hiding place
the pale dawn whitened the colossal
arches. Night and the Devil fled,
a confused swarm of dispersed demons.
And the dead, who had been burning bright
but moments before, reposed again.
The stones were back that held them;
their frozen glances gazing upward,
pillowed in ash and the dust of ages.

— Translated and adapted by Brett Rutherford.
From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800*, Supplement 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet’s Press, 2021).



THOMAS D. JONES

Land of Dreams

Miramare Castle, Trieste, 1992

I approach the strange castle
Which hugs a girdle of sand.
Its sphinx guards my movement
around giant sequoia trees.
As I walk down overgrown paths,
I notice a man standing near fountains.
Does he take the same path
an emperor would take
to muse about the world?

I rest beneath sequoia trees
at the edge of a secluded pond,
and in the water see a reflection
of a Mexican emperor from Austria.
At night I hear the drowsy waves
lap like a thirsty mouth
onto the head of a lone peddler
sleeping under the stars.

The Last Narcissus

A large fountain looms before the man
sitting in a chair outside the café.
He sips martinis and eats cherries,
swallowing stems like slippery fish.
He watches as the women pass,
dressed in bright orange miniskirts.
Years ago, a girl his age and countenance,
now stooped and bent in disease,
walked the same limestone pavement.
The statues, the sculpture on buildings,
buried memories haunting him.

He notices a flock of pigeons
resting on the head of a gigantic god.
He wishes he were that god, brawny and naked,
rising from the mud by his own volition,
not placed there by puny humankind.
He puts the binoculars up to his eyes
but instead of the imposing stone,
sees a Rubenesque Italian girl
collecting flowers by the fountain.
In her eyes and smiles, he sees his own.

Who's Afraid of the Dark?

I no longer fear the dark,
invisible voice
or transparent hand.

*Night now embraces
with cool breath,
veil drawn over pale face.*

I no longer fear the dark,
monsters hidden under the bed,
white head on crimson wall.

*Twilight, my lover, caress my flesh,
tickle me in forbidden places,
voice of my voice, breath of my breath.*

I no longer fear the dark,
forgotten bone dust of severed hand.
Farewell to ravaged fingernail.

*Forgotten bride veiled in black,
restore my love, my fear of ugly things,
dirty streets and crickets dying in grass.*

I no longer fear the dark,
leaves that fall in slicing rain
onto scars that footprints scratch in soil.

*Sometimes monsters scare me enough
to reach for a hand
and give me breath in the dark.*

Alternative View of Revisionist History

You stare at me in the looking glass, Alice,
But how do you know I'm really there?
We hold certain truths to be self-evident,
Once sacred and part of Everyman.
It is evident Egypt was a mirage,
The Greeks never had a Golden Age,
The Roman empire never fell,
Christ never walked the earth,
The Middle Ages was a fairy tale,
The Renaissance was an invention
of idiot savants,
The Age of Reason was totally irrational,
Christopher Columbus never discovered

anything,
America never became a nation,
Britain never had a king,
Europe never dominated the world,
The twentieth century is really the first century,
The World Wars never happened,
Six million Jews were never slaughtered,
Russia was democratic, America
was communist,
The great writers were actually
fictional characters,
The sky never fell on Chicken Little,
Little Bo Peep never lost her sheep,
All that exists is illusion,
And I was never born.

Generation X

I was born in a town called Orange
in late June when the yellow snow
of chestnut blossoms scattered the lawn,
the hedge in front of the blue-sided house.

I was born on a thunder road
of inner city blacks,
a grammar school of hard days
getting beat up by homeboys
for opening my mouth,
keeping me silent in the sounds
of television nights,
the blue eye flashing in my lids.

In the parsley and basil of my mother's
spaghetti,
in the crock pot of her Austrian ancestors,
she cooked the toil of those nights spent
helping my brother and me with homework,
getting us through school.

And I knew the ads on the television
better than I knew the times tables
or how a sentence worked.
For hours I watched re-runs of Speed Racer,
The Road Runner or Wile E. Coyote —

this was a time to open up, to get with it,
get moving
down the road to identity, to grow
the real thing in the garden
and have it my way.

I was born in the USA,

told not to squeeze the Charmin.
My father, like Mr. Whipple, held me back
from the prurient, and smiled.
I felt like walking on the sun,
or building sounds of silence
in my own way, taking a flop in the snow.

Now hard days come without a shoulder
to lean on,
without a recipe of basil in the old crock pot
hanging around,
a way to rebuild the old house
that now stands boarded up.

It's not too sweet or hip to refuse to grow up
And admit how much was lost in the fire
of the past.

I can't seem to snap out of it, to simmer down
and get moving
To a new house where I can build that island
in the sun.

Left-Overs

Dust settles on the floor of a room,
on the imitation oriental carpet,
in slits of book pages.
The book smells like centuries of garlic
steamed in a large pot by grandma
whose handwriting peculiarly describes the face
of a bearded lady wearing a smock
in the kitchen.

Grandma always prefers to work in the kitchen

whose aroma penetrates like cream puffs,
musk of stained cookbooks, tattered lives,
secrets hidden beneath the cracks of a face.

Even the fluffy white cat
between grandma's legs
coughs and sputters, flutters its eyes,
fur expanding into tufts of hair as it
plays with food under the stove.

With dolorous wrinkles sneaking
across her face,
wearing hair like a judge's phony wig,
Grandma looks at gray photographs of children:
The pictures of ancestors, of herself,
stare back from the dust of garlic,
the book, the stove, the shelves, the cat
chasing the last remaining scrap of another life,
the warmth of a child hiding in a white cave.

River Journey

I am in my room, not far from Passaic river,
watching the sun throw shafts of light
onto the floor like a playful child. Soon I step
on the bus bound for New York City
(endless flowing river of humanity)
with heavy burden draped over shoulder,
corroded lunch in hand, dressed in baggy clothes.
I arrive on the streets of New York
to find old man river disheveled and mean-spirited,
Buddha sitting in Lotus holding hungry bowl,
begging spare change from life's stray passengers.

Here I am, student traveling river of life,
poetry reading where I will become immortal,
sing of earth with a voice of thunder,
of the many craters pounded in the moon,
with my body dumped in Hudson River
(polluted river keep flowing till I end my song).
Here my head floats far from carnivorous beasts,
past sloping hills of submerged hamlets,
past playgrounds and graveyards once
isolated in the church I revered as a child —
bless me father for I have sinned.

Like a voice in the wilderness,
inner strings strum the sound of harsh lament,
of pigeons crushed to death in Central Park,
garbage dotting sidewalks like a collage,
blood-splattered graffiti on edge of oblivion,
dope pushers whispering "sense" in Washington Square,
my soul sacrificed to the never-ending hum,
its massive dynamo pounding my head. I am
still here! I continue to grab hold
despite discrepancies of my birth. Yes, my
hands are still part of my arms my eyes
my head and brain plastered to skull.
What is God but a mother's womb?

I am on the bus heading towards East River,
but I am also on the street looking to be fed.
Like sheep herded off to the barn, I wish
my master would feed me, but my church
I see built only in illusion of dreams,
I Nomi di Patri di Figli di Matri Santi. Yet I
still need wisdom to outlive this folly,
this sin, first sin, sinned once, sinned again.

And if I can be nothing else, if I can be nothing else,
I wish to be a singer of music nobody hears,
barbaric yawp sounded down blind alleys,
singing of poetic injustice, freedom for no one,
slipping into skin of empty bodies on the sidewalk.

Sing sing sing! not of pathetic music, but divine
they say to me at the watering hole,
next to my mother river, mother I never had:
silk hair, blue eyes, flippery feet, soft smooth breasts
fondled like tinfoil in the fingers of innocence;
dripping, dripping with ocean-flicker, attempt
at rhyme, jagged scraping of music against
bloody windowpane, razor-sharp edge of margin
cutting with sides of leaves of grass.

I have not come this far only to return,
I have not come this far only to be turned away,
but the hole I leave with regret and dying love,
the holy river is wet with dying love.
It must be love I sing, it *must* be love I sing!
I cannot hope to go this far and beyond.
I wish the world would go this far, into my hands,
into my bosom, my poetic sky and silent feet.

The city drones its massive missive hum
like killer bees stabbing deadly stings,
violins jangling heavy heavenly strings,
dancers and singers of spacious skies
blowing through the river's horn of plenty,
through the many holes pounded in the moon,
sky god's castration at the feet of its child,
mouths drooling with saliva at fallen angels,
twisted faces of Picasso crushed by Guernica's horse.
I choose to be what I am, nobody else,
salt-echo of a lover seeing better days,
sunning myself at the edge of the riverbank,
my mother's and father's fishy head waiting for me.

As I watch sunlight trickle patterns on the floor,
my soul drifts down many corridors,
down hallways, sidewalks, empty streets and dark bars,
crying for joggers mugged in Central Park,
mothers killed in the act of childbirth,
all heavenly bodies lying like heaps in time of war.
Soon the bus comes to a grinding halt,
I slowly climb off at the end of my journey,
my feet leave sin-filled androgynous river,
my feet leave muddy waters. I am finally home.

— From *Genealogy X* (The Poet's Press, 2000).

MICHAEL KATZ



Dr. Michael Katz plays many roles: transpersonal Psychologist, meditation instructor, author, artist and long-time student of contemporary masters of Tibetan Buddhism. He has been amongst the pioneers in utilizing hypnotic induction for lucidity during “guided naps,” often with spectacular visionary results. His novel, *The White Dolphin*, raises awareness about the destruction of the world’s natural resources, featuring the dream-based relationship between a white dolphin and an environmental activist. Dr. Katz’s book, *Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light*, emphasizes the importance of using the time spent asleep and dreaming for spiritual or transpersonal purposes. The book also offers specific exercises to develop awareness within the dream and sleep states associated with the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism.

The Crossing, published in 1980 and reissued in 2022, is a young poet’s first book, fascinated with the lure and decadence of the Jersey Shore, with love attained and lost, and with the first hints of transcendent light behind the realm of the everyday.

“On a misty night”

*On a misty night
when my car has crossed 80,000 miles
and I am thinking, cherishing, turning,
turning memories over and over
profoundly aware of time passing
and the approaching moment
when the car will cross 100,000 miles
and begin again.
I, a preoccupied shadow
slide into a cantina
and suddenly the rich beer is half gone
and I have thought of enlightenment
with every out breath
and my lover with every in breath
and the wet street sings
that we are all actors
and I sing to the road
that I wish we all knew it
and I walk on the road,
walk on the road thinking of all the deaf
and I want them to hear the still voice
that springs from the very source,
and roars like nothing else,
and murmurs I love you
like the river whispers to the earth.*

Dreamland

The dancing bones sat in Lotus position,
the Monks sent their beads around a string world.
The Turtle King opened the treasury
turned the wheel in a cloudless sky of mind.
The echo of the wind whispered,
wake up in dreamland.
It was also on the breath of the bee,
as it traced geometric designs
across the great expanse.

The Children Have Been Fixed in Amber

The children have been fixed in amber
and positioned just so on a coffee table
in suburbia.
On special occasions when the plastic covers
come off the sofa,
they are dusted, and track lights illuminate them
for admiring guests.

The Water Drops

this uneasiness circles like a lone mosquito
above stuporous forms in the grip of
straight bourbon
circles like the bombers of all wars
and you
helplessly swatting, befuddled beyond protest,
and wanting sleep
but unable to quite close your eyes
to the annoyance
mumbling
leave me, leave me
stop it.
the glare of the unshelled electric light
keeps sleep waiting like the insistence of
an unsatisfied lover
recalls the red-eyed irritation of lingering tear gas
the room spins
no peace
and the water dripping
from a broken pipe
from broken promises
is like a rusty edge,
the moments pass slowly like years,
seems like from and to time immemorial
the water drops like starving children

The Promise of Fire

On New Year's Eve Times Square is a
nuclear reactor
more and more neon radiation
proclaiming its plutonium mantra
the light, the power, the brilliance,
the light, the power, the brilliance.
While beneath the glare
hidden in the enormous shadows
the syphilitic whores, pimps and thieves.

An enormous front
an enormous back
the plague of blood diseases,
and mutated morality of the shadows;
the light begetting the darkness
The promise of fireworks on New Year's Eve
to end the holiday.

The soldiers on leave.
mingling amongst the festive crowds.
The soldiers, experimental fodder
their brains inflamed and deteriorating
exposure to the neon
heralding no more generations.

On New Year's Eve
the plutonium heart beats quickly
its din muffling dark cries
of those afflicted by hidden poisons.
Its brilliance intoxicating and
distracting the crowd
from awareness of the shadows;
where even now degenerates stagger in circles
like grey fish swimming gills up,
drained and dying slowly.
And the children below
long stopped playing,
promised fireworks,
first to fall asleep beneath the neon.
Your children
exhausted,
seduced by the shadows
the light, the power, the brilliance.
While the plutonium heart ticks to
the midnight hour,
its bile oozing into the corners of Times Square,
its neon filtering over a city of frenzied celebrators
the promise of fire,
the promise of fire,
the promise of fire.

How Like Snakes You Have Come and Gone

The summer's day hisses like
brushed snare drums.

My embittered loves,
my innocent loves,
my callous loves,
like snakes you have come and gone,
slipping through my windy hands.

I remember you green and seductive
through the grass;
I remember you striped with poison cunning;
I remember you trapped in old skins.
How you have left traces, my loves,
disturbing tracers,
like those across a wartime sky.

The summer's day is hissing,
the air itself is rolling and warping
like the strings of a harp;
and through the bending waves
my memories,
snakes.

Insinuating through the harp's fabric,
like notes of an acoustic bass
disappearing into the dark rock walls.
My loves, all my loves
how like snakes you have come and gone.

— From *The Crossing* (The Poet's Press, 1980, 2022).

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

La Belle Dame Sans Merci: A Ballad

O, what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful — a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said —
“I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed — Ah! woe betide! —
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried — “La Belle Dame sans Merci
Thee hath in thrall!”

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

—From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural
Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2015).

HENRY KENDALL (1839-1882)



This Australian lyric poet had a local reputation like that of Poe, for all the wrong reasons. He had scant education, and a brief adventure at sea before settling into writing as his life's work. His later years were marred with drunkenness and madness. Some of his early poems were published in London. His *Poems and Songs* (1862) and *Leaves from Australian Forests* established him as a "bush poet." His efforts in editing a satirical magazine failed. After finding himself unable to attend the duties of a government post, he drifted into dissolution and was briefly in an insane asylum. He re-established his reputation later with *Songs from the Mountains* (1880).

The Hut by the Black Swamp

Now comes the fierce north-easter bound
About with clouds and racks of rain,
And dry dead leaves go whirling round
In rings of dust, and sigh like pain
 Across the plain

Now twilight, with a shadowy hand
Of wild dominionship, doth keep
Strong hold of hollow straits of land,
And watery sounds are loud and deep
 By gap and steep.

Keen fitful gusts, that fly before
The wings of storm, when day hath shut
Its eyes on mountains, flaw by flaw
Fleet down, by whistling box-tree butt,
 Against the hut.

And ringed and girt with lurid pomp,
Far eastern cliffs start up, and take
Thick, steaming vapours from a swamp
That lieth like a great blind lake,
 Of face opaque;

The moss that, like a tender grief,
About an English ruin clings —
What time the wan autumnal leaf
Faints, after many wanderings
 On windy wings.

That gracious growth whose quiet green
Is as a love in days austere,
Was never seen — hath never been —
On slab or roof deserted here
 For many a year.

Nor comes the bird whose speech is song —
Whose songs are silvery syllables
That unto glimmering woods belong,
And deep meandering mountain dells
 By yellow wells.

But rather here the wild-dog halts,
And lifts the paw, and looks, and howls;
And here in ruined forest vaults,
Abide dim, dark, death-featured owls,
 Like monks in cowl.

Across this hut the nettle runs,
And livid adders make their lair
In corners dank of suns,
And out of foetid furrows stare
 The growths that scare.

Here Summer's grasp of fire is laid
On bank and slabs that rot, and breed
Squat ugly things of deadly shade,
The scorpion and the spiteful seed
 Of centipede.

Unhallowed thunders, harsh and dry,
And flaming noontides, mute with heat
Beneath the breathless, brazen sky,
Upon these rifted rafters beat
 With torrid feet:

And night by night the fitful gale
Doth carry past the bittern's boom,
The dingo's yell, the plover's wail,
While lumbering shadows start, and loom,
 And hiss through gloom:

No sign of grace no hope of green
Cool blossomed seasons mark the spot;
But chained to iron doom, I ween,
'Tis left like skeleton to rot
 Where ruth is not.

For on this hut hath murder writ,
With bloody fingers, hellish things;
And God will never visit it
With flower or leaf of sweet-faced Springs,
 On gentle wings.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800*, Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2016).

ROBERT KRAMER

Robert Kramer, born in New York City, is a widely published scholar, critic, playwright, poet, and translator of European literature. He has received six awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and has been a Fulbright Scholar for a year of research in Munich, Germany, and a Swiss Government Scholar for a year in Bern, Switzerland. He has been a guest professor at various colleges, such as the University of Connecticut, Syracuse University, and Haverford College, and has lectured at such institutions as the Smithsonian, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Art Therapist Association.

Like the Severed Head Staring

Like the severed head staring
at its languid trunk
beneath the guillotine,
into the mirror you peer
and see but the face of a clock.
Chatter futilely
like a wasp in a jug, await
the invisible leeches of time
to lock with the night;
blink, avert your eyes
beneath the cool gaze
of the clock —
with the hermetic terror
of the fevered child
locked in his nightmare.

After-Love Song

Once souls and bodies close
as lid and turning eye,
our lines of love ran skew;
and then the process of forgetting
like the gradual fading
of a bad photograph.
Now in utter silence
listen to the sounds
of your sole companion
as he eats.
While the ancient parrot
sates his avian lust
on mirror image,
not yet attained
the sterile land
of resignation.

— From *Group 74: Poems of the Last Bohemia*
(1974, The Poet's Press, 2021).

ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN (1861-1899)

Ontario-born Archibald Lampman was principally a nature poet, but for his romantic style has been dubbed “the Canadian Keats.” This dystopian poem, written near the end of his life, seems as removed from reality as Shelley’s “Ozymandias,” but it is meant as a cry against modern urban life, factories with their “thousand furnace doors,” and the coming horrors of mechanized war and anti-humanist governments. It continues the tradition of post-apocalyptic poems that started in 1816 with Lord Byron’s “Darkness.”



The City of the End of Things

Beside the pounding cataracts
Of midnight streams unknown to us
'Tis builded in the leafless tracts
And valleys huge of Tartarus.
Lurid and lofty and vast it seems;
It hath no rounded name that rings,
But I have heard it called in dreams
The City of the End of Things.
Its roofs and iron towers have grown
None knoweth how high within the night,
But in its murky streets far down
A flaming terrible and bright
Shakes all the stalking shadows there,
Across the walls, across the floors,
And shifts upon the upper air
From out a thousand furnace doors;
And all the while an awful round
Keeps roaring on continually,
And crashes in the ceaseless sound
Of a gigantic harmony.
Through its grim depths re-echoing
And all its weary height of walls,

With measured roar and iron ring,
The inhuman music lifts and falls.
Where no thing rests and no man is,
And only fire and night hold sway;
The beat, the thunder and the hiss
Cease not, and change not, night nor day.
And moving at unheard commands,
The abysses and vast fires between,
Flit figures that with clanking hands
Obey a hideous routine;
They are not flesh, they are not bone,
They see not with the human eye,
And from their iron lips is blown
A dreadful and monotonous cry;
And whoso of our mortal race
Should find that city unaware,
Lean Death would smite him face to face,
And blanch him with its venomous air:
Or caught by the terrific spell,
Each thread of memory snapt and cut,
His soul would shrivel and its shell
Go rattling like an empty nut.

It was not always so, but once,
In days that no man thinks upon,
Fair voices echoed from its stones,
The light above it leaped and shone:
Once there were multitudes of men,
That built that city in their pride,
Until its might was made, and then
They withered age by age and died.
But now of that prodigious race,
Three only in an iron tower,
Set like carved idols face to face,
Remain the masters of its power;
And at the city gate a fourth,
Gigantic and with dreadful eyes,
Sits looking toward the lightless north,
Beyond the reach of memories;
Fast rooted to the lurid floor,
A bulk that never moves a jot,
In his pale body dwells no more,
Or mind or soul, — an idiot!
But sometime in the end those three
Shall perish and their hands be still,
And with the master's touch shall flee
Their incommunicable skill.

A stillness absolute as death
Along the slacking wheels shall lie,
And, flagging at a single breath,
The fires that moulder out and die.
The roar shall vanish at its height,
And over that tremendous town
The silence of eternal night
Shall gather close and settle down.
All its grim grandeur, tower and hall,
Shall be abandoned utterly,
And into rust and dust shall fall
From century to century;
Nor ever living thing shall grow,
Nor trunk of tree, nor blade of grass;
No drop shall fall, no wind shall blow,
Nor sound of any foot shall pass:
Alone of its accursed state,
One thing the hand of Time shall spare,
For the grim Idiot at the gate
Is deathless and eternal there.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
Since 1800, Supplement 1* (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021).

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE (1887-1917)

Francis Ledwidge, a self-educated Irish workingman and trade union activist, wrote and published poetry from an early age. His literary life was propelled forward when Lord Dunsany took an interest in his work and helped support him. Through Dunsany he became acquainted with Yeats and other Irish poets. Dunsany edited Ledwidge's collection of poems, published as *Songs of the Fields*, in 1915. When World War I broke out, Ledwidge enlisted in the British Army. He survived the Battle of Gallipoli, only to be transferred to the front in Belgium, where he died in the Battle of Passchendaele.



All-Hallow's Eve

The dreadful hour is sighing for a moon
To light old lovers to the place of tryst,
And old footsteps from blessed acres soon
On old known pathways will be
lightly prest;
And winds that went to eavesdrop
since the noon,
Kinking¹ at some old tale told sweetly brief,
Will give a cowslick² to the yarrow leaf,³
And sling the round nut from the hazel down.

And there will be old yarn balls,⁴ and old spells
In broken lime-kilns, and old eyes will peer
For constant lovers in old spidery wells,⁵
And old embraces will grow newly dear.
And some may meet old lovers in old dells,

¹ *Kinking*. Provincially a kind of laughter. —FL

² *Cowslick*. A curl of hair thrown back from the forehead: used metaphorically here, and itself a metaphor taken from the curl of a cow's tongue. —FL

³ *Yarrow*. Maidens on Hallows Eve pull leaves of yarrow, and, saying over them certain words, put them under their pillows and so dream of their true-loves. —FL

⁴ They also throw balls of yarn (which must be black) over their left shoulders into old lime-kilns, holding one end and then winding it in till they feel it somehow caught, and expect to see in the darkness the face of their lover. —FL

⁵ *Wells*. Also they look for his face in old wells. —FL

And some in doors ajar in towns
light-lorn; —
But two will meet beneath a gnarly thorn
Deep in the bosom of the windy fells.
Then when the night slopes home
and white-faced day
Yawns in the east there will be sad farewells;
And many feet will tap a lonely way
Back to the comfort of their chilly cells,
And eyes will backward turn and long to stay
Where love first found them
in the clover bloom
But one will never seek the lonely tomb,
And two will linger at the tryst away.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Volume II* (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

DONALD LEV (1936-2018)

Longtime editor of the poetry and criticism tabloid *Home Planet News*, New York-based Donald Lev was an embodiment of the last wave of the Beat era, and was omnipresent at live poetry readings. He had his own column in *The Village Voice* and appeared as himself in the feature film, *Putney Swope*. Lev's wry, satirical poetry has the sensibility of Russian and Yiddish New York, memories of the more radical politics of pre-McCarthy America, and an overall irreverence for sacred cows.

There Is Still Time

god is crawling on his hands and knees,
so to speak,
looking for the key to turn the whole thing off.
he dropped it in one of the streets
of glory and it
fell thru a grating into the depths of perdition.
he is trying to get it up with a gummed stick. it
isn't easy, and it is most trying to his
infinite patience.

The Passenger

a child in a superman costume
is teetering on the edge of a brooklyn roof
as the elevated m train i'm on passes by.
i mutter in passing,
"don't try..."

August Poem Written in February

just a minute.
what's snow doing on your shoes in august.
august is the cruelest month, when
the sun comes down
and you have snow on your shoes.
august is the month of sunrise and sunset
over cemeteries and crematoria.
august is an apple too large to eat.
and if you have snow on your shoes in august,
you will stand accused!

The Republic

opposite the
tower from which
lookouts used to
search out enemies, is the wall against which
potential disrupters of the social order were
shot.

did you see the last such exhibition?
i was one of the marksmen.
A wonderful cloud dipped low out of heaven to
shade our eyes
a slight salt breeze wafted in from the ocean.
all was peaceful.
the seven terrorists, there was one woman
among them,
were silent and orderly and ultimately
cooperative.

i am glad all that is over now.
after those seven were executed the state be-
came
quite secure.
we had nothing to do but sit on the rocks and
clean our weapons.
one day, while cleaning his weapon,
one of our men
accidentally shot the lookout.
we are waiting now, by the wall.

The Terror

The terror struck
before daybreak
our neighbors in sheets,
our servants with pitchforks,
our baker, our barber, our banker
all bearing torches,
surrounded our
apartment
our landlord refused to send up heat
some nut in a jet plane tried pelting us with
bricks
the mayor told a gathering in queens that he
was
 preparing to pass laws against us
the police just stood around and watched
the fire department took its time
an ambulance dispatched from mount sinai
 got lost in central park
one poet called it all a cosmic joke.

Sadat

ultimately
it is better to sit down to an overly
cholesterolized breakfast
at the market diner, than
to be three hours dead, shot
off a reviewing stand
from a parade of one's own loyal armed forces.
(at seven am, 2 hours late, i am getting dressed
 in Brooklyn,
preparing for a day of cab driving. He is
 standing, in the cairo
afternoon, in full uniform, preparing
 for the grave)
Anwar, peacemaker, born on christmas day,
 under the sign of the goat.

Soliloquy

I am very sad and very unexcited.
The Creator forged me like a signature
upon a worthless check.
I lie around uncashable.
The rain has already blurred my ink.
The sun has yellowed my paper.
Hoo boy, am i sick!

Summer Composition

*(interior monologue vaguely after the manner
of Barbara A. Holland)*

just in case you're
confused with a moth ball
after you've crawled
into a corner of your most forgotten closet
and poured yourself inward to create
what, god knows why, you once conceived
as the perfect poem, uncluttered by
ideas, uncompromised by any
 mundane triviality
 not first
thoroughly interiorized:
at least let your voice be heard.
if only to alert the moth.
 or to relieve or amuse it.

“The Landlord Refuses To Repair This Window”

his eyes are opaque
he sees only behind himself
he does not understand windows
the sign, on a board the entire size
and shape of the window, replacing
the missing glass, secretly delights him.
it reminds him of his own vision.
besides, it is some form of public recognition.

the tenant will have to make the repairs himself.

City Life

He eyed my hidden hand. Distrust
shone under his eyelids like two
nightlights. My public fingers drew
back into fist. My other hand
remained hidden. A line started
forming behind me. Another
formed behind him. The clerk slept on
in her booth. The sky clouded up.
Thunder was heard. A drop of rain
fell on my nose. My public fist
twitched. The other hand moved in my
coat pocket. My enemy's heart
jumped out of his throat and landed
at my feet. I picked it up and
handed it back to him. Tension
eased and the lines started to move.

Fall and Winter (A Russian Novel)

zetzov was only thirty versts from
putzov, but i refused to walk.
anatoly! i implore you to drive me
to zetzov. i'll give you four rubles.
anatoly spit contemptuously.
"six" he replied.
but i only have four. for the love of
God, anatoly!
he signalled me to climb up into the
wagon beside him.
when i reached the house in retznikoyaslav alley
grechunka was away in the forest
 feeding her wolves.
or so nikolai, her father's half-brother
 and her slave,
would have led me to believe.

but i did not believe, i could not believe!

so i set forth for the quarter called svetlaya,
a haven for gypsies pimps and poles,
searching for my grechunka, to repay
her the thirty rubles i had cheated
out of her worthless uncle prince pitkin.
but she was nowhere about.

let her feed her wolves! i shouted,
and ordered more vodka

my head was spinning as they led me away.

Wisdom Poem

The years go round like rising and
falling horses. My eyes see less
of what they look at, but my mind's
cluttered with better examples.

Overnight I have become what
yesterday has prepared me for.

Improvisation 1983

jolly roger at half-mast a whole ship of
frightened wolves in mourning
 for one of their kind.
 when was it i
 dreamt this; where?
 in a supply room somewhere in
a mountain bomb shelter i shared
with several veteran actors and their
skeletons.
i had meant to be the driver of a car bomb
 bound for glory.
but i wasn't.

End of Year Kvetch

(for Richard, who's beyond this now)

cliffs of broken rock, me
stumbling over them, my
feet cut and bleeding, the shattered
tablets of my
destined work

no forget it
it is a cold night
on a windy corner

i stand with tall bagged can of beer
awaiting destiny

i have work running errands for several devils
who pay me
what i'm worth
there are no benefits

but i find an old portable
typewriter abandoned in a vacant lot
it types poorly but it types
i use yesterday's newspaper to type on

the work goes
not well
but on

— From *There Will Be Time*
(The Poet's Press, 1997).

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS (1775-1818)



Author of the infamous Gothic novel, *The Monk*, Matthew Gregory Lewis was poet, anthologist, playwright, theater producer, composer, and the unwitting heir of a Jamaican plantation. His two-volume *Tales of Wonder* (1801), annotated and updated by The Poet's Press in 2010-2012, was the first English-language poetry anthology to focus exclusively on supernatural-themed poetry. In "The Gay Gold Ring," Lewis adapts a narrative that goes back to ancient Greek sources, and readers will recognize the plot outline as nearly identical to Goethe's "The Bride of Corinth." Lewis was friends with Shelley and Byron, and published Sir Walter Scott's early poems in *Tales of Wonder*. For his almost single-minded devotion to the Gothic, and for his openly homoerotic preferences, he was shunned by many, and his work was condemned by conservative critics like Coleridge. Full appreciation of his gifts would not come until the revival of interest in the Gothic in the Twentieth Century.

The Gay Gold Ring

1

— "There is a thing, there is a thing,
Which I fain would have from thee!
I fain would have thy gay gold ring;
O! warrior, give it me!" —

He lifts his head;
Lo! near his bed
Stands a maid as fair as day;
Cold is the night,
Yet her garment is light,
For her shift is her only array.

— "Come you from east,
Or come you from west,
Or dost from the Saracens flee?
Cold is the night,
And your garment is light,
Come, sweetheart, and warm you by me!" —

— "My garment is light,
And cold is the night,
And I would that my limbs were as cold:
Groan must I ever,
Sleep can I never,
Knight, till you give me your gay ring of gold!

For that is a thing, a thing, a thing,
Which I fain would have from thee!
I fain would have thy gay gold ring;
O! warrior, give it me!" —

— "That ring Lord Brooke
From his daughter took;
He gave it to me, and he swore,
That fair la-dye
My bride would be,
When this crusade were o'er.

Ne'er did mine eyes that lady view,
Bright Emmeline by name:
But if fame say true,
Search Britain through,
You'll find no fairer dame.

But though she be fair,
She cannot compare,
I wot, sweet lass, with thee;
Then pass by my side
Three nights as my bride,
And thy guerdon the ring shall be!" —

In silence the maid
The knight obeyed;
Low on his pillow her head she laid:
But soon as by hers *his* hand was press'd,

Changed to ice was the heart in his breast;
And his limbs were fettered in frozen chains,
And turned to snow was the blood in his veins.

The cock now crows!
The damsel goes
Forth from the tent; and the blood
 which she froze,
Again through the veins of Lord Elmerick flows,
And again his heart with passion glows.

Donned the knight
His armour bright;
Full wroth was he, I trow!
— “Beshrew me!” he said,
“If thus, fair maid,
“From my tent to-morrow you go!” —

Gone was light!
Come was night!
The sand-glass told, ’twas three;
And again stood there
The stranger fair,
And murmur again did she.

— “There is a thing, there is a thing,
Which I fain would have from thee!
I fain would have thy gay gold ring;
O! warrior, give it me!” —

“One night by my side
Hast thou passed as my bride:
Two yet remain behind:
Three must be passed,
Ere thy finger fast
The gay gold ring shall bind.” —

Again the maid
The knight obeyed;
Again on his pillow her head she laid;
And again, when by hers *his* hand was press’d,
Changed to ice was the heart in his breast:
And his limbs were fetter’d in frozen chains,
And turned to snow was the blood in his veins!

Three days were gone, two nights were spent;
Still came the maid, when the glass told “three;”
How she came, or whither she went,
None could say, and none could see;
But the warrior heard,
When night the third
Was gone, thus claimed his plighted word:

— “Once! — twice! — thrice by your side
Have I lain as your bride;
Sir Knight! Sir Knight, beware you!
Your ring I crave!
Your ring I’ll have,
Or limb from limb I’ll tear you!” —

She drew from his hand the ring so gay;
No limb could he move, and no word
 could he say.
— “See, Arthur, I bring
To my grave, thy ring,” —
Murmured the maiden, and hied her away.

Then sprang so light
From his couch the knight;
With shame his cheek was red:
And, filled with rage,
His little foot-page
He called from beneath the bed.

— “Come hither, come hither,
My lad so lither;¹
While under my bed you lay,
What did you see,
And what maiden was she,
Who left me at breaking of day?” —

— “Oh! master, I
No maid could spy,
As I’ve a soul to save;
But when the cock crew,
The lamp burned blue,
And the tent smell’d like a grave!

And I heard a voice in anguish moan,
And a bell seem’d four to tell;
And the voice was like a dying groan,
And the bell like a passing bell!” —

¹ *lither*. Worthless or lazy.

2

Lord Brooke look'd up, Lord Brooke
look'd down,
Lord Brooke look'd over the plain;
He saw come riding tow'rd's the town,
Of knights a jolly train:

— "Is it the king of Scottish land,
Or the prince of some far coun-trie,
That hither leads yon goodly band
To feast awhile with me?" —

— "Oh, it's not the prince of some far coun-trie,
Nor the king of Scottish land:
It's Elmerick come from beyond the sea,
To claim Lady Emmeline's hand."

Then down Lord Brooke's grey beard was seen
A stream of tears to pour;
— "Oh! dead my daughter's spouse has been
These seven long years and more!

"Remorseful guilt and self-despite
Destroyed that beauteous flower,
For that her falsehood kill'd a knight;
'Twas Arthur of the Bower.

Sir Arthur gave her his heart to have,
And he gave her his troth to hold;
And he gave her his ring so fair and brave,
Was all of the good red gold:

And she gave him her word, that only he
Should kiss her as a bride;
And she gave him her oath, that ring should be
On her hand the day she died.

But when she heard of Lord Elmerick's fame,
His wealth, and princely state;
And when she heard,
that Lord Elmerick's name
Was praised by low and great;

Did vanity full lightly bring
My child to break her oath,
And to you she sent Sir Arthur's ring,
And to him sent back his troth.

Oh! when he heard,
That her plighted word
His false love meant to break,
The youth grew sad,

And the youth grew mad,
And his sword he sprang to take:

He set the point against his side,
The hilt against the floor;
I wot he made a wound so wide,
He never a word spake more.

And now, too late, my child began
Remorseful tears to shed;
Her heart grew faint, her cheek grew wan,
And she sicken'd, and took to her bed.

The Leech then said,
And shook his head,
She ne'er could health recover;
Yet long in pain
Did the wretch remain,
Sorrowing for her lover.

And sure 'twas a piteous sight to see,
How she prayed to die, but it might not be;
And when the morning bell told three,
Still in hollow voice cried she:

— "There is a thing, there is a thing,
Which I fain would have from thee!
I fain would have thy gay gold ring;
O! warrior, give it me!" —

* * *

3

Now who than ice was colder then,
And who more pale than snow?
And who was the saddest of all sad men?
Lord Elmerick, I trow!

— "Oh! lead me, lead me to the place
Where Emmeline's tomb doth stand,
For I must look on that lady's face,
And touch that lady's hand!" —

Then all who heard him, stood aghast,
But not a word was said,
While through the chapel's yard they passed,
And up the chancel sped.

They burst the tomb, so fair and sheen,
Where Emmeline's corse inclosed had been;
And lo! on the skeleton's finger so lean,
Lord Elmerick's gay gold ring was seen!

Damsels! damsels! mark aright
 The doleful tale I sing!
 Keep your vows, and heed your plight,
 And go to no warrior's tent by night,
 To ask for a gay gold ring.*

* I once read in some Grecian author,² whose name I have forgotten, the story which suggested to me the outline of the foregoing ballad. It was as follows: A young man arriving at the house of a friend, to whose daughter he was betrothed, was informed that some weeks had passed since death had deprived him of his intended bride. Never having seen her, he soon reconciled himself to her loss, especially as, during his stay at his friend's house, a young lady who was kind enough to visit him every night in his chamber, whence she retired at daybreak, always carrying with her some valuable present from her lover. This intercourse continued till accident showed the young man the picture of his deceased bride, and he recognized, with horror, the features of his nocturnal visitor. The young lady's tomb being opened, he found in it the various presents which his liberality had bestowed on his unknown *inamorata* — MGL.

The Erl-King's Daughter

From the Danish

O'er the mountains, through vallies,
 Sir Oluf he wends
 To bid to his wedding relations and friends;
 'Tis night, and arriving where sports
 the elf band,
 The Erl-King³'s proud daughter presents him
 her hand.

² Lewis has strayed far from the familiar Greek classics here. What seems to be the parent of this story was related by the Greek philosopher Proclus (412-484 CE) in one of his treatises regarding Plato's *Republic*. Proclus cites letters written by Hipparchus and Arrhidaeus from the third century BCE as his sources, thus recounting a story already some 700 years old. Theologian Alexander Morus (1616-1670) rescued the unpublished tale from a manuscript in the Vatican. The ghost story is related in full in Lacy Collison-Morley's *Greek and Roman Ghost Stories* (1912, pp. 66-70). Lewis has altered the domestic circumstances of the story considerably, but the details and incidents are much alike. This tale is a ghost story but also a precursor of the vampire tale. Goethe adapted the same material, moving it to Corinth in early Christian times and making the ghost explicitly a vampire in his 1797 poem "The Bride of Corinth." — BR.

³ *Erl-King*. From the Danish *elverkonge*, or Elf-King. This makes "Erlkönig" a borrowed word in German, literally meaning "Alder-King" in that language. The Erl-King is associated with omens of death, much like the Irish banshee. This story is fairy lore, and not part of the Wotan mythos.

— "Now welcome, Sir Oluf! oh! welcome to me!
 Come, enter our circle my partner to be." —
 — "Fair lady, nor can I dance with you,
 nor may;
 To-morrow I marry, to-night must away." —

— "Now listen, Sir Oluf; oh, listen to me!
 Two spurs of fine silver thy guerdon shall be;
 A shirt too of silk will I give as a boon,
 Which my queen-mother bleached
 in the beams of the moon.

"Then yield thee, Sir Oluf! oh, yield thee to me!
 And enter our circle my partner to be."
 — "Fair lady, nor can I dance with you,
 nor may;
 "To-morrow I marry, to-night must away." —

— "Now listen, Sir Oluf; oh, listen to me!
 An helmet of gold will I give unto thee!" —
 — "A helmet of gold would I willingly take,
 "But I will not dance with you,
 for Urgela's sake." —

— "And deigns not Sir Oluf my partner to be?
 Then curses and sickness I give unto thee;
 Then curses and sickness thy steps shall pursue:
 Now ride to thy lady, thou lover so true." —

Thus said she, and laid her charmed hand
 on his heart; —
 Sir Oluf, he never had felt such a smart;
 Swift spurred he his steed till he reached
 his own door,
 And there stood his mother his castle before.

— "Now riddle me, Oluf, and riddle me right:
 Why look'st thou, my dearest,
 so wan and so white?" —
 — "How should I not, mother, look wan
 and look white?
 I have seen the Erl-King's cruel daughter
 to-night.

"She cursed me! her hand to my bosom
 she pressed;
 Death followed the touch, and now freezes
 my breast!
 She cursed me, and said,
 "To your lady now ride;"
 Oh! ne'er shall my lips press the lips
 of my bride." —

— “Now riddle me, Oluf, and what shall I say,
When here comes the lady,
 so fair and so gay?” —
“Oh! say I am gone for awhile to the wood,
To prove if my hounds and my coursers
 are good.” —

Scarce dead was Sir Oluf, and scarce
 shone the day,
When in came the lady, so fair and so gay;
And in came her father, and in came each guest,
Whom the hapless Sir Oluf
 had bade to the feast.

They drank the red wine, and they ate
 the good cheer;
— “Oh! where is Sir Oluf? oh, where
 is my dear?” —
— “Sir Oluf is gone for awhile to the wood,
To prove if his hounds and his coursers
 are good.” —

Sore trembled the lady, so fair and so gay;
She eyed the red curtain; she drew it away;
But soon from her bosom for ever life fled,
For there lay Sir Oluf, cold, breathless,
 and dead.

— From *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press 2010, 2012).

FRANK BELKNAP LONG (1901-1994)



H. P. Lovecraft and Frank Belknap Long.

Frank Belknap Long met H.P. Lovecraft when he was a teenager, and, like Lovecraft, he considered himself principally a poet. I knew Long in his latter years, and we met at his Chelsea apartment in Manhattan and read our poems to one another. He was the last living member of the Lovecraft circle, and had published many science fiction and horror stories (29 novels and 150 short stories), some in the Lovecraftian vein, but many others in a gentler, more poetic manner more like Ray Bradbury in tone. He wrote almost nothing in his last decades, and was so impoverished and disheveled that passersby frequently tried to press money upon him, assuming he was a beggar. He was interviewed and fêted by Lovecraft fans and defended Lovecraft's persona against detractors, saying proudly, "He was the kindest man I knew." His fiction and poetry are worthy of preservation.

The Gods Are Dead

The gods are dead. The earth has covered them,
And they are less than shadows in our sight;
Young Helios is banished from delight,
Who once wore flame upon his garment's hem.
The world was young when tall Osiris died,
And it was old when Bacchus ceased to be;
A Light there was that towered deathlessly,
But once again has He been crucified.

The world is lonely now without its gods;
We stand forlorn beneath the stars of heaven,
For unto us no new joy can be given,
And we must always bear the bitter rods
Of heat and frost and harsh necessity:
There are no wonders now on land or sea.

On Icy Kinarth

I dreamed I stood upon a buttressed ledge
Of Icy Kinarth.
High above my head
Soared lizard-birds, and bats
with wings outspread,
And loathsome tails that swept
the mountain's edge.
A thousand rods below me streamed the sea,
Its black waves lapping at the Isles of Spice:
I clung in terror to a blasted tree,
And fought for footing on the slippery ice.

There came at last, by scent or instinct led,
A fleshless thing with glazed, malignant eyes:
It pawed my mouth until its claws were red,
And voiced its ire in sharp, metallic cries:
A dry and corpsy gargoyle-shape that fed
Its belly with the refuse of the skies.

—From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 2 (The Poet's Press, 2016).

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882)

The Red Planet Mars

The night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams?
Oh no! from that blue tent above
A hero's armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,
And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light
But the cold light of stars;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long, —
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

— From *Poets Fortnightly* (1991).

The Skerry of Shrieks

Now from all King Olaf's farms
His men-at-arms
Gathered on the Eve of Easter;
To his house at Angvaldsness¹
Fast they press,
Drinking with the royal feaster.
Loudly through the wide-flung door
Came the roar
Of the sea upon the Skerry;²
And its thunder loud and near
Reached the ear,
Mingling with their voices merry.

"Hark!" said Olaf to his Scald,
Halfred the Bald,
"Listen to that song, and learn it!
Half my kingdom would I give,
As I live,
If by such songs you would earn it!

"For of all the runes and rhymes
Of all times,
Best I like the ocean's dirges,
When the old harper heaves and rocks,
His hoary locks
Flowing and flashing in the surges!" —

Halfred answered: "I am called
The Unappalled!
Nothing hinders me or daunts me.
Hearken to me, then, O King,
While I sing
The great Ocean Song that haunts me." —

"I will hear your song sublime
Some other time,"
Says the drowsy monarch, yawning,
And retires; each laughing guest
Applauds the jest;
Then they sleep till day is dawning.

¹ *Angvaldsness*. A village on the Norwegian island of Karmt.

² *Skerry*. Scottish word for a reef.

Pacing up and down the yard,
King Olaf's guard
Saw the sea-mist slowly creeping
O'er the sands, and up the hill,
Gathering still
Round the house where they were sleeping.

It was not the fog he saw,
Nor misty flaw,
That above the landscape brooded;
It was Eyvind Kallda's crew
Of warlocks blue,
With their caps of darkness hooded!

Round and round the house they go,
Weaving slow
Magic circles to encumber
And imprison in their ring
Olaf the King,
As he helpless lies in slumber.

Then athwart the vapors dun
The Easter sun
Streamed with one broad track of splendor!
In their real forms appeared
The warlocks weird,
Awful as the Witch of Endor.³

Blinded by the light that glared,
They groped and stared
Round about with steps unsteady;
From his window Olaf gazed,
And, amazed,
"Who are these strange people?" said he. —

³ *Witch of Endor*. A witch and necromancer visited by King Saul in the Old Testament (*Samuel* vvxiii. 7-25).

"Eyvind Kellda and his men!"
Answered then
From the yard a sturdy farmer;
While the men-at-arms apace
Filled the place,
Busily buckling on their armor.

From the gates they sallied forth,
South and north,
Scoured the island coast around them,
Seizing all the warlock band,
Foot and hand
On the Skerry's rocks they bound them.

And at eve the king again
Called his train,
And, with all the candles burning,
Silent sat and heard once more
The sullen roar
Of the ocean tides returning.

Shrieks and cries of wild despair
Filled the air,
Growing fainter as they listened;
Then the bursting surge alone
Sounded on; —
Thus the sorcerers were christened!⁴

"Sing, O Scald, your song sublime,
Your ocean-rhyme,"
Cried King Olaf: "It will cheer me!" —
Said the Scald, with pallid cheeks,
"The Skerry of Shrieks
Sings too loud for you to hear me!"

⁴ *Christened*, i.e., drowned on the reef when the tide rose.

Enceladas

Under Mount Etna⁵ he lies,
It is slumber, it is not death;
For he struggles at times to arise,
And above him the lurid skies
Are hot with his fiery breath.
The crags are piled on his breast,
The earth is heaped on his head;
But the groans of his wild unrest,
Though smothered and half suppressed,
Are heard, and he is not dead.
And the nations far away
Are watching with eager eyes;
They talk together and say,
“To-morrow, perhaps to-day,
Enceladus will arise!”⁶
And the old gods, the austere
Oppressors in their strength,⁷
Stand aghast and white with fear

⁵ *Mount Etna*. The tallest active volcano on the European continent, Etna looms over the Sicilian landscape.

⁶ *Enceladus*. Longfellow here associates the volcano with the Titan Enceladus, who, during the battle between Titans and Olympians, was hit by a “missile” (probably a boulder or entire mountain) hurled by Athena. The Titan was flattened, forming the island of Sicily (Graves, 35.f). Longfellow might have better employed the monster Typhon, who was imprisoned under the mountain by Zeus. The forges of Hephaestus were also rumored to be under the volcano.

⁷ *Oppressors in their strength*. These lines reveal that Longfellow may be using the poem to symbolize the 1860 events of the *Risorgimento*, which freed Sicily and launched the capture of Southern Italy by Garibaldi. Sicily became part of the new Kingdom of Italy in 1861. This makes clear why the poet seems to wish for the rebirth of the seemingly destructive monster, and why he chose Enceladus, symbolic of the entire island, instead of the volcano monster Typhon.

At the ominous sounds they hear,
And tremble, and mutter, “At length!”
Ah me! for the land that is sown
With the harvest of despair!
Where the burning cinders, blown
From the lips of the overthrown
Enceladus, fill the air.
Where ashes are heaped in drifts
Over vineyard and field and town,
Whenever he starts and lifts
His head through the blackened rifts
Of the crags that keep him down.
See, see! the red light shines!
’Tis the glare of his awful eyes!
And the storm-wind shouts through the pines
Of Alps and of Apennines,
“Enceladus, arise!”

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural
Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet’s Press, 2015).

HOWARD PHILIPS LOVECRAFT (1890-1937)

Night-Gaunts

Out of what crypt they crawl, I cannot tell,
But every night I see the rubbery things,
Black, horned, and slender,
 with membraneous wings,
And tails that bear the bifid barb of hell.
They come in legions on the north wind's swell,
With obscene clutch that titillates and stings,
Snatching me off on monstrous voyagings
To grey worlds hidden deep in nightmare's well.

Over the jagged peaks of Thok they sweep,
Heedless of all the cries I try to make,
And down the nether pits to that foul lake
Where the puffed shoggoths splash
 in doubtful sleep.
But oh! If only they would make some sound,
Or wear a face where faces should be found!

Nyarlatheotep

And at the last from inner Egypt came
The strange dark One to whom
 the fellahs bowed,
Silent and lean and cryptically proud,
And wrapped in fabrics red as sunset flame.
Throng pressed around, frantic
 for his commands,
But leaving, could not tell what they had heard;
While through the nations spread
 the awestruck word
That wild beasts followed him
 and licked his hands.

Soon from the sea a noxious birth began:
Forgotten lands with weedy spires of gold.
The ground was cleft, and mad auroras rolled
Down on the quaking citadels of man.
Then, crushing what he chanced to mould
 in play,
The idiot Chaos blew Earth's dust away.

The Well

Farmer Seth Atwood was past eighty when
He tried to sink that deep well by his door,
With only Eb to help him bore and bore.
We laughed, and hoped he'd soon be sane again.
And yet, instead, young Eb went crazy, too,
So that they shipped him to the county farm.
Seth bricked the well-mouth up as tight
 as glue —
Then hacked an artery in his gnarled left arm.
After the funeral we felt bound to get
Out to that well and rip the bricks away,
But all we saw were iron hand-holds set
Down a black hole deeper than we could say.
And yet we put the bricks back — for we found
The hole too deep for any line to sound.

The Howler

They told me not to take the Briggs' Hill path
That used to be the highroad through to Zoar,
For Goody Watkins, hanged in seventeen-four,
Had left a certain monstrous aftermath.
Yet when I disobeyed, and had in view
The vine-hung cottage by the great rock slope,
I could not think of elms or hempen rope,
But wondered why the house still seemed
 so new.

Stopping a while to watch the fading day,
I heard faint howls, as from a room upstairs,
When through the ivied panes one sunset ray
Struck in, and caught the howler unawares.
I glimpsed — and ran in frenzy from the place,
And from a four-pawed thing with human face.

— From the Sonnet-Cycle, "Fungi from Yuggoth,"
from *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume II (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2016).

From "Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H. P. Lovecraft"

by Brett Rutherford

LOVECRAFT

(Writing a letter again) What can I say about being married — or whether one should be married? I was married for a while, as astonishing as that may seem to my friends. I can scarcely believe it myself. Matrimony can be a very helpful and pleasing permanent arrangement when both parties share the same mental and imaginative habits. The trouble is that not even a psychiatrist could tell if two people are suitable for one another. It takes two to three years of living together to determine if you should live together. Fortunately for myself — and for Mrs. H.P. Lovecraft — divorce laws are now progressive enough to allow rational adjustments.

The Mrs. and I were very fond of one another...
(muses).

How could any woman love a face like mine?

SONIA

A mother could ... and some who are not mothers would not have to try very hard.

LOVECRAFT

(Facing audience). We met through the circles of amateur journalism. She was everywhere, bringing all of us scattered correspondents and writers together for tea and excursions.

SONIA

(Turning to audience, but giving Lovecraft sidelong glances at appropriate points.) I invited Lovecraft and several other writers to be my guests at my apartment in Brooklyn. It was a very daring thing in those days, and I surprised myself by inviting these men into my home. But I was determined to go ahead. *(Pauses)*

Actually, I am rather inclined toward the lean, ascetic type, and I was puzzled that Howard regarded himself as such an ugly duckling. Besides, I realized his genius and felt that all he

needed was encouragement and help. He could have been very successful in New York. When we were married, he looked starved.

LOVECRAFT

After a few months of domestic life I grew rather stout. Thank God I was able to lose all those pounds in a matter of weeks after returning to Rhode Island. For a while, I rather resembled an Antarctic penguin.

SONIA

Annie and Lillian were supposed to send him fifteen dollars a week — his allowance of the proceeds of the family estate. Howard and his two aunts had twenty thousand dollars, which had to last them the rest of their natural lives. They only sent him five dollars a week and in some weeks nothing at all. As I was making more than ten thousand a year as a buyer, it hardly mattered. I looked after Howard's needs and he never lacked for pocket money when our friends were in town. I even bought him new clothes —

LOVECRAFT

She even dragged me into a haberdashery and insisted on my getting a new overcoat. And then I had to have a suit, and then new trousers. My old clothes from 1918 were still quite fine.

(A momentary blackout. When the lights come on, Sonia and Lovecraft are entering through the back stage door.)

SONIA

(Rushing in.) Oh dear God, no!

LOVECRAFT

(Sleepily) What is it my dear, what's wrong? You, invoking the Deity, no less!

SONIA

Just look around you. The room's a shambles. The window is open. We've been burglarized!

LOVECRAFT

(Searching about the borders of the room.) I knew it. I knew it was bound to happen the moment you told me the landlady permitted ... foreigners to board here. *(Alarmed at last.)* They've taken the radio — the radio!

SONIA

(Tearing through clothes in a closet.) Oh Howard, they've taken your suit! All your new clothes are gone!

LOVECRAFT

(Turned away from Sonia, he smiles faintly.) How very unfortunate.

(Black out. Sonia and Lovecraft return to their previous positions before the lights come up again.)

LOVECRAFT

I was actually a little relieved to lose the new apparel. Nowadays I can even wear some of my father's finely cut suits. The collars look a little strange. Obnoxious children sometimes assume I'm a gentleman of the theater and annoy me. But I dress in keeping with the Lovecraft and Phillips honor. I'd prefer a periwig and an eighteenth century waistcoat, but that would disturb the neighbors a trifle.

Ultimately it wasn't beauty that killed the beast — it was New York itself. Trying to live there drove me close to madness. I found the daily contact with the rat-faced mongrel hordes in Manhattan abhorrent.

SONIA

I think Howard hated humanity in the abstract. When he learned that our apartment neighbor was Syrian, he recoiled like someone who had found a rattlesnake in his bathtub.

LOVECRAFT

New York is a pest hole. Rats — millions of them — wharf rats with tails longer than a Chinaman's queue. And cockroaches, my God, a living carpet of them. But for vermin nothing can match the people: One cannot describe the noxious miasma of a subway car at rush hour, or the heteroge-

neous horde that shuffles through lower Manhattan on weekends, snuffing for bargains among the seedy sidewalk vendors.

There are beggars so noxious and dirty that raindrops fall sideways to avoid them. It makes one wish that a portion of the globe would neatly pass through a cloud of cyanogen gas.

SONIA

And yet as soon as Howard came to know someone personally, their background became irrelevant. I had to remind him that I was a Russian Jew, and he would assure me that of course I was *exceptional*. Well, I managed to show him lots of exceptions to his unthinking prejudices. I don't think there was one friend of his who wasn't a social outsider in some way.

James Morton, possibly Howard's fastest friend, is a free-thinking atheist, an ardent supporter of Negro rights, who was kind enough to forgive Howard's racist mutterings. A remarkable man, and a vigorous pamphleteer. Frank Long is strangled by his mother's apron strings and doesn't know how to boil water. And Howard never seemed to figure out how close to Oscar Wilde many of his friends were, even after Samuel Loveman dragged us to a low place with Hart Crane, a bunch of drunken sailors, and some pretty seedy cross-dressers. What was actually going on just seemed to fly over Howard's head.

He was utterly unfamiliar with how other people lived. When we went to an Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, Howard admitted that he — a man in his third decade of life — had never had spaghetti with sauce and cheese. He absolutely detested seafood and connected the produce of the sea with decay and things utterly sinister.

(Turning to Howard) Howard, things are going to be difficult unless you receive some kind of employment. New York is a very expensive place to live.

LOVECRAFT

I know, my dear. I am working on it. While you were out today I typed ten copies of a letter soliciting employment.

SONIA

That's wonderful, Howard. And to whom will you apply?

LOVECRAFT

To the publishers, naturally. With my talents and background—

SONIA

— and your fine new suit—

LOVECRAFT

That, too. One of the companies should, as the phrase goes, *snap me up*.

SONIA

I'm so proud of you.

LOVECRAFT

But my dear, I should not expect to be a full-fledged editor at the start. One has to establish one's reputation for discernment, good judgment and superior taste.

SONIA

They will know all that from just looking at you.

LOVECRAFT

That is your wifely prejudice, my dear. To the rest of the city I'm a loping, long-jawed alien. Mirrors crack when I pass them.

SONIA

(Protesting) Howard, really!

LOVECRAFT

Babies cry out in terror. Dogs bristle with suspicion.

SONIA

Don't go on that way.

LOVECRAFT

I see them closing the shutters of the upper windows when I first turn the corner. I hear the mothers calling their children in.

(Suddenly, seized by inspiration, Lovecraft leaps to

center stage and recites the last paragraph of "The Outsider" in the most exaggerated, Barrymore-esque manner:)

For although nepenthe has calmed me,
I know now that I am an outsider,
a stranger in this century
and among those who are still men.
This I have known
ever since I stretched out my fingers
to the ABOMINATION
within the great gilded frame;

STRETCHED OUT MY FINGERS
AND TOUCHED
A COLD, UNYIELDING SURFACE
OF POLISHED GLASS.

SONIA

Howard, stop that! You know I detest that story! *(Trying to get him off the track.)* Read me your letter, Howard.

LOVECRAFT

(Fumbles for one of the copies on the desk.) Here it is. *(Reads)* If an unprovoked application for employment seems somewhat unusual in these days of system, agencies and advertising, I trust the circumstances surrounding this one may help to mitigate what would otherwise be obtrusive forwardness. *(Takes a breath.)*

SONIA

That's very stuffy.

LOVECRAFT

One has to establish a tone of politeness. And such an opener demonstrates the complexity of my thought processes. I am not going to say — as those brutes over in Red Hook might — "Ay-yoo! Gimme a job, huh?"

SONIA

I wasn't suggesting that. But it's too indirect.

LOVECRAFT

But I get to the point. *(Reads again)* Certain definitely marketable aptitudes must be put forward in an unconventional manner if they are to override the current fetish which demands prior com-

mercial experience . . . Since commencing two months ago, a quest for work for which I am naturally and scholastically well fitted, I have answered nearly a hundred advertisements without gaining so much as one chance for satisfactory hearing —

SONIA

That will never do. You're telling the reader that a hundred others have rejected you.

LOVECRAFT

A hundred fools, O Matron of My Hearth. I am flattering my reader that he is the exceptional one. It's a matter of rhetoric.

SONIA

Do you tell them what kind of position you want?

LOVECRAFT

Naturally, it's here on page two. (*Turning the letter over and running his hand down the page, then reads*) ...author, reviser, re-writer, critic, reviewer, correspondent, proofreader, typist or anything else even remotely of the sort.

SONIA

(*Looking over Howard's shoulder*). And what are all those other paragraphs?

LOVECRAFT

Just elaboration.

SONIA

(*Impatiently*.) Let me see. (*Takes letter and speed reads, frowning. Then she reads aloud.*) "My education, while not including the university or a professional translator's knowledge of modern language, is that of a gentleman...." Oh, Howard, this just won't do.

LOVECRAFT

It will have to "do." It is my best. I cannot lie about myself.

SONIA

So embellish a little.

LOVECRAFT

I am a gentleman. I do not have a commercial nature. It is not in my ancestry.

SONIA

Your grandfather was a *businessman*. He had interests all over the country.

LOVECRAFT

He invested. He did not go on the subway to an office. He worked in his library, or he traveled to the Northwest where his dams were being constructed. The bankers called on *him*. The neighbors hardly knew he was in business.

SONIA

(*To clinch the argument*) Your father worked. He was a silver salesman. A salesman, no better than those street peddlers you so despise.

LOVECRAFT

(*Becoming haughty.*) He conducted his business in distant cities. No one in Providence was aware of it. He had the air of a gentleman.

SONIA

It was very damaging for you to be brought up with these expectations ... living with aunts who hadn't the faintest idea how the world makes its living. They encouraged these 18th Century notions.

LOVECRAFT

Don't criticize the aunts. They admire you.

SONIA

Because I took them to lunch. And because I sent them hats.

LOVECRAFT

That is unkind.

SONIA

Annie stayed here for weeks at my apartment. We took her out every night. I never even received a thank you note. And I know they are keeping some of your share of your little income. They admire me because they think you've snagged a rich woman — and a foolish one.

LOVECRAFT

How could you suggest such a thing?

SONIA

(Going on, ignoring Howard's rage.) Well I am not a fool and I am NOT rich. I work for every penny. Everyone works today, Howard. Absolutely everyone.

LOVECRAFT

(With an air of finality, but sullenly.) A gentleman need not. An artist ... ought not.

SONIA

(To herself) And a husband?

The stage is bathed in complete darkness. Howard and Sonia's voices are heard close to one another.

SONIA

It's three o'clock, Howard. I thought you'd never come to bed.

LOVECRAFT

I was revising a story. I — I thought you'd be asleep by now.

SONIA

I'm wide awake. Don't you know what tonight is?

LOVECRAFT

Tonight? I'm not sure. Wednesday —

SONIA

It's our *anniversary*. A year since our wedding night.

LOVECRAFT

Don't. That tickles.

SONIA

It didn't tickle then. You liked it.

LOVECRAFT

It was novel then. I was not accustomed to being touched. It is not always desirable.

SONIA

Aren't you too warm in those pajamas. Here, let me —

LOVECRAFT

It's a cool night. Please stop that.

SONIA

You are my husband. *(Then, obviously snuggling up to him, in Russian)*

Moi moozh, moi moozh. Ya vass abazhayoo. *(A beat of silence)* Well, Howard?

LOVECRAFT

Hmm...?

SONIA

Aren't you going to ... do something?

LOVECRAFT

Do something?

SONIA

The way we did then.

LOVECRAFT

I think it would be better not to. I — I think I have a migraine coming.

(For a beat of silence we hear Sonia move across the room. A door opens and closes, and, from the other side of the door, Sonia's voice, sobbing.)

LOVECRAFT

At the end we could live neither there nor here. Trying to think of living in Rhode Island drove the late missus equally close to despair. She proposed to come up and open a millinery shop here, but my aunts determined —

SONIA

— determined that neither they nor Howard could afford to have a wife in Providence who *worked*.

LOVECRAFT

Sonia accepted a position with a company in the mid-West. Although I protested that we could remain married and meet now and then, she

insisted on a divorce, which I was finally persuaded to consent to.

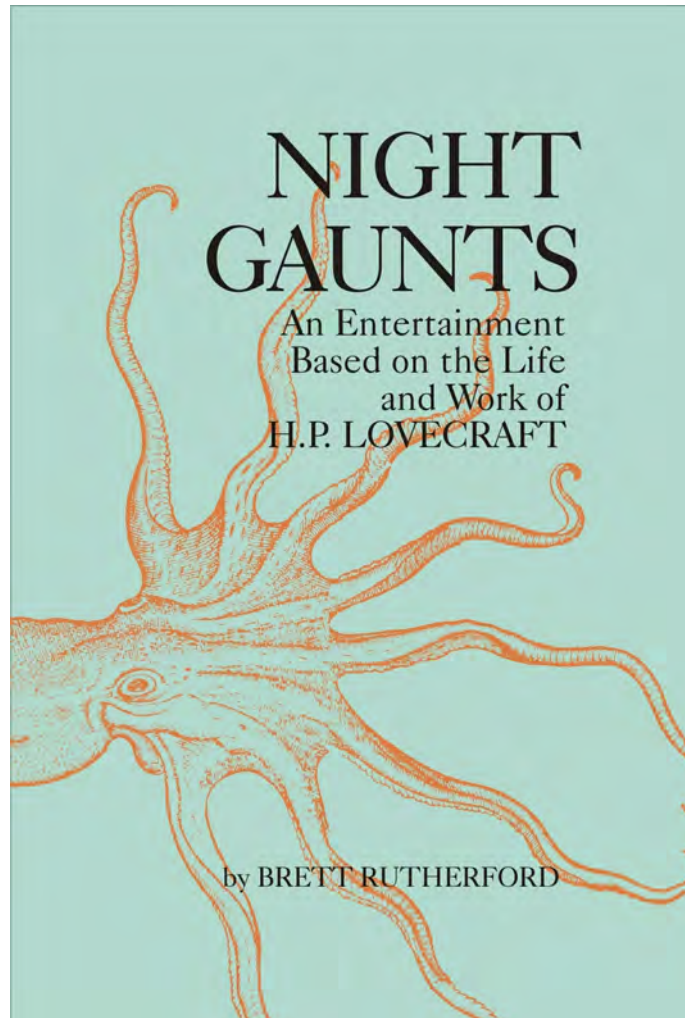
(Sonia returns to the Chorus and Lovecraft goes back to writing his letter)

I think the chances for a successful marriage for a strongly individuated, opinionated and imaginative person are damn slender. It's wiser to lay off after venture Number One. I remain a

proud, lone entity face to face with the cosmos. A haughty celibacy is not a terrible price to pay for cerebral integrity.

— From *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based On The Life and Writings of H. P. Lovecraft.*

First performed in 1990
at The Providence Athenaeum,
and published in 1993.

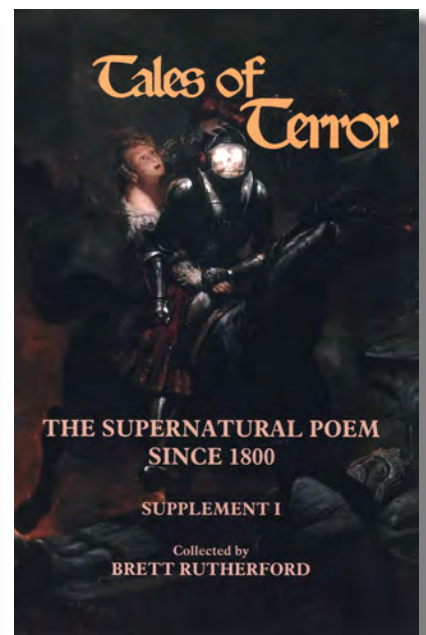
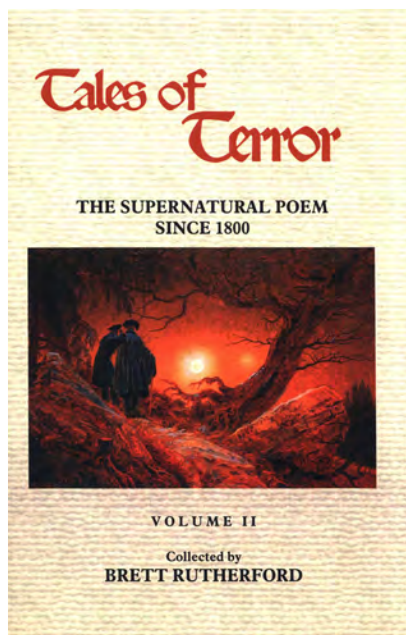
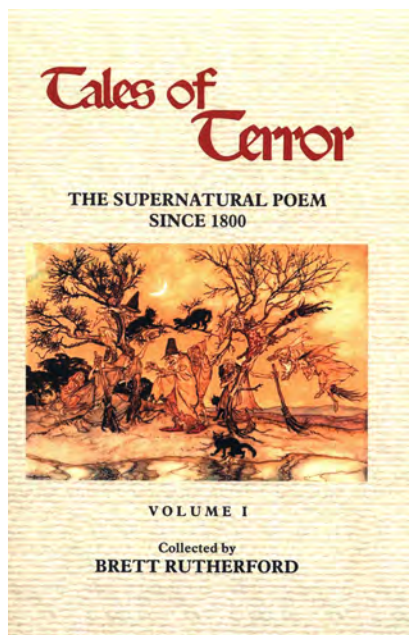


AMY LOWELL (1874-1925)

Haunted

See! He trails his toes
Through the long streaks of moonlight,
And the nails of his fingers glitter;
They claw and flash among the tree-tops.
His lips suck at my open window,
And his breath creeps about my body
And lies in pools under my knees.
I can see his mouth sway and wobble,
Sticking itself against the window-jamb,
But the moonlight is bright on the floor,
Without a shadow.
Hark! A hare is strangling in the forest,
And the wind tears a shutter from the wall.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Supplement 1 (2021).



The project that Matthew Gregory Lewis commenced in 1801 with his two-volume poetry anthology, *Tales of Wonder*, is continued and brought up the present day with Brett Rutherford's three-volume series, *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*. The annotated volumes are in the same format as the Yogh & Thorn edition of *Tales of Wonder*, making them one extended series, and one index covers all five books and a total of 419 poems.

RICHARD LYMAN (1925-2003)

Richard Lyman (1925-2003) was the pseudonym of Richard Bush-Brown. He was active in the Greenwich Village poetry scene in the 1960s and early 1970s. The poet was the son of Harold Bush-Brown (1888-1983), a Harvard-trained architect and author of the 1976 book, *Beaux Arts to Bauhaus and Beyond: An Architect's Perspective*. His mother, Marjorie Conant Bush-Brown (1885-1978), was an artist and portrait painter, and both his paternal grandparents were artists. He was estranged from his family, who disapproved of his youthful avowal of Communism. Only the fact of his birth is stated on web pages about his parents. Bush-Brown attended Black Mountain College. His poetry is overshadowed by his reverence for Dylan Thomas. His poem, "The leopard came into the world" was his most memorable work, and his readings of it impressed listeners at New York poetry readings. No other details are known about the poet, who vanished from the Manhattan poetry scene, and so far as we know, he published no other books after his Poet's Press chapbook. He continued to live in Manhattan, and was spotted riding the subway to and from some Wall Street job. Lyman's chapbook, *In the Silence of Scorpions*, was one of the earliest Poet's Press productions.

"The leopard came into the world ..."

The leopard came into the world
Came at half past one and left at midnight
Lost in the eleven-hour city
Picked up sticks at the railroad yards
Swished his tail in the silence of lonely rooms
Licked the kitten against the wrinkled wall
Finding no break for the season's evening ripening
Into the trough of bludgeoned seas
Finding in the waking dark the sun
The leopard diamond-eyed at midnight
Found his lost remorse between the open-eyed sea
And the rails and trolleys of the dull freight-yard
Among the pulleys of paradise he spied
Among beggars and the screaming police
The whisper and the whistler of the city's bloom
And then in the dark he expired like a bulb
His flesh burned out against the dying wall of slums.

"Dare I advance to her"

Dare I advance to her in warmth and joy
Lest the death-ray of her works unhinge my heart
And wring from the sockets tears of rage;
Knowing that I cannot turn life's first page
I feel the sea of horror eclipse my world:
Unborn, untried before the unrisng sun.

“Life’s flying rivers dammed”

Life’s flying rivers dammed
By walls of fear,
Whose halted currents breed in the mind’s swamp
The sites of death when the bones are white ash
Beyond the last sign,
And the final heartbreak.

A strange hour past this day in tears
Waiting for the world to end
To bring the promise of a coming voyage
From here to Polaris and beyond
New openings to strange houses, learning to love.

Fondly angered by morning’s grief

Fondly angered by morning’s grief
He shot upwards on the pretext of miracles
To the sky’s climbing furnace of unmirth
Lead shadows on the merry pasture.

Slumbering in the tomb of unladdered stars
This evening wakes to a dream of pheasants
Twice a day calling crowned herds skyward
In the berry-burned cycle of their years.

Dare not rave, till morning claims the root
Of fear’s wind flashing veins of nighthood.
When each rude raid breathes quiet as thunder
Her whisper blooms in the silence of scorpions.

Future with a figure turned soul-inward
Raid the present till it stabs
Your heart with shouting tears
Miracle of wishes in the common tide.

When thoughts sting the clouds of songs unheard
Light storms the windows of each railed cavern
Against the loud rain of the sun-broken steeple.
Through tortures of storms the sea breathes homeward.

“Locked in the flood of the grave”

Locked in the flood of the grave
In the rained cycle of the silent wind
The cloud under heaven lashing earth's frail sea
Ends and beginnings of the fabulous tide

Is shouting in the brain's dark caravan
Of memory beyond home and time beyond reason
The catcalls of the night-jarred room
Rummaged in the filament of schemes

Till death-spoken time unhinged by
The rudder of forgiveness under rubble
Waked in the noon-crack of sinless skies
Devoured in the crouch of strayed heaven

Beyond all signs the manic avalanche
Waiting for winds to speak
Rude heaven opened its veiled dream
When blighted wood opened, stone closed

Are you in the fortunate fires of laughter
Lost in the wee heaven of the nighted world
Or in the dead spiraling to mist beyond reason?

“Mad”

Mad
Went out the window
Sad
Strayed in the bare room
Brag
On the foothills of imagined love
Real life only
There are lonely streets and dust-filled rooms
Image of what was and never found again
Since the day the lights went out
Downhill road of dreams decayed
Like dust that bloomed in desert wind
Is the drumbeat of my heart
Swinging at nothing
But the droughts rise and fall
Marking the lover.

— From *In the Silence of Scorpions*
(The Poet's Press, 1971, 2019).

DAVID MALLET (1705-1765)

David Mallet (1705-1765), was originally named David Malloch. This forgotten poet's career is outlined in some detail in Robert Chambers' *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*. This poem achieved great notoriety in Mallet's youth, and launched his poetic career. He was also co-author, with James Thomson, of the masque *King Alfred*, from which "Rule, Britannia" is derived. His efforts as a landscape poet in the manner of Thomson, and as a playwright, failed. Although he had aristocratic patrons, he became involved in many literary and political imbroglios. Mallet, as a freethinking social outcast "became a great declaimer in London coffee-houses, against the Christian religion."

This poem is based on an early ballad, "Fair Margaret and Sweet William," found in Volume III of Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. This supernatural poem, cast in "eights and sixes," alternating lines of eight and six syllables, uses a mode familiar in ballads and hymns. Mallet's poem was originally published as "William and Margaret" in *The Plain Dealer* #36 (1723).

Margaret's Ghost

'Twas at the silent solemn hour,
When night and morning meet,
In glided Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.¹

Her face was like an April morn,
Clad in a wintry cloud;
And clay-cold was her lily hand,
That held her sable shroud.

So shall the fairest face appear,
When youth and years are flown:
Such is the robe that kings must wear,
When death has reft their crown.

Her bloom was like the springing flower,
That sips the silver dew;
The rose was budded in her cheek,
Just opening to the view.

But love had, like the canker-worm,
Consumed her early prime:
The rose grew pale, and left her cheek; —
She died before her time.

— "Awake!" she cried, "thy true love calls,
Come from her midnight grave;
Now let thy pity hear the maid
Thy love refused to save.

"This is the dark and dreary hour,
When injured ghosts complain;
Now yawning graves give up their dead,
To haunt the faithless swain.

"Bethink thee, William, of thy fault,
Thy pledge, and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.

"Why did you promise love to me,
And not that promise keep?
Why did you swear mine eyes were bright,
Yet leave those eyes to weep?

"How could you say my face was fair,
And yet that face forsake?
How could you win my virgin heart,
Yet leave that heart to break?

"Why did you say my lip was sweet,
And made the scarlet pale?
And why did I, young witless maid,
Believe the flattering tale?

"That face, alas! no more is fair;
These lips no longer red:
Dark are my eyes, now closed in death,
And every charm is fled.

¹ For a discussion of variants of the comings and goings of ballad ghosts named Margaret and William, see Lowry Wimberly's *Folklore in English and Scottish Ballads*, pp. 250-253. Mallet's poem is quoted briefly in the comparison. Bishop Percy praises Mallet's poem and adds it at the end of Volume III of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. Percy asserts that Mallet saw only several verses of the original ballad, quoted in a play by Fletcher, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*. The original ballad is quite hair-raising, and differs considerably in outline and detail from Mallet's treatment, and Lewis includes that poem later in his volume.

“The hungry worm my sister is;
This winding sheet I wear:
And cold and weary lasts our night,
Till that last morn appear.

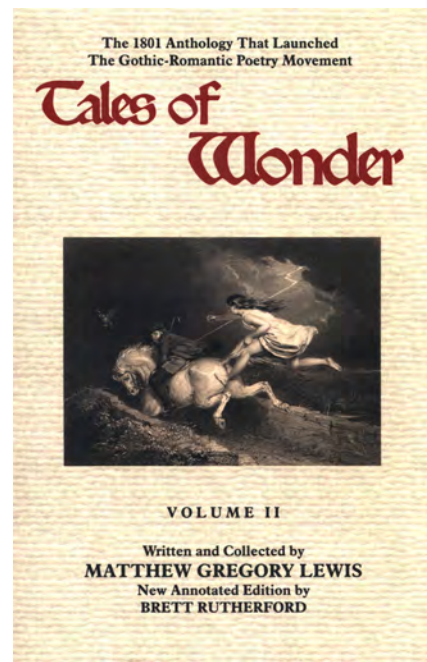
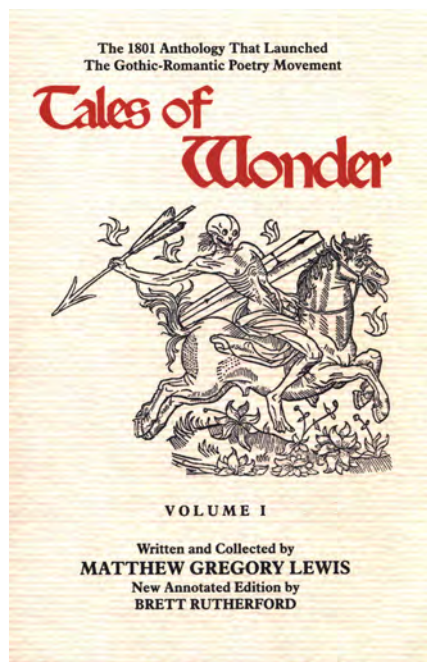
But hark! the cock has warn’d me hence!
A long and last adieu!
Come see, false man, how low she lies
Who died for love of you.” —

The lark, sung loud, the morning smiled
With beams of rosy red;
Pale William shook in every limb,
And raving left his bed.

He hied him to the fatal place,
Where Margaret’s body lay;
And stretch’d him on the grass-green turf,
That wrapt her breathless clay.

And thrice he call’d on Margaret’s name,
And thrice he wept full sore;
Then laid his cheek to her cold grave,
And word spake never more.

— From *Tales of Wonder*, Volume II
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet’s Press, 2012).



Never reprinted in its original form since its 1805 second edition, and never before presented in full in an annotated, scholarly format, *Tales of Wonder* is a landmark in Gothic literature and Romantic poetry. This edition, annotated by Brett Rutherford, traces the literary origins of the poems and the stories behind them, connecting them to the long line of eccentric antiquarian scholars who collected classical, Runic, English and Scottish manuscripts or folk material. The poems here also reveal the late-18th century British project of constructing a pagan pre-history for England, building a poetic connection to Nordic legends and bringing Wotan/Odin and the gods, monsters and fairies of the forest into competition with Biblical and Greco-Roman lore. The originals of these poems and ballads are from Greek, Latin, Icelandic, Danish and German, as well as English and Scottish supernatural ballads. Information about the poets, source texts and alternative versions enrich the reader's experience of these thrilling Gothic narratives in verse. The two-volume set book includes more than 700 informative annotations, maps, illustrations, and an extensive bibliography. No other edition of *Tales of Wonder* contains these additional materials. Published 2010-2012 in paperback and PDF ebook, and recently added to The Internet Archive.

DON MARQUIS (1878-1937)

Don Marquis (1878-1937), born in Walnut, IL, found his way to New York City, where he became a prominent newspaper columnist. He created the fictional characters “archy and mehitabel,” the former a typing cockroach who composed all-lower-case free verse, the latter an alley-cat. He was also an accomplished playwright. These selections are from his 1915 poetry collection, *Dreams and Dust*. The poem, “Hunted,” in the context of Midwestern and Southern Klan lynchings, and the memory of the hunts for escaped slaves, should disturb any reader’s conscience.

In the Bayou

Lazy and slow, through the snags and trees
Move the sluggish currents, half asleep;
Around and between the cypress knees,¹
Like black, slow snakes the dark tides creep —
How deep is the bayou beneath the trees?

Knee-deep,
Knee-deep,
Knee-deep,
Knee-deep!

Croaks the big bullfrog of Reelfoot Lake
From his hiding-place in the draggled brake.

What is the secret the slim reeds know
That makes them to shake and to shiver so,
And the scared flags quiver from plume to foot? —
The frogs pipe solemnly, deep and slow:

Look under
the root!
Look under
the root!

The hoarse frog croaks and the stark owl hoots
Of a mystery moored in the cypress roots.

Was it love turned hate? Was it friend turned foe?
Only the frogs and the gray owl know,
For the white moon shrouded her face in a mist
At the spurt of a pistol, red and bright —
At the sound of a shriek that stabbed the night —
And the little reeds were frightened and whist;²
But always the eddies whimper and choke,
And the frogs would tell if they could, for they croak:

¹ *Cypress knees*. Woody projections rising from the roots of cypress trees.

² *Whist*. Hushed.

Deep, deep!
Death-deep!
Deep, deep!
Death-deep!

And the dark tide slides and glisters and glides
Snakelike over the secret it hides.

Hunted

*Oh, why do they hunt so hard, so hard, who have
no need of food?*
*Do they hunt for sport, do they hunt for hate, do
they hunt for the lust of blood?*

If I were a god I would get me a spear, I would
get me horse and dog,
And merrily, merrily I would ride through covert
and brake and bog,

With hound and horn and laughter loud, over the
hills and away —
For there is no sport like that of a god with a
man that stands at bay!

Ho! but the morning is fresh and fair, and oh!
but the sun is bright,
And yonder the quarry breaks from the brush and
heads for the hills in flight;

A minute's law for the harried thing — then follow
him, follow him fast,
With the bellow of dogs and the beat of hoofs
and the mellow bugle's blast.

Hillo! Hallo! they have marked a man! there is
sport in the world to-day —
And a clamor swells from the heart of the wood that
tells of a soul at bay!

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2021).

D. H. MELHEM (1926-2013)



D. H. Melhem was the author of eight books of poetry, two novels, three nonfiction books, a musical, and numerous articles, essays and reviews. Born in Brooklyn, NY, to Lebanese immigrants (with paternal Greek ancestry), she was a lifelong resident of New York City, where her two children were born and raised. Of her scholarly works, *Gwendolyn Brooks: Poetry and the Heroic Voice* (University Press of Kentucky) was the first comprehensive study of that poet. A later book, *Heroism in the New Black Poetry: Introductions and Interviews* won an American Book Award. Melhem's stirring portrait of her mother, *Rest in Love*, is one of her most popular works and has gone through several editions. The Poet's Press was her first publisher, with *Notes on 94th Street*, in 1972.

Broadway Music

The musicians at the newsstand
are singing
they sing and play instruments
the saxophone and cracked guitar
bawl and whine over exhaust fumes and garbage
dust
they play and play
 the dirty black cap open between them
on the ground —
two old men for pennies.

And a big, drunken woman laughs
laughs over her balloon stomach
she pulls up her sweater to show it
the string holding up her skirt
hanging from the big white belly
she laughs through the spaces between her teeth
her mouth looks purple and half-vacant
 when she opens it
she shows the old men her distended belly
as if it were fruitful or cherished
she lifts her paper bag to her mouth
like a trumpet — and drinks.

She is singing now, softly, then begins
a hard hoarse cry of a note
and holds it. She is singing —
a little wine left in the bottle
the flavor that was in it
a harsh joy in the emptying

And the old men sing with her
they dream through the curving wood
 and metal
and the forms of the sounds that go out
as if the dirty newspapers and today's news
the people running up subway stairs
the dogs the pimps the hustlers the
gleaning-eyed girls, the howling police cars
their bullhorn commands, the litter
and dust-filtered daylight
as if these held the moment of art
as if it could be made
from the unlovely flesh, half-clay, half-dust
as if it could all be molded again,

 and the players
were gods empowering a new music

the big-bellied woman
and the musicians
at the newsstand

Tough Babe Doesn't Beg

Tough Babe doesn't beg
she says, gimme.
Gimme a quarter, gimme a dime,
gimme. Demands her due,
asserts
her worth to the street.

No please. It isn't a favor.
You're not absolved by giving.
Something in your pocket
belongs to her,
she believes.

This Tourist, Resident

This tourist, resident
cruises Broadway's exotic islands,
sees
toilet paper in the trees
where
bench to bench
communities oppose
their rows of misery
cross street.

Old men together
face the sun
resting
arthritic argument against the past.
Sleeping it off
drunks and junkies sprawl
cynicism, defeat
in beer cans,
suck dreams from paper bags.

Crier (Song)

Crier
wears a hat with three roses
hands hang empty the length of her coat

over timid shuffling
her body dips and droops
Nobody laughs
who passes her crooked hat
her eyes that glitter tears
upon the dark
as she
cries up 94th Street
every night

Supermarket

mister manager, last week
this little can of peas was twenty cents
today it's two for forty-five
think I think that's cheaper?

boy opens carton stamps cantops
new price you call smiling to distract me
over cartful of
chickenbacks soupbones and canned beans
things I can afford
not what I like

mister manager, this marketing
grows bitter
meatless dinners now
and fishless
we'll be eating grits and gruel
before you're through
shall I blame the system only
are you wicked, too?

On 94th Street

on 94th street
rain upon snow the long summer long
where footsteps tire and tireless the track
of wheels and window-washing
over cracks that rattle carts
and carriages of babies flying down
a hill of stillness shouted into dark
to everyone who hurrying along will
shuffle back no ending starts and
stirs again alarming moans and
calling out of tune will ruin
silences the sweep of sun one touch
is touching one is touching it
a friend of evening
with you

— From *Notes on 94th Street*
(The Poet's Press, 1972).

DAVID MESSINEO (b. 1962)



David Messineo is among the 30 longest-serving literary magazine publishers and poetry editors still active in America. *Sensations Magazine* — featuring a unique blend of contemporary poetry and fiction, and research into American poetry and history from as early as the 1500s — will see its 35th anniversary in 2022. As an editor, he has had a great influence on regional poets, persuading them to write narrative poems on historical subjects for the themed issues of his magazine. He has written over 600 poems, and is the first New Jersey poet to have feature readings in all 21 New Jersey counties, in all 50 states, and on six continents (sans Antarctica). The Poet's Press published his chapbook, *Twenty Minutes of Calm*, in 2019.

The Cross-Dressers of Antietam

Women occasionally disguised themselves as men in order to serve in the American Civil War. Reasons ranged from a sense of duty and honor to country, to simply raising money to send home to family. The Battle of Antietam was the bloodiest day of the Civil War — and twenty-first-century research indicates eight women dressed as men were part of it, two of whom were Mary Galloway and Sarah Emma Edmonds/Franklin Thompson.

Everything becomes private. A bevy of boys is naked in front of you, in the creek, in a rare moment between battles. You wish you could join them — *day's a scorcher in these G.D'd woolens* — but you can't be seen naked. They'll know. Every moment becomes a challenge, a near-miss, a sigh of relief.

Wipe the sweat from your forehead. This dirty, bloody mess is well nigh on four years now, and you have a concern. The young'uns joined in 1861 are now starting to shave, and if this goes on two, three more years, they're gonna wonder about you. Some may already wonder about you. Do they whisper over the campfire at night? Is there an ominous hush behind the wail of the lone harmonica?

Tying your breasts down is a daily pain, your private nightmare, but you're still alive, it seems so little to give, it's really not a bother when you consider all the young boys who have died, all the flies you've seen feeding on their corpses, and the fields of body parts, the blood, the dirt, the roses, the mud, the field, the violets, the violence, the weary resolve, your fade and dissolve into grit and resolve. You look at their faces and

wonder — *Am I the only one? Is that a boy? Or am I*
looking into a looking glass into my own future?

Remind yourself you have a name. It may not be your
given name, whatever they're calling you these days,
a world away from dresses and dolls. Someone may say
you don't look a day older than when you came in
but your eyes remain the panes into your pain.

You may never know Antietam numbers: 3,654 killed;
1,771 captured or missing; 18,292 wounded; all in one day:
September 17, 1862, American bloodbath on a steamy afternoon.
Now it's 1865: the thrown, the mangled, the war-worn, and you.

Women's work is never done. Don't meet their eyes.
Reload your gun.

— From *Beyond the Rift: Poets of the Palisades* (The Poet's Press, 2010).

To Be or Not to Be

*in memory of Tyler Clementi, and all the other GLBTQI children
and young adults who have taken their own lives*

starry starry night
grab the cable at your left
pull yourself to railing's edge
pause a moment to absorb the view

oh, they are going to pay
they are going to pay in a big way
no quiet ending in a quiet room for you
you planned your plan and, sadly,
carried through

now the world's again askew
gay leaders wring their hands and cry
"What CAN we DO?"
well-worn cycles resume anew
while I wonder — "Why G. W.?"¹

there's a message in your choice
perhaps a thought you couldn't voice
perhaps a telecast that troubled you
a Valentine's message from a G.W.
calling you "the greatest threat
to marriage" he had met

¹ G.W. The George Washington Bridge.

and the thing we must forget
the thing we never, ever state
is how a thousand points of light interrelate
how each bare bulb casts its glow of hate
and how, collectively, they overwhelm

so call to task those at the helm
it's not just what kids see in school that lead their charge
but what they hear and see in the world at large
that makes them ask "To Be or Not to Be"
that make us all live through more tragedy

yes, there are evil women and men
who spew their hate of gays time and again
they often call themselves "Republican"
"Muslim" — "Mormon" — sometimes "Chris-ti-an"

but to counterbalance all of them
to bring their hatred to an end
we need each and every kinder soul
like you

I wish you'd understood this
before you dove toward New York's promise:
its blinding skyline lights, its river view.

Morning

for Kleber, on our silver anniversary (2016)

There is no darkness today.
In the three-quarter-inch bevel curves
between the shade and sill
seeps light.

Quietly it pulls its way
onto his dark hair
fanned across the pillow,
framing his sleeping face.

It reaches the mirror,
reflects through the eyelets
of our lace canopy,
lands in starlike display
against the white ceiling.

Sheets rise and fall
to quiet breathing.
Even the dust particles
join in general stillness.

Before the alarm, shower,
shave, dress, travel routine
comes the brief moment:
happiness captured
in the distillation
of our quiet dawn.

— From *Meta-Land: Poets of the Palisades II*
(The Poet's Press, 2016).

The Palace of Nine Perfections

On a painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

A steep slant of *lapis lazuli* tile
leads the eye along this roof of
brilliant blue, curving to cornices
of carefully placed dragons.

From the bamboo railing,
I watch as the wind
pulls pine needles from the tree
perched precariously on the cliff.

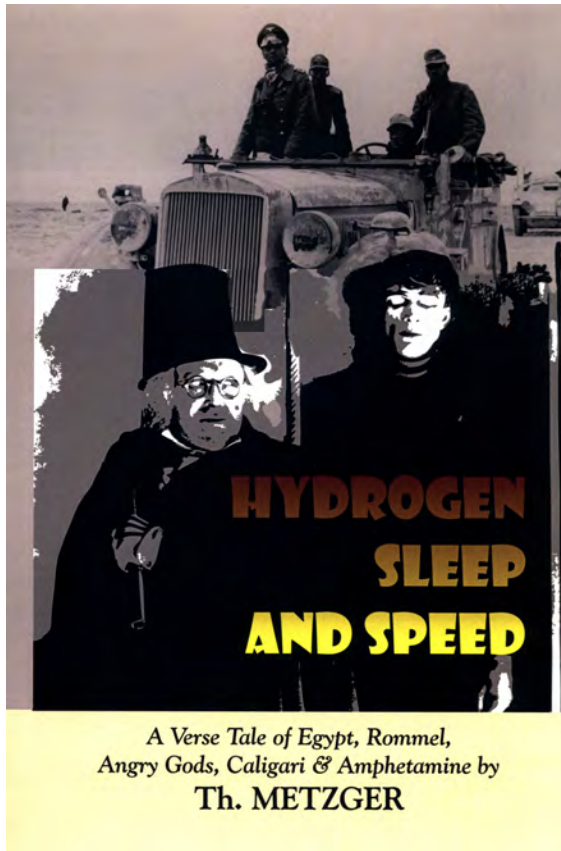
While I stand in the soft safety of
this massive mountaintop palace,
I readily relate to
the fragility of the tree:

the merciless wind that picks
piece by piece, 'til branches are bare,
the solidity of soil
that lets needles renew.

And I revel quietly in
this rice paper moment:
the duality of something
so fragile, yet so strong.

— From *Twenty Minutes of Calm:*
Poems of Nature, Scene & Season (The Poet's Press, 2019).

TH. METZGER



It is almost impossible to excerpt from Th. Metzger's *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed*, the weirdest book ever published by The Poet's Press. This riveting poem cycle mines little-known aspects of World War II history into a melange of African invasions, angry Egyptian gods, rampant Mormon warriors, and the lord of sleepwalkers, Dr. Caligari, presiding over the Nazi obsession with not sleeping, ever, until the ultimate triumph (hence, the advent of mass-produced amphetamines). Brett Rutherford illustrated this book with digital-art montages from *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Mormon histories, silent film stills and other historical sources (even Zeppelins bombing American truck stops).

From "Hydrogen Sleep and Speed"

2

In Rome, they worship human gods again —
Caesar, Scipio, *Il Duce*.
They carry the fasces
and make the stiff-armed imperial salute,
fingers rigid, shouting like war-dogs.
Il Duce bellows back at his black shirt legions
and the lictor marches past
carrying the new fasces,
emblem of newborn Roman power,
the throb of ego and cinematic war-lust.
He relives the triumphs of Scipio Africanus,
his vision of himself
reborn as the invincible Roman general.
The most expensive Italian film ever made
a vast and bloated kino behemoth
fascist Rome's salute to itself
grandfather of every sword and sandal epic
featuring Hercules, Samson and Maciste.

You must see: *Scipio Africanus — The Defeat of Hannibal*.
Fifty elephants slaughtered on the screen and
a cast of ten thousand mock warriors
practicing for their real deaths in the real African desert
under the true African sun.

3

Like Caesar

Il Duce wanted the Pharaoh's heart
and his heartland:

Suez — pyramids — Alexandrian magic — white gold
the delta with its countless acres of cotton,
black peasants stoop-backed in the Nile-rich fields.

Mussolini's pincers — Ethiopia and Libya —
poised to crush Egypt.

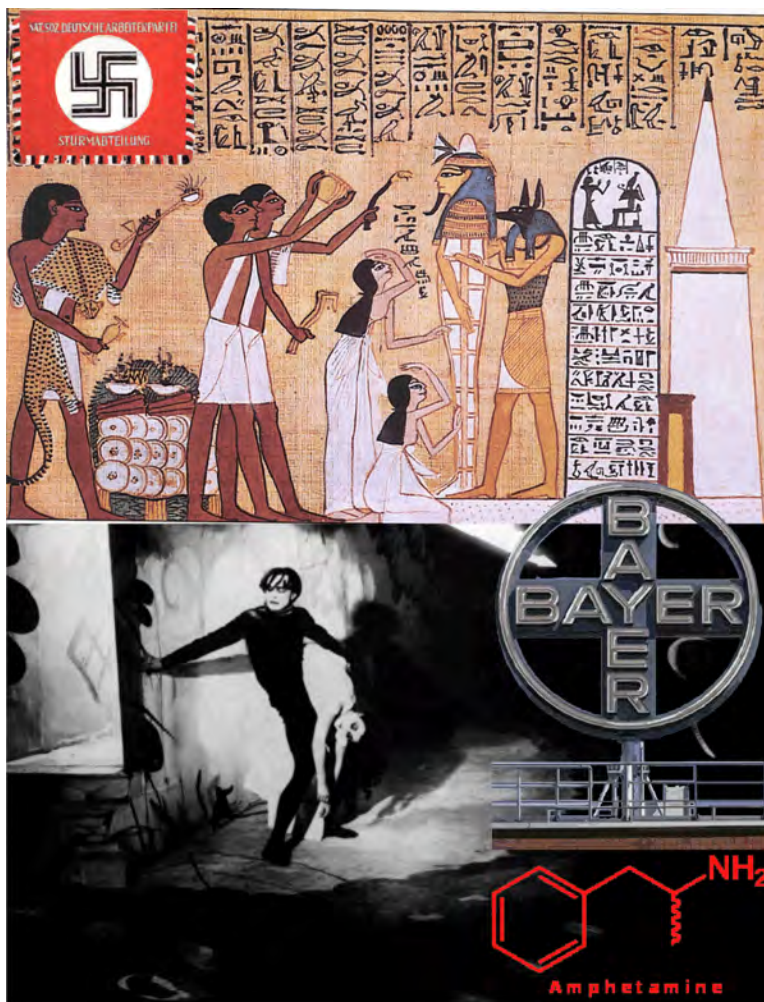
A half million Italian soldiers
led by General Bombastico —
with his ludicrous mustachios,
tarnished braid and rattling epaulets,
an opera buffo buffoon —
marched fifty miles toward Cairo
then stopped to dig in.

Outnumbered ten to one
the British counterattacked from Egypt
sweeping up a hundred thousand prisoners,
four hundred battle tanks,
a thousand heavy guns.

And other, finer, Italian spoils of war:
bed sheets, silk shirts, Florentine leather toilet seats,
spiced hair pomades, wines and liqueurs
and a caravan of Neapolitan harlots
jabbering and shameless as jays.

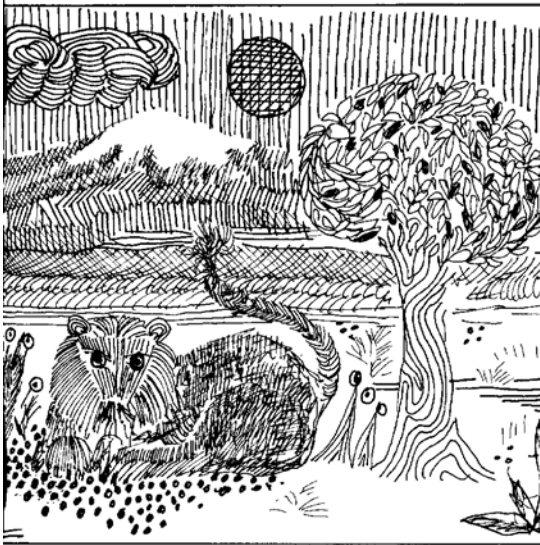
Within days, nothing was left of *Il Duce's* army
but columns of trucks speeding west,
thousands of men throwing down their rifles,
running in blind panic through the dunes.

— From *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed* (The Poet's Press, 2011).



Digital illustration by Brett Rutherford for Th. Metzger's *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed*.

STUART MILSTEIN (d. 1977)



A Dream in Eden, published in 1975-76 by The Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint, was Stuart Milstein's first and only chapbook. The author died of an epileptic seizure in Brooklyn about a year later. Some of his poems appeared in the magazines *Hyn*, *Cave*, and *Global Tapestry*. He was involved with a poetry project called *The Tenth Muse*, and was co-editor of an anthology by that title, also produced at The Poet's Press loft in New York City. He was a promising poet with an already distinguished style, and we still lament his passing. The drawing is from the cover of the original chapbook, by I. Sigsgaard.

Sailboats on Lake Calhoun

Almost any summer day you can see them
skeetering across the lake,
or seemingly paused
in an unfinished traverse —
the white sailboats.
Like thoughts of day passing day
they glide and keel in their complex procession.
Floating across air, yet rocking or dreamily
brooding
on their undulation of water
white gulls tipped by the sun
that only an avalanche of clouds can set free.

A Fairy Tale of Old Age

When evening breezes fluttered
the edges of his face
and blew him into fields
Picasso felt
tranquil exhilaration.
When his piercing dancing eyes
covered a pasture with their lids
the cows, their sacs bloated with milk,
slunk down on their shins
and went to sleep.
And then
imagining sepia,
a final oxidation,
the last rusting pigment of sun,
he disappeared into his paintings.

Roman Holiday

What could he expect
from such provincial women? —
everywhere *Momma Momma*.

All of them have a Momma
in a black dress
with hanging breasts
and a double chin.
She strides the streets and piazzas
with them.

His smiles
are little silver fish
that wind and wiggle in Momma's net
to end

gasping
in her daughter's lap.

Devolution

In time
immaculate rapids
become muddy lagoons
with swart, hilarious shadows
and the lover's moon
a bare bulb.

A Dream in Eden

Poor Eve, impulsive wife, her wiles grown old,
a fat caterwauler. She had pounced
on the serpent in the fire of her youth
while loneliness drifted through Adam's side.
No longer does her heart go yelping, leaping
like a stray dog at every passing soul.
With children, chaos, God, the devil, age
her sin is growing bulkier with time.
Now in her dreams she bellows in despair,
dying, an elephant with broken tusk,
a small gray mountain of lumbering sadness,
plodding towards Golgotha through the dusk.

E.E.G.

No longer shall I be toyed with.
Cradled in lamplight
I have learned to live dis-
jointed from the past.
Mouth rinsed with coffee smells.
Hands and limbs
assume their own selves,
candles flicker tense shadows
exploding like captive orgasms.
I'm so immune
to anything the heart sur-
renders. I, more than emotion,
seek syllogisms
to enhance myself with thought,
and imply my existence.
Bursts of dark
in a hearse
bear away
the sin of doubt.

I sit at my desk;
my veins ache,
sinews droop, eyes tear
in a cave of dry silence.

The resurgent whirl of shade
sprays like a finger-stopped faucet
into cells of my brain.
Life comes in rushes,
convulsions of movement.

Downstairs, a girl's smile
patters past on little feet.

The Gestapo of quiet
assaults me again.

Slowly lapsed to calm
a gnarled hand opens.
I feel a death of glimpse
My pencil moves
like a frantic stick
shaken by waves.
I don't know water;
beginner of life
won't speak anymore:
bridges above
and tunnels below.
I don't know land,
just running through grass,
yawns.

Wind separates
the Venetian blind.

I smell a candle burning.
In an attic
a little girl is crying;
watches the sabbath candle burn.
She wipes the tears on her sleeve
and snuffles the storm of her eyes.
When I become the wind I'll ask:
"Little girl, why were you crying?"

My tears have dried,
melted wax pupils squeeze together.
The venetian blind flutters,
rattles, like a small boy's stick
rubbed quickly along a fence.
My heart shakes,
pounds and clatters —
I'll become the wind roaring.
I'm so afraid...
Momma's sounds, sounds,
comfort me please.

I stand at my chair
rising
from that look of flesh
to erect being;
from a half-life drifting,
mixing aimlessly,
bordering and bunking
I feel and I breathe till I bellow with life.

My mind is crumbling,
tired in its supports
like a stone monument.
I could stand the stone age:
I would make the first hatchet
and wear pebble necklaces.
But stones from the earth and dirt
mark graves.

my head
the wrecking spirit
convulses; head and hands
shift, backgrounds and foregrounds
quiver, my floor's dull patterns
mingle: pebbles are zeroes; zeroes
are nothing but to concentrate on,
just ease the tumult
when the synapse snaps —
lines bordering desks
pagan dwellings,
all unmoving things.
Idolators, goddamn idolators,
always cramped, push
their way between confining lines
bordering death.

Come, cross back pencil line
to hump-backed brain;
my pencil moves
like a ship in water.

Terror slows;
medicine has
sealed the snaps
from where the darkness comes. But gushing
light may rush in like water, delving
furrows through loose dirt fields.

The Race

The table lonely for supper
or one member of the family,
the lamp screaming for light
(the nacreous grey in our skulls),
the night times of burning sands
and closed highways,
the inevitable landscape, a desert,
(the *tabula rasa* of a dried-out jungle);
the drives, the blocks,
the mad dash towards eternity,
struggling for the hymen,
the hymnal, the prayer,

the way to break open,
to go through the wall;
the flagellation, the need to know,
to disinter, to escape back to our old wounds,
to suffer pain, anxiety and humiliation:
all this makes our fingers tremble
as we press them on the keys.
Our struggle never ends;
images of contentment and rest
do not hold us —
unwitting victims of our lives' impulsive drift,
spending the best moments, the best years
putting inspirations end to end,
why on earth do we do it?

Genesis I

We trundled in the sun. Once,
in dotted lacunae of field
we made coloratura gazeboes
with a high-pitched squawking
of birds. Your soul, a stray hair,
straggled in my eyes.
I breathed out/irises
and tiny pink roses.
Lightning flashed in every synapse.

Genesis II

Included in the wind,
a certain curve of hill,
the cresting wave,
I blazed.
I knew our mother
earth
for she became like you;
a puzzle came together
then. Now undone
there is a space inside me
in which your shape
just fits.

— From *A Dream in Eden*
(Grim Reaper Books/
The Poet's Press, 1976).

BRIAN MORRISEY

Brian Morrisey was about fourteen years old when he started his own literary 'zine in his native Littleton, NH. He also fired off this lurid murder poem to our newsletter-journal *Poets Fortnightly*. Today, receipt of such a poem in many quarters would result in a SWAT team being sent to the home of the young poet. But we saw talent and passion, a nascent Villon, Rimbaud, or Genet, and published it. Morrisey is now on the West Coast, and his little magazine, *Poesy*, still goes on as a bicoastal outlet for edgy poetry, photography, and reviews, with Doug Holder as Boston editor.

Reluctant Death

It is exactly 1:19 and 36 sec
I, being the way I am, infatuated by death
relax in my favorite graveyard
in northern New Hampshire.
Resting upon a gravestone across
the way from where
I will rest
 beyond my death
Vodka by my side
pleases me best.

Envyng the psychotic thoughts
passing through the surreal highways of my mind,
I arise with a thundering shot
from my devastating revolver
scattering my best friend's brains into bits —
drifting, like gray snails, down my tombstone.

Checking the alternatives I realize
there is only one left:
entrap the body in the hole — sharing my grave —
hide it to keep the disgusting stink away.

Pleased by my cleverness
I walk, departing the grave and cemetery
(The lost togetherness for him
and his wealthy family!)

To this day he's thought to be missing.
Pretending I care, I'm hypocritically listening.

— From *Poets Fortnightly*, Volume 1 Number 4 (1991).

CATHERINE MURRAY (1918-1990)

A Short Poem

It's February.
There is a Christmas tree
in the field across the way:
the strength of shoulders
on the back of the chair,
your yesterday's shirt
in the corner of my bedroom,
new and fresh
it was not there before,
and in the dim light
my old mirror shows my face young.

Lights in the Water

1

Here
are orange benches
and the memory of our conversation
that hangs, trembling,
like lights in the water:
I see the lighted windows,
like small sails
they glide in the night air.
A reflection in a window
is like the sound of voices
drifting
from the upstairs rooms,
beautiful, but interrupted,
like the unusual music in the night
when a car passes,
(it disturbs for a moment the low leaves)
or a poem written in a slanted hand
how we long to interpret its difficulties!
(You sent me once a poem, folded
and folded.)

2

Today you wear your favorite coat,
which is like bringing me lilacs
or walking next to me under an arch;
those lights in the distance we spoke of —
they have nothing to do with love,
nor does any moon that may suspend itself
in vanity above the world;
but in moving slowly, tremulously
we came
to the direct disturbing vision
that we share:
(This may be the explanation
though none of it is
easy to explain).

Poème

The tunnel of love is a tunnel of darkness
The tunnel of darkness a tunnel of love
And then vibrations of light like
Water lilies beyond Monet:
An almost-allegory of the soul.

As though you are on the Paris express
Intensely lit gardens flash by:
(A flame, there, at the tip of that pylon.)

— From *Lights in the Water*
(The Poet's Press, 1993).

LOUIS NEWMAN

The Residue

I live by keeping books
to check how others grow
and how they die.

I stack them high, to keep
(six years by law)
lying in my trust,
underneath the dream, dissolved
and swept with the possessor
on to doom.

And still I must report
the solvency for those
entitled to the bones.

A Financial Portrait

Every period has its portrait
Sun, rain, and seasons come,
Inflation and boom.
Ask any chartered Angel
The angle one holds.

Today or tomorrow
Facts alone stand out:
The ledger dies with the possessor,
There is the ritual of flowers
And the opening of vaults
for the living.

— From *Tear Down the Walls* (The Poet's Press, 1973).

ALFRED NOYES (1880-1958)



Alfred Noyes was no conventional poet. He had an odd progression from anti-war skeptic to Catholic apologist over his long life. His 1940 novel *The Last Man* is a work of science fiction depicting the invention of a death ray, and how its foolish use destroys virtually all the human race. His antiwar poem “The Victory Ball” is still read, and his three-volume poem cycle on the history of science, *The Torch-Bearers*, was an ambitious product of his probing intelligence. Noyes edited a splendid 1908 anthology of fairy poetry, *The Magic Casement*. This selection inverts the usual sense of the fairy world being one of ancient and unknown power, and makes the fairy folk the creations of human passions. It is a unique take on the subject, and leaves the reader with a poignant sense of loss, and a burden to carry forward. Perhaps one that should be heeded.

A Fairy Funeral

I

Bear her along
Keep ye your song
Tender and sweet and low;
Fairies must die!
Ask ye not why,
Ye that have hurt her so.

*Passing away — flower from the spray!
color and light from the leaf!
Soon, soon will the year shed its bloom on her bier,
and the dust of its dreams on our grief.*

II

Men upon earth
Bring us to birth
Gently at even and morn!
When as brother and brother
They greet one another
And smile — then a fairy is born!

But at each cruel word
Upon earth that is heard,
Each deed of unkindness or hate,
Some fairy must pass
From the games in the grass
And steal thro’ the terrible Gate.

*Passing away — flower from the spray!
color and light from the leaf!
Soon, soon will the year shed its bloom on her bier
and the dust of its dreams on our grief.*

III

If ye knew, if ye knew
All the wrong that ye do
By the thought that ye harbor alone,
How the face of some fairy
Grows wistful and weary
And the heart in her cold as a stone!

Ah, she was born
Blithe as the morn
Under an April sky
Born of the greeting
Of two lovers meeting!
They parted and so she must die!

*Passing away — flower from the spray!
color and light from leaf!
Soon, soon will the year shed its bloom on her bier
and the dust of its dreams on our grief.*

IV

Cradled in blisses,
Yea, born of your kisses
Oh, ye lovers that met by the moon,
She would not have cried
In the darkness and died
If ye had not forgotten so soon.

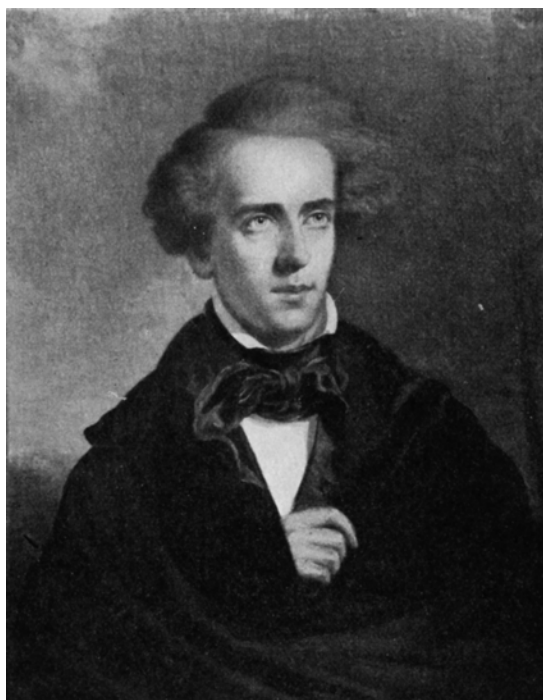
Cruel mortals, they say,
Live for ever and aye,
And they pray in the dark on their knees!
But the flowers that are fled
And the loves that are dead,
What heaven takes pity on these?

*Bear her along — singing your song —
tender and sweet and low!
Fairies must die! Ask ye not why —
ye that have hurt her so.*

Passing away
Flower from the spray!
Color and light from the leaf!
Soon, soon will the year
Shed its bloom on her bier
And the dust of its dreams on our grief.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poems Since
1800*, Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2021)

WILLIAM JEWETT PABODIE (1812-1870)



William J. Pabodie, Providence's leading poet of the mid-19th century, published this little Goethe translation in 1839 in his first book, *Calidore, A Legendary Poem*. Although the book was ridiculed in Providence newspapers, Pabodie lived to become a sought-after poet — the class poet for Brown University in 1839 and the creator of the poem for the opening ceremony for The Providence Athenaeum. When he attempted to start a literary magazine in Rhode Island, he was lampooned in local newspapers and called "Mistress Nabodie." He is best known for hosting Edgar Allan Poe during The Raven's brief courtship and engagement with Sarah Helen Whitman, and for defending Poe's reputation thereafter. Much given to indolence and laudanum, he ended his life by suicide.

Go Forth Into the Fields

The world is too much with us. — Wordsworth

Go forth into the fields,
Ye denizens of the pent city's mart!
Go forth and know the gladness nature yields '
To the care wearied heart.

Leave ye the feverish strife,
The jostling, eager, self-devoted throng —
Ten thousand voices waked anew to life,
Call you with sweetest song.

Hark! from each fresh clad bough,
Or blissful soaring in the golden air,
Bright birds with joyous music bid you now
To spring's loved haunts repair.

The silvery gleaming rills
Lure with soft murmurs from the grassy lea,
Or gaily dancing down the sunny hills,
Call loudly in their glee!

And the young, wanton breeze,
With breath all odorous from her
blossomy chase,
In voice low whispering,
'mong th'embowering trees
Woos you to her embrace.

Go — breathe the air of heaven,
Where violets meekly smile upon your way;
Or on some pine-crowned summit,
tempest riven,
Your wandering footstep stay.

Seek ye the solemn wood,
Whose giant trunks a verdant roof uprear,
And listen, while the roar of some far flood
Thrills the young leaves with fear!

Stand by the tranquil lake,
Sleeping 'mid willowy banks of emerald dye,
Save when the wild bird's wing its surface break,
Chequering the mirrored sky —

And if within your breast,
Hallowed to nature's touch one chord remain;
If aught save worldly honors find you blest,
Or hope of sordid gain —

A strange delight shall thrill,
A quiet joy brood o'er you like a dove;
Earth's placid beauty shall your bosom fill,
Stirring its depths with love.

O, in the calm, still hours
The Holy Sabbath hours, when sleeps the air,
And heaven, and earth decked
with her beauteous flowers,
Lie hushed in breathless prayer-

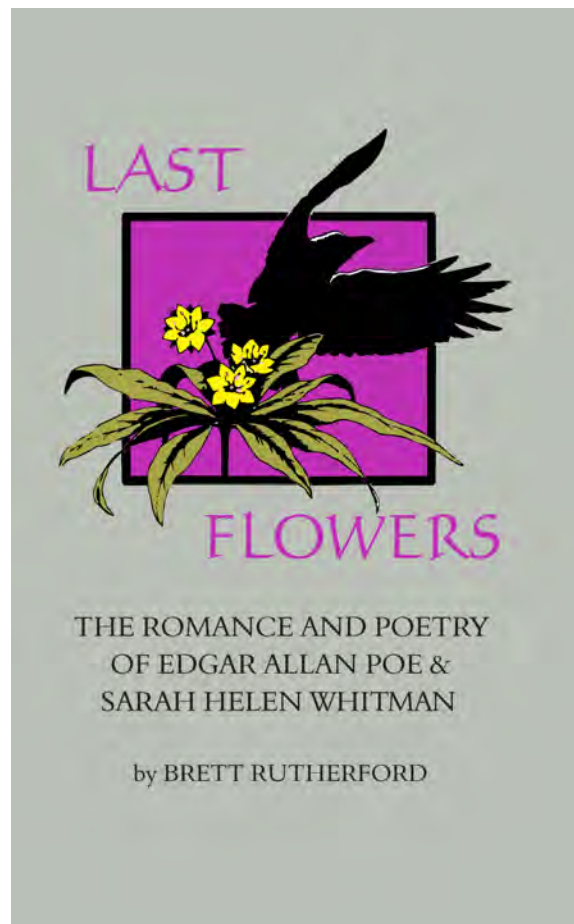
Pass ye the proud fane by,
The vaulted aisles, by flaunting folly trod,
And 'neath the temple of the uplifted sky,
Go forth and worship God!

Song – From Goethe

Many thousand stars are burning
Brightly in the vault of night,
Many an earth-worn heart is yearning
Upward, with a fine delight.

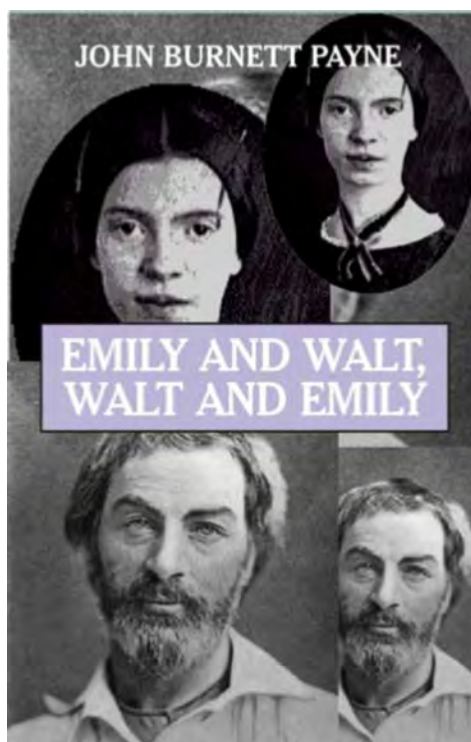
Stars of beauty, stars of glory,
Radiant wanderers of the sky!
Weary of the world's sad story,
Ever would we gaze on high.

— From *Poets Fortnightly*.



William J. Pabodie is a character of interest in the brief romance and engagement of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman. *Last Flowers* is a detailed account of the doomed romance.

JOHN BURNETT PAYNE (1919-1986)



In addition to being a fine and sensitive poet, John Burnett Payne was also a mentor and correspondent to several generations of younger poets. Born in 1919 in New Mexico and raised in Kentucky, he had taught at universities in Missouri, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Michigan, and at Wayne University, before coming to New York to teach at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, an art school. At readings, John did not talk about his academic credentials: he had quit teaching in 1965, and lived solely off his editorial work as a reader for several major publishers. He lived in a basement apartment on East 26th Street in Manhattan with a number of cats and thousands of books. After his death, The Poet's Press, aided by poet Dennis Barone, assembled a small collection of Payne's poems. The rest remain only in the numerous small magazines where he published, and in the archive of his papers at Temple University.

The Ways of Love

For Barbara A. Holland

In her ultimate bed Griselda rots,
the grey girl run to ground,
fleetingly mourned,
buried with her bloody patience.

Enraged by failures within her highly contended bed
Helen flees her man-destroying mystique
(who among us isn't haunted,
rendered impotent,
by the loveliness of her face?)
and turns to a Jungian analyst
anxious to divorce herself
from everyone's racial memory,
everyone's clumsy performance.

From the south of Dallas Cressida writes,
much as she has from Frisco, New Orleans, Santa Fe,
taunting, embittered, taut,
complaining, petulantly, of fickle cowboy lovers,
swift in booted flight,
faithful only to leather, mother, pony, bike and Texas.
Roused from memory of sleep with Jocasta,

shaken by the necessary recognition,
I write passionate sonnets
to Stella in Dublin,
to Vanessa in Seville,

to Miranda in Bayonne,
the closest,
most threatening,
the one most likely to reply,
imploring swift return.

Any insomnia-inspired inventory is only
an inventory,
even of lovely ladies,
mistresses all,
departed, over-accessible, exiled,
lamented, lusted for sometimes again;
far more certain to set my blood
whirling turbulent
is the prospect of a glorious new Christabel,
her inevitable successor, and hers.

Emily and Walt, Walt and Emily

Cross-town buses run each way
To and from the open poetry reading,
Bearing Emily and Walt, Walt and Emily.

Emily stands at the foot of the pier,
Contemplating the Hudson, Jersey,
A city which isn't hers.
Inward, shy,
Wary of the afternoon sun,
Bombast,
The naked ego on display,
Emily turns and hastily catches
Her cross-town bus,
Eastward bound,
Thinking of her sandalwood box,
An inward private special place for poems;
And she rides,
Happier with private lyricism,
With increasing distance,
Counting each block
Away from the open poetry reading
As liberative of community,
Others.

Cross-town buses run each way,
To and from the open poetry reading,
Bearing Emily and Walt, Walt and Emily.

Westward riding Walt,
Riding into the setting Jersey sun,
Hails Emily from his cross-town bus,
Yelling:

*"Why aren't you coming
To the open poetry reading?"*

And Walt rides on,
Impatient,
Turned outward,
Turned on,
Loving cross-town streets,
Uptown-downtown streets,
The pulse and heart and promise of a city,
The world,
The prospect ahead,
All a delight to anticipate,
Joyously excited,
Bucked up by the contemplation
of all the ego-bombast,
The shared, the real, the enlarged,
All, himself,
One's self, the blade of grass,
An empire city,
The self and city and words of others,
Strengthened, multiplied
By the multiple statement/sound.

And Emily,
Briefly secure in flight,
Thinks
How dangerous
To give your heart to public rhetoric,

How perilous
To run the risk of love,
The risk of loving or being loved,
And then she thinks of Walt,
Outward loving verbal Walt.
A sandalwood box is not enough.
We wear too many masks of privilege
and privacy
Turn too often from the sun of reality
Deny too often the heart
Without or with its Pascal reasons.

And Emily, lonely on her cross-town bus,
Continues eastward,
Thinking of Walt,
Vibrant in his courage,
In his involvement.

And Walt,
Loving Emily even in her flight,
Thinks
How dangerously not to love,
Fully, rapaciously,
World-embracing, world-embraced,
Rhetoric-fucking, rhetoric-fucked;

And he is impatient with the blocks
Which still intervene
As cross-town buses run their way
Closer and closer
To the open poetry reading.

Counter-transference can occur
When cross-town buses
Bearing Emily and Walt, Walt and Emily
Pass,
With Walt yelling
Out of bravado and conviction
and need to Emily.

Walt,
Nearing the end of the westward line,
Asks himself:
“When did I,
Like Emily,
Last have a glorious introspective
private moment?”

A weathervane,
A cross-town bus,
Any vibrant authentic poet,
Can spin and turn
At the line’s end.

Walt spins and turns,
Whirling with thoughts of Emily,
And he rides back east in search of self.

Emily,
Riding vibrantly,
Passionately,
Preciously alone,
Thinks again of Walt,
Engaged poet,
Taking his chances
With the whole fucking universe,

And stays on her bus
At the end of the line
To ride westward
Into the setting Jersey sun
To wave and yell at Walt
On his cross-town bus
Passing hers:
“*Why aren’t you coming
To the open poetry reading?*”

— From *Emily and Walt, Walt and Emily*
(The Poet’s Press, 2006).

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-1849)



The two 19th century American poets who cast the longest shadow over posterity are Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman. Poe features in four different Poet's Press and Yogh & Thorn editions. First, we placed Poe's poems against those of his Providence fiancée Sarah Helen Whitman in *Last Flowers*, along with an essay about their doomed 1848 romance. This hand-bound book was set in a digital type font, "Lenore," especially designed for the edition.

Poe appears again in 2015 in *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume I, where all of his overtly supernatural-themed poems are gathered, including "Ulalume," with its suppressed last stanza restored. Finally, more information about Poe, including the only modern annotated edition of Whitman's eloquent *Edgar Poe and His Critics*, was published in *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence* (2019).

Ulalume

The skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves, they were
 crispèd and sere —
The leaves, they were withering and sere:
It was night, in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,¹
In the misty mid region of Weir:² —
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul —
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll —
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the Pole —
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the Boreal Pole.³

¹ *Auber*. No convincing explanation has ever been given for the place-names in this poem. The French composer Daniel François Auber premiered an opera titled *Le Lac des Fées* (*The Lake of the Fairies*) in Paris in 1839, based on a German ballad set in the Harz Mountains, with a libretto by Eugène Scribe. Scribe's libretto sets the opening act in a lake in the mountains. Scribe's libretti were published in book form in Paris in 1841, but it is uncertain how Poe would have been familiar with this opera or its text.

² *Weir*. One possible source for this name is the artist and painter Robert Walker Weir, (1803-1889) who lived in New York City and taught at the West Point Military Academy.

³ The volcano Mt. Erebus in Antarctica was discovered in 1841, but there is no volcano at the "Boreal" (North) Pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere —
Our memories were treacherous and sere —
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year —
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber —
(Though once we had journeyed down here)
We remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoulish-woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent,
And star-dials pointed to morn —
As the star-dials hinted of morn —
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn —
Astarte's⁴ bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.⁵

And I said — “She is warmer than Dian,⁶
She rolls through an ether of sighs —
She revels in a region of sighs.
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion,⁷
To point us the path to the skies —
To the Lethean peace of the skies —
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes —
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes.”

But Psyche,⁸ uplifting her finger,
Said, “Sadly this star I mistrust —
Her pallor I strangely mistrust —
Oh, hasten! — oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly! — let us fly! — for we must.”
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings till they trailed in the dust —
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust —
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.
I replied — “This is nothing but dreaming.
Let us on, by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

⁴ *Astarte*. The Greek name for Ishtar, Semitic fertility goddess, associated with the planet Venus.

⁵ Like the moon, Venus displays a crescent phase, which can be seen with a telescope.

⁶ *Dian*. The moon.

⁷ *Lion*. The constellation Leo.

⁸ *Psyche*. The Soul.

Its Sybillic⁹ splendor is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty tonight —
See! — it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we may safely trust to its gleaming
And be sure it will lead us aright —
We surely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night.”

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom —
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb —
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said — “What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?”
She replied — “Ulalume — Ulalume —
'T is the vault of thy lost Ulalume!”

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispèd and sere —
As the leaves that were withering and sere;
And I cried — “It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed — I journeyed down here! —
That I brought a dread burden down here —
On this night, of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?

Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber —
This misty mid region of Weir —
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoulish-woodland of Weir.”

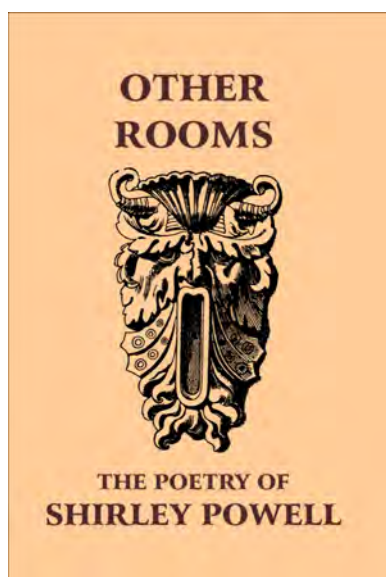
Said we, then — the two, then — “Ah, can it
Have been that the woodlandish ghouls —
The pitiful, the merciful ghouls,
To bar up our way and to ban it
From the secret that lies in these wolds¹⁰ —
From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds —
Have drawn up the spectre of a planet
From the limbo of lunar souls —
This sinfully scintillant planet
From the Hell of the planetary souls?”

— From *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman* (The Poet's Press, 1987, 2003, 2011).

⁹ The Sibyls were ancient oracles.

¹⁰ *Wolds*. Old English. Wood or forest, especially woodland on rocky, higher ground.

SHIRLEY R. POWELL (1931-2019)



Ohio-born poet Shirley Powell arrived in Manhattan in 1971, and brought with her a story-telling voice that filled her poems with Midwestern ghosts, haunted houses, and spitefully haunted objects. Powell's plain-spoken narratives are the calm voice of a grandmother recounting dark secrets, in words and rhythms that are hypnotically persuasive. Powell was also an editor and anthologist, producing *Womansong*, an important early collection of feminist poets, and editing *Oxalis*, a long-running literary magazine. She has published collections of her own poetry, one novel, and a collection of short stories. After New York City, she lived in the Catskills, and later in Indiana. The Poet's Press published her books *Alternate Lives*, *Villages and Towns*, and *Rooms*. The lattermost was expanded into a second version titled *Other Rooms*. Powell died in Brookville, IN in 2019.

At the Bar

It was one of those nights
when I was standing at the bar
I saw a man bring his hallucination in

It sat beside him (next to me)

He didn't buy it a drink
but patted it from time to time
when it seemed restless
Just one more drink and we'll go home
he said

A shadow seemed to grow there
I saw a tear fall on the bar
Wait here, he told it and went back
to the men's room

I watched it for him
After awhile I touched its hand
And that was the beginning
the edge
of all the rooms
that I keep going through.

Seventy Years Ago

Seventy years ago my grandmother
rode a spring wind to church
and was married
looking around the still room
to see if the man she loved
was a witness.

ample black hair puffed on her head
eyes lively
mouth just missing a pout
gown to the chin
to the wrists
to the floor
delicate fingers on the young farmer's arm ...

Her lover stayed away,
was shot in a barroom brawl the next
year.

She went to Montana and lived
in a tarpaper shack
snakes crawled under it
wolves visited
children were born and no
doctor
women met in tunnels of snow
to exchange remedies
and when spring came

she sometimes took the horse
after cattle
riding away and away
while her young ones watched
from the door.

She has lived to be old
buried her husband
two grandchildren,
seen her children grow lean
and grayheaded . . .

she sleeps in the long afternoons
dreaming of prairies
of wildcats that lived in the coulees,
of a lover
who didn't come back —
she stands at a window
watching a country road.

He is walking toward her
tall and bareheaded
whistling and laughing
ready at last
to turn her life
another way

When Will It Happen

Dog's body at the side of the road
man with twisted legs lying in a ditch
truck carrying thunder down the hill
floating, faces cold in water, those two girls

But those were dreams

Inside my ribs or somewhere
locked in my blood grains
the killer feeds and grows

he'll have me sometime, that vengeful one
it may be night I'll be an animal
dazed by rushing lights

These are not the thoughts I want to think
I didn't ask you to come here looking:
since you did I'll tell you this, that
we will all cry murder sometime.

Grammarian's Poem

Buckminster Fuller said,
"I seem to be a verb."

That made me think.
My granddad was a genuine article,
my cousin Jill an adjective
modifying every
person, place or thing.
Some men I've known are
mostly ejaculations.

The Jones we keep up with
must be prepositions:
They have so many objects.

And politicians?
They'd be pronouns,
saying they stand for
something of substance
till after the election.

As for me, I'd like to be
a conjunction,
joining all the lost parts
until my life's sentence
has more meaning.

Under the Lighthouse

(for my grandmother)

there were certain dreams you told me
a litany
I on my cot beneath the lighthouse picture
in its oval frame
you massaging my thin leg
then bracing it against a pillow

You told me of girls with handsome legs
figure skating
tales of athletes
being crowned
whipped cream wishes
perfections like a mountain
of strawberries
or an island
of iced melons
You fed me
favorite dreams
your fingers probing my dead
muscles

That's why the painting of the lighthouse
 shining in the moon
 still makes me sleepy
 makes me smile
 gives me
vague and lovely dreams

First Magic

Long room full of six year olds
I am teacher with a little edge of mercy left
You are student
 blank and listening
 leaning elbows on
 an old desk

 I
catch a corner of your nine o'clock dream
 you
think of spaces around words on paper

You will remember dull walls
 Catholic saints
 homilies
 your old desk
 scarred and bearing your thumb prints

Leaning over the new words you have written
 you
stare at me In one fist you carry them
smudged running together to me
"Teacher, what do they say?"

Do you know better than I
that we are all mysteries?
Out of us
 come stars which line the cool East
 with fire-faced Messiahs
Out of us
 comes abracadabra
Out of us and our old desks
 comes the beginning of sorrows
 the beginning twists
 in our memories
 plays back
the anthems of Mars

About Barbara

No copy I,
as she once thought;
nor copy she, it's true.

She was like me,
and I, like her;
but we were different, too.

She stared the moon
full in its face
and never could withdraw,

while I,
more tender of my needs,
lived ravenous and raw.

We both saw monsters
clearly, fondling them
like snakes.

She, bitten first, subsided
while I invent
escapes

Real Poet

On the death of Barbara Holland

My eyes hurt.
I think of hers,
so blurred she learned
to speak the lines
without seeing them

She burned all messages,
leaving only the poems
alive.

Even she, the marvel-maker,
drifts now
and her words go out,
sparkles beyond my fingers
to touch, my mouth
to try.

— From *Other Rooms* (Grim Reaper Books/
The Poet's Press, 1975, 2009).

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN (1799-1837)

The Demons

The clouds whirl, the clouds scurry.
The moon, unseen, lights up
from above the flying snow.
Gloom-ridden sky, gloom-ridden night:
on my life, I can't find the way.
I drive, I drive on the endless steppe.
The little bell's *ding-ding-ding*
flies back to me, fearsome,
fearsome in spite of one's self,
lost bells amid an unknown plain!

— “Driver, don't stop! Keep going on!” —
“It's impossible, sir. It's a heavy go
for the horses against all this snow.
And my eyes are swelling shut, sir.
Who can make out where snow ends
and where the land begins?
All the roads are covered, I swear.
Kill me if you like. I've stopped,
for not a track is to be seen.
We are lost! What would you have me do?” —

“What have you been following, driver,
if you can see no road?” —
“Some Demon of the steppe, my lord,
is leading the horse and me. I thought
I recognized a turn or two, but no,
now we've been turned aside. We're lost!
“Look, there ahead beyond that drift
he huffs, and spits at me. My God,
he's almost led the stumbling team
into a steep ravine! Back, back!

“Did you not see him, sir? He stood
as thin as a weird mile-post before us.
(Here, take this cloth and clean
your fogged-up spectacles!)
Look there — that little spark was him,
and now he's gone into the empty dark.”

The clouds whirl, the clouds scurry.
The moon, unseen, lights up
from above the flying snow.
Gloom-ridden sky, gloom-ridden night:
on my life, I can't find the way.
We have no strength to go onward:

there, look, our tracks again:
we have gone in a full circle!
The little bell is suddenly silent,
in a fog so thick it cannot tremble.
The horses stop. “What is that in the field?”

“Who knows, sir. It's just a tree stump.
No, *Bozhe moi*, I see a wolf!”
The snowstorm becomes furious,
the snowstorm howls and wails.
The snorting horses make sounds
of terror and try to break the reins.

“There — farther on — the Demon.
I saw him jump, sir. See there:
just those two eyes float deep,
red lamps inside the gray-white
nothingness of sky and snow.”

Then comes a sudden silence,
a narrow path made visible
lures on the horses; the bell
makes tentative tinkles. I see
a line of phantoms assembled
on either side of us,
in the midst of the whitening plains.

Onward we go, the driver's
whispered litany of *Bozhe moi*,¹
Bozhe moi and the silver ding
of the blessed sledge-bell
our only prow and pilot.
Endless and formless,
the Demons watch us
in the dim play of the moonlight;
they are legion, as leaves
on the ground in November.

How many are there? Where do they go
en masse in this blizzard night?
And, oh, they are singing. Hush, driver!
Listen to that plaintive melody!
Are they off to some hobgoblins' burial?
Is Baba Yaga² at last to be married?

¹ *Bozhe moi*. Russian exclamation: “My God!”

² *Baba Yaga*. The famous witch of Russian folklore who has iron teeth and eats children. Her famous hut sits on four fowls' legs.

The clouds whirl, the clouds scurry.
The moon, unseen, lights up
from above the flying snow.
Gloom-ridden sky, gloom-ridden night:
on my life, I can't find the way.

In faith the driver and the horses
plod on in the narrow passage,
the right-of-way the Demons grant us
as they swarm and swarm around us,
some walking on snow and treetop,
some leaping into the storm itself.

Home, if I make it there, will not be warm
enough, nor will any bright song erase
the funereal chant of the Demons,
whose mourning rends my heart.

Bozhe moi, ding-ding-ding,
Bozhe moi, ding-ding-ding
Bozhe moi, ding-ding-ding

1830, Translation and adaptation
by Brett Rutherford, 2012.
From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem*
Since 1800, Volume 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2015).

JACOB RABINOWITZ

Jacob Rabinowitz's poem, "The Vampire," was written when the poet was 20, still a student at Columbia University. It was part of a thwarted chapbook set to be published by The Poet's Press in 1980, but never released. Since earning his Ph.D in the classics from Brown University, Rabinowitz has gone on translate works as diverse as the poetry of Heinrich Heine, the ancient Egyptian coffin and pyramid texts, the Chinese Book of Songs, the Latin poems of Propertius and Catullus, and a great tome on the theme of witchcraft in antiquity. He has also created a multimedia online version of Dante's Divine Comedy.

The Vampire

Immense the silence seems, new sounds the song,
Slow noticed, of the bird that sings by night.
How few and distant are the lights! More warm
And wanted is their show. The lucid moon
Pours down her streaming light in level beams
That charge the mist with argent sorceries
And make a gently phosphorescent sea
Of radiant vapor.

Weary beats my heart.

Laughter, once the clarion of spleen,
Seems now sad task. It more agrees with me
To let the tears glide down my cheeks a while —
They water the oasis of my grief,
This isle of sorrow in the bitter waste
Of years.

On such a night, so clothed in mist,
I saw you go, soft-singing, through the haze
And slow approach with soulless glowing eyes
And thrilling silver laughter at my dread;
A sad, unearthly laughter, strong to soothe.

With even pace and tranquil eye you led.
I was your docile follower, I reeled
Along, half-drunk with fear, joy and desire.
Glad horror charged my head ...

. . . and then I writhed

And steamed above your strong machinery;
I watched the vacuum of your lidless gaze;
You moaned with loathsome open mouth, we surged
Together in the dark, I swam your lean
And steely thighs to pleasures terrible —
The pain that pleases — the delight that kills.

I ululated like a thing that dies
And emptied in my venom as I felt
Your cold remote contractions of the squid.

Our heavy breath subsided. There we lay,
The sleeping and the dead. You grimly smiled
And gave me kisses in a solemn way
As if to seal my fate upon my lips.
In starry hour flashed your round black eyes,
Then spread your wings of bat — the boney arcs
Of tented membrane fanned out taut and sleek
Across. Framed for the soar, you went, ashriek,
An angular shadow through the darkened world.
You left me then. Gone, gone, you could not be!
You fled — forever — it was like a dream
From which I cannot wake.

The day may reign,
The sky be wide, the sun be bright and swift
In his heartwarming course. For others, yes,
No more for me. I know he cannot light
My soul with all his cruel clarity,
For there the mist, the moon, and you remain.

Sometimes I hear, as darkness darkest falls,
Your laughter, like a toast to madness, ring —
It makes me drunk and, gone, it leaves me sick,
Initiates a night of heavy thoughts
That charge the sleepless hours with their weight.

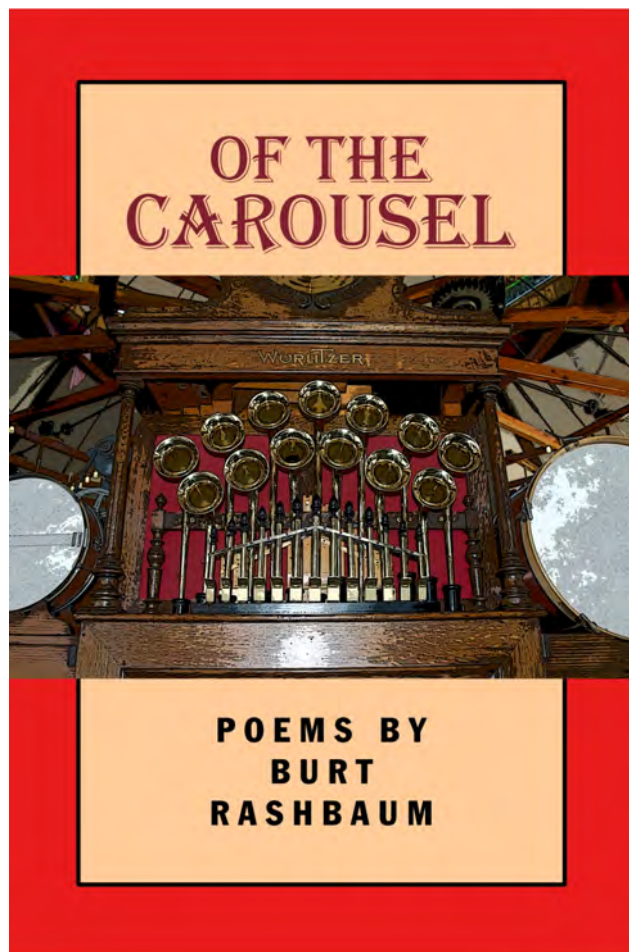
I am become my own cracked sepulchre,
My bed — a harbor for uneasy dreams,
Where soon the black death-boat shall scrape its keel
And wait to take me to the place you are,
The world of darkness, world without an end.
I am, remain, till death arrive at me,
A prisoner to your evadeless shade,
And dead, I shall awake in your embrace.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 2
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2016).

BURT RASHBAUM (1953-)



The Carousel of Happiness, in Nederland, CO, is a hand-carved carousel made by Scott Harrison, a Vietnam veteran. The carving took almost 26 years. More than 100,000 riders a year enjoy this carousel. Poet Burt Rashbaum is one of its operators, and his book, *Of the Carousel*, combines photos of the carousel with “shape poems” that tell stories about some of the carousel animals and their human visitors. Born in 1953 and a native of Brooklyn, New York, Rashbaum has published poetry and fiction in various literary journals and anthologies over the past three decades, most recently in *Contemporary Literary Horizons* (Bucharest) and through their chapbook series a book of poems, *Blue Pedals*. His books include the novels *The Ones That I Know* and *Tears for My Mother*; a collection of short fiction, *Becoming An American*; and one of non-fiction, *A Century of Love*.



From "Of the Carousel"

2

The Wurlitzer is like
a beast
but different
from those
who spin and
have nicknames
given by
children who ride
often.
Its roar is louder
than
the creaking and groaning
of
the muscular machine
revolving around it —
louder
than arguments
phone calls
tantrums
the cd-player
and the wind.
It is the only beast
caged
to contain its
loudness
originally designed for
outdoors
now needing
mufflement
singing its 88
instruments to
the heights
protected behind
plexi
glass
oaken and regal
the brass horns
gleaming
like the cymbal

the snare crisp and taut
bass drum thump

makes some jump.
The Wurlitzer
is like a
beast.

3

Between rides he
tells the story
of one soldier's pain
of a war the young
don't know
of
the loss
the searching for
the way
to return
to his life,
knowing
there was a way
to return
and finally discovering
the wood
awaiting
the carving of
animals
appearing below his
studied hand
and reaps tears
from those who listen
and offers
a ride on an inanimate animal
and watches
time unfold into the magic
of
a timeless
Joy
barely contained
within
the human form.

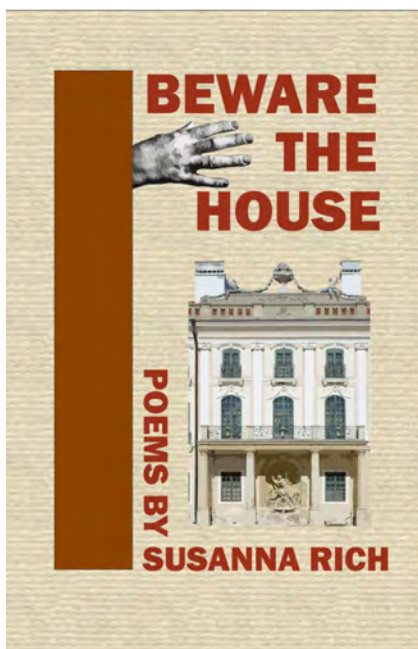


8
Sometimes he wished
he could talk. Sometimes
he hated his keyboard
attached
to his wheelchair
even though it connected him.
He wished he
didn't shake so much.
But he could always talk to Panda.
No keyboard necessary no
words said
no mis
com
muni
ca
tion
no mis
un
derstan
ding
as the faster
he spins the calmer

he feels
going
around
no need to
work the keys
that connect him
to others
no need to
but the joy
of going
around
air on his face
sun outside
shining on kids
who run
and call each others'
names
he's taken
out of himself
floating
high above
the Twirling Girl
forever dancing
high atop
the carousel
out of himself
he's taken
and he's connected
to the animals
of wood
buoyant with joy
taking him
as one of
their own.

— From *Of the Carousel*
(The Poet's Press, 2019).

SUSANNA RICH



Susanna Rich is a bilingual Hungarian-American, Fulbright Fellow in Creative Writing, and Collegium Budapest Fellow — with roots in Transylvania and family ties to the Blood Countess, Elizabeth Báthory. She is a Distinguished Professor of English Studies at Kean University (NJ). Rich is also an Emmy Award nominee, and the founding producer and principal performer at Wild Nights Productions, LLC. Her repertoire includes the musical *Shakespeare's *itches: The Women v. Will*, and *ashes, ashes: A Poet Responds to the Shoah*. In addition to her Poet's Press collection, *Beware the House*, she is author of three earlier poetry collections, *Television Daddy* and *The Drive Home* (Finishing Line Press), both of which are also Wild Nights performances; and *Surfing for Jesus* (Blast Press).

Beware the House With No Corners

the round house, like a massive breast
suctioned to a knoll;
like the eyes and skull of a buried giant.

Enter this cyclotron to braille the inner wall,
never to know where you entered
or if you can leave.

Wings are embedded in the broken china floors,
wooden fish gossip in the inverted bowl of air
breathing itself like a sponge.

Nothing meets itself. No right angles
corner spirits. And don't ask doors to shut
or open in jambs meant not to true.

An orange paper jellyfish hangs,
clitoral, at the center,
to vacuum you into the glass dome.

Sling your quilt over your head
to spiral on Escher stairs —
wander your sleep among distant thumps

and whistling goats.

This mandala is all a basement
and attic, with no between.

Ghosts loll their tongues, thick as boots;
ride you like a zebra,
as the calliope plays.

Anchor

Father Malloy was the mean priest —
his confessional window a nightmare television
that talked back; black-rimmed
coke-bottle glasses,

like binoculars boring into our backs.
Father Malloy filled the doorway of class 7A,
the day the president was shot in the sun —

midnight-blue Lincoln convertible,
pretty Jackie in her pink suit, pink pillbox hat;
the red roses they gave her at Love Field, Texas.

Father Malloy trooped us to church,
as if we were, somehow, to fault —
right hand clamped on Dennis Resnick's neck,
the other waving like Death's scythe —
his hard-set jaws willing our slow march,
our sobs echoing up the walls. Early dismissal,

we went home to Walter Cronkite
waiting for us
in our Zeniths and Motorolas.
Replay after replay,
we watched him look up at his clock,

take off his glasses, and announce —
*President Kennedy died at 1:00 PM,
2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.*

His chin cramped up.
Throat swallowing hard.
Not to weep, himself, Walter Cronkite
steadied us with his eyes after Jackie
kissed the flag-draped coffin,
and John-John saluted.

His voice carried us
through the riderless black horse,
the bullets' angles —
making us feel that, in him,
we still had a father;
that, next time, we would know

to put a bubble over the limo,
to not go to Love Field,
to not wear pink.

His was the face that always returned
and stayed between us
and *whatever* happened.

Some nights, I turned the volume down,
and confessed all my miserable little sins
to Walter Cronkite in his box of light.

He lip-synced my words, (exactly
as I said them) and we always ended
with *That's the way it is. That's the way...*

Sitting with Grandmother On a Park Bench

She's wearing her instant facelift —
long rubber-bands taped at her temples;
tied, like apron strings, behind her head.
Her strawberry-blond Zsa Zsa wig
clutches her scalp like a shriveled starfish.

A homeless man — bald,
but for his thin gray ponytail —
sits on the ground, leans on a willow,
plucks at a broken zither.

She steadies a gutted coconut half
on her knees,
sprinkles in one pink plastic rosary bead,
toothpicks gnawed the required nine times,
half-moon nail parings she douses with honey.

She is humming "Hungarian Rhapsody"
following and not following
the homeless man's notes.
He's Liszt, she says, come to marry me.

Nothing I can do for her —
whose first husband died of a stroke;
whose second, soldier husband,
was run down by a truck —

but believe with her that she is young again,
sitting by the Danube, and that I am her sister.
*Look, I whisper to her, that man
with long fingers —
he's come back for you, your Franz.*

— From *Beware the House* (The Poet's Press, 2019).

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849-1916)



Author of more than a thousand poems, Indiana-born James Whitcomb Riley, “the Hoosier poet,” was the most famous poet in the United States in the 1890s, touring everywhere doing dramatic readings, despite the scorn heaped upon him by the East Coast literary establishment. Some later lyric poems show Riley’s admiration for Poe in full flower. Given to dipsomania like Poe, Riley out-stayed his welcome and his late output did not live up to his earlier work. His best-known work is the poem “Little Orphant Annie,” the source of the legendary warning: The Goblins will get you if you don’t watch out!”

A Dream

I dreamed I was a spider;
A big, fat, hungry spider;
A lusty, rusty spider
 With a dozen palsied limbs;
With a dozen limbs that dangled
Where three wretched flies were tangled
And their buzzing wings were strangled
 In the middle of their hymns.

And I mocked them like a demon —
A demoniacal demon
Who delights to be a demon
 For the sake of sin alone;
And with fondly false embraces
Did I weave my mystic laces
Round their horror-stricken faces
 Till I muffled every groan.

And I smiled to see them weeping,
For to see an insect weeping,
Sadly, sorrowfully weeping,
 Fattens every spider’s mirth;
And to note a fly’s heart quaking,
And with anguish ever aching
Till you see it slowly breaking
 Is the sweetest thing on earth.

I experienced a pleasure,
Such a highly-flavored pleasure,
Such intoxicating pleasure,
 That I drank of it like wine;
And my mortal soul engages
That no spider on the pages
Of the history of ages
 Felt a rapture more divine.

I careened around and capered —
Madly, mystically capered —
For three days and nights I capered
 Round my web in wild delight;
Till with fierce ambition burning,
And an inward thirst and yearning
I hastened my returning
 With a fiendish appetite.

And I found my victims dying,
“Ha!” they whispered, “we are dying!”
Faintly whispered, “we are dying,
 And our earthly course is run.”
And the scene was so impressing
That I breathed a special blessing,
As I killed them with caressing
 And devoured them one by one.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poems Since 1800*, Volume II (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet’s Press, 2016).

STEPHEN RONAN (d. 2007)

Stephen Ronan was born in Fall River, MA, where Lizzie Borden may or may not have committed double murder against her father and stepmother. Treated in news accounts of her trial, in fiction, opera, and ballet, the Lizzie Borden story haunts its landscape. Ronan published his "Our Lady of Fall River" as a chapbook in 1983, and The Poet's Press reprinted it in Poets Fortnightly and gave it a place of honor on our website. In latter years, the poet lived in Berkeley. A specialist in Beat literature, he was an editor, collector and book dealer with that special focus. He died sometime around 2007, which we learned of only by reading about the dispersal of his library and papers.

Our Lady of Fall River

*Lizzie Borden took an axe,
Gave her mother forty whacks,
When she saw what she had done,
Gave her father forty-one.*

—Turn-of-the-century children's song

I. Invocation

My mother pointed out
Your cadmium house one night
As we walked home from mass.
A backyard then,
A trellis of bloodclots.
You were a dark silhouette
Behind a pale curtain of eyelids.
The jump-rope song reaches further back.

Photos and paintings of you
In the window of Adams' bookstore
Through the amber plastic
Hung so they wouldn't fade.
Today in the gutted storefront
Your images persist.

Past the funereal high school,
The Historical Society
With its granite monoliths,
A church of materialism,
Excommunicated by relics
Of your supernal life.
Then your final house,
Sudden wind from the sunset Bay
Sweeps a lost white glove
From the gleaming granite step
Where "Maplecroft" is carved.

In the sun's dying rays
An optical illusion of elder runes.

I prowl behind the carriage house
'To look within your veiled rear porch.

II. Evensong

Children topple marble obelisks
Over the graves of mill owners.
Scaling the wall of Oak Grove cemetery
I am dizzy in a wave of night vision
of the Negro pallbearers
hoisting your black-draped box over it.
They bury you in a place other
than where your headstone marked
to foil the carnival barkers
who sought to cube your bones for dice
or charge admission to view your mummy.

Dusk escapes from ajar crypts
Bleeding into trees and monuments
Against the mercury sky.
Flaxen bats emerge from wrought-iron gates
Of mausoleums, openings
Of vast caverns where the dead reside
Where the Quequechan flows.
And you follow with your entourage
Of gossamer serpents, two flaming wolves,
silk flying foxes, other nameless ones.

Fire-flies coalesce
'To form a canopy over your graceful step
Through the deadly nightshade,
Through bouquets of daggers.
Like Houdini unable to remain chained,
You lead toward a maleficent city risen anew.

I follow at a distance.
Passing your father's grave,
His skeleton of glowing coral
As if through six feet of sea,
Wears your untarnished ring.

Red smoke-stacks of the mills
Emerge from the swollen Bay.
The night doubled by coal-smoke.
We are periodically illumined by streetlamps
'b the gaze of smokey faces in widow's lookouts
Along High Street to Maplecroft.
As you enter to encant your dark evangel
I return to the back porch,
Then steal within to join the convent
of lotus-eaters who attend you.
Actors, dancers, poets
In eroded stage finery,
And your tragic androgyne, Nance,
Shouldering a falcon of animate onyx.

You suddenly dispel this atmosphere
As aromatic as sleep in a burning building
And once again we are in the streets.
Those the ignorant call hell-spawn
Appear and evanesce and we descend
From the hill to the actual inferno
Of granite mill buildings
Bearing your father's name.
Muffled cries of children at the looms
Escape from within as the night shudders.

Christmas wreaths tum black
In the downtown of phantoms.
You lead into the boarded-up
McWhirr's department store
Where you shoplift undetectably.
Tonight an atomizer
Of Black Widow spider balm.
The salesgirls were told to add
Missing goods to your father's account,
O perfect criminal!

Outside watery lights undulate.
You greet the Marshal
With a Massasoit war whoop
And stop to vilify a priest
Before St. Mary's church.
He brandishes his crucifix of dry ice
That vaporizes in his sweating hand.
You decorate his cathedral with contumely.

III. *Angelus*

We reach 92 Second Street under a brass moon
Pierced by a skeletal finger of cloud.
The ring with which you wed your father.
You climb the narrow front stairway
Past the whispering dress closet
to the guest room.
She stands between the bed and the mirror.
In an instant the hatchet throws sparks
That ignite the magnesium walls.
Petals of flame drift down
From wallpaper flowers to land
In a pool of petroleum issuing
From her shoulders over
A shattered ceramic doll's face.
The false hairpiece, a severed rope mooring.

On the dirt floor cellar a player piano
Annuls gravity in the giddy staircase,
Beyond the dark barn,
The druidic stone well,
A pear tree yields biblical fruit.
The past and future occur simultaneously,
You tum to your fate of absent heat.

In the hermetic sitting room
Your father exhales a rancid mutton smell.
The Taunton River rises up to Second Street.
Your drowned suitors, eyes eaten by fish,
Appear in the windows as if
in funhouse mirrors.
His sleep removes the air from the room.
Flies incinerate in its furnace.
His breathing is the sound
Of the satin coffin lining tearing
From his couch stuffed with hoarded currency.
His head scatters, a jigsaw puzzle,
Spilling tom-up newspapers
The vowel *A* on each shred
Soaked in his black blood of flies.

I observe from without
Through the missing wall of a doll's house
As you dance your staccato taboo,
And stand in a boat formed
By the moon's reflection
Rocking below it as a pendulum.
An immense whalebone corset
Drifts up the roof as the skylight
Of your secret attic room swings open,
And you levitate through it
To board this gondola to float North,

Deaf to the interrogation of stuffed seals
On gelatinous towers and steeples,
As this spectral sea drains uphill
To the subterranean caves of the bone-yard.

IV. *Matin*

At this dwarf's table of dawn
No seats for the pontiffs
Who seek to enlist your signature
For their stagnant guest books.

The recent cornball language
On your "passion"
Missed the desire that flowed
As ultraviolet light.

Desire for the sexual spectre
To blot out the hazy Fall River sun
That filled your father's
Woolen undertaker's jacket.

And give life to vampires
That encircle his woman's
Dreams of millinery,
To rent their cheap fabric.

In the kitchen by the black stone sink
A box of burning glass
With a handleless axe,
Photographs of splintered skulls,

Ajar with rusty flakes of his blood
A bedspread stained with his wife's,
A cardboard echo
Of your silver nitrate smile.

— From *Poets Fortnightly*, Volume 1 No 6.

Editor's endnote from *Poets Fortnightly*: Lizzie Borden, although present in the house when her father and stepmother were killed with an axe, was acquitted of the crime. Kleptomania was her other quirk, and she reputedly was once arrested for this offense at the Tilden-Thurber shop in downtown Providence. She remains one of New England's archetypal figures, the wild-eyed Bacchante beneath the prim spinster's bonnet.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

Christina Rossetti's 1862 poem "Goblin Market" catapulted her to instant fame and marked her as England's most prominent female poet, just one year after the death of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Although her star has faded, "Goblin Market" remains as a landmark of British literature, open to many interpretations by literary critics, and as a demonstration of voluptuous language. Although we ran the entire long poem in *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, space here permits only an excerpt, sufficient to demonstrate Rossetti's skill and power.

From "Goblin Market"

Morning and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry:
"Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries; —
All ripe together
In summer weather, —
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy."

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes:
Crouching close together

In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
"Lie close," Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head:
"We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what soil they fed
Their hungry thirsty roots?"
"Come buy," call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.
"Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men."
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook:
"Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes."
"No," said Lizzie, "No, no, no;
Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us."
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.
One had a cat's face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat's pace,
One crawled like a snail,

One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,
Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
“Come buy, come buy.”
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother;
Signaling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One heaved the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
“Come buy, come buy,” was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money:
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,

The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-faced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was
heard;
One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried “Pretty Goblin” still for “Pretty Polly;” —
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
“Good folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather.”
“You have much gold upon your head,”
They answered all together:
“Buy from us with a golden curl.”
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
She sucked until her lips were sore;
Then flung the emptied rinds away
But gathered up one kernel stone,
And knew not was it night or day
As she turned home alone.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since
1800*, Volume 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2015).

RICHARD P. L. ROWE (1828-1879)

Richard P. L. Rowe was born at Doncaster, England, 9th March, 1828. He emigrated to Australia when young and started his working life there as a journalist. Although he was only in Australia for a brief time, he did newspaper work there and his poems were already recognized. He returned to England in 1858, and published frequently in newspapers and magazines. This fine poem is based on a note by Tzetzes upon Lycophron, quoted in Keightley's *Mythology of Greece and Rome*. It was first published in *Peter 'Possum's Portfolio* (Sydney, 1858) and included in *An Anthology of Australian Verse* (1907), edited by Bertram Stevens.

Soul Ferry

High and dry upon the shingle lies the fisher's boat to-night;
From his roof-beam dankly drooping, raying phosphorescent light,
Spectral in its pale-blue splendor, hangs his heap of scaly nets,
And the fisher, lapt in slumber, surge and seine alike forgets.
Hark! there comes a sudden knocking, and the fisher starts from sleep,
As a hollow voice and ghostly bids him once more seek the deep;
Wearily across his shoulder flingeth he the ashen oar,
And upon the beach descending finds a skiff beside the shore.
'Tis not his, but he must enter — rocking on the waters dim,
Awful in their hidden presence, who are they that wait for him?
Who are they that sit so silent, as he pulleth from the land —
Nothing heard save rumbling rowlock, wave soft-breaking on the sand?
Chill adown the tossing channel blows the wailing, wand'ring breeze,
Lonely in the murky midnight, mutt'ring mournful memories, —
Summer lands where once it brooded, wrecks that widows' hearts have wrung —
Swift the dreary boat flies onwards, spray, like rain, around it flung.

On a pebbled strand it grateth, ghastly cliffs around it loom,
Thin and melancholy voices faintly murmur through the gloom;
Voices only, lipless voices, and the fisherman turns pale,
As the mother greets her children, sisters landing brothers hail.
Lightened of its unseen burden, cork-like rides the rocking bark,
Fast the fisherman flies homewards o'er the billows deep and dark;
That boat needs no mortal's mooring — sad at heart he seeks his bed,
For his life henceforth is clouded — he hath piloted the Dead!

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2021).

BRETT RUTHERFORD (b. 1947)

The Tree at Lovecraft's Grave

This solemn spreading beech
was once a perfect hemisphere
of waxy red-green foliage.
Now it is crippled and sere,
scarred by the pruning
of diseased limbs,
trunk bared, a twisted bole
in the form of a petrified heart.
Its gnarled roots rake earth
with a death-row desperation.
Within another hollowed bole,
(eye-socket for a Cyclops)
malignant mushrooms proliferate,
caps and stalks angled sunward.
The schoolboy gashes
where fans have carved initials
(their own and HPL's)
widen and blacken,
the once-proud limbs
tattooed with NECRONOMICON,
HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT '99,
even a whole sentence
about the primacy of fear,
runes ruinous to a living monument.

Still, the furry beech-nuts fall like hail
to the delight of squirrels.
Still, the hard brown kernels issue forth,
each a perfect blueprint
of a perfect tree —

or have the roots, tasting the calcium
of author's bones, the humus rot
of eye and brain and memory
mutated the germ and flower anew
so that these seeds transcend
to sentience?

Gather these nuts, then,
and harvest them.
First they must hibernate,
for the beech remembers glaciers.
Then they will germinate,
pale tentacles in search
of anchorage,
until the red-green engine
of stalk and leaf

is ready to catapult
into the sun-chase.

Will these trees move
of their own accord?
Will their root-claws crave blood
and the iron-rich earth
of a crumbling grave?
Will the branches sway
on windless nights?
Will fox-fires and will o' wisps
paint impossible colors
on bud-ends and blossoms?

Will beech nuts burst
to pale blue eyes
insomniac astronomers
with perfect vision,
counting the Pleiades,
numbering the galaxies?
And will they speak
the patient sonnets
of their greater lifespans,
the long-arc'd lines
their waving branches beat?

And somewhere within them,
does *he* smile there,
transmuted poet and dreamer
subsumed into the eons?

Are those *his* thoughts
that make them tremble
at every sunset,
his elder gods they fear
might swallow the sun
as it tosses in darkness?

Is he lord of their nightmares,
giving them Dread,
the obverse of the coin of Joy,
Fear, the companion of Wonder?

I regard the ailing tree,
the modest gravestone.
The tree will die. The rain
will wipe the letters clean.
Only the whispered words,

the lines the fingers trace
from one yellowed book
to another
endure —

I hold the burst nuts in one hand,
a book of Lovecraft's tales in the other.
I study the cloudless, blue, deceptive sky,
the lie that conceals an infinity
of screaming stars —

Oh, these roots have read him,
they have read him.

— From *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*,
Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press,
4th edition 2008.

What Is a Poet For?

Springs needed him. Stars arching up
from winter sleep awaited the names
with which he'd anchor them. What
is a poet for? Waves from the past
anticipated the nights he'd call them back.
Sometimes, on city street, he'd hear
a violin surrender itself to bow and arm
behind an open window-way. What
is a poet for? to make of anything
and everything a Heaven, all with words;
to beat down Hell, if that is what
the story indicates. This was entrusted him,
and a few others before and after.
But he seldom equaled it. Was he
not always led off by expectations,
made the fool by mere coincidence,
as though all this were signaling
there was someone he was supposed
to love? (He stalked immensities
on his pages, but lovers stalked *him*,
their shaggy sentiments going in and out,
and sometimes even staying
until the sparrows awoke him).

If even *one* were love, why did
those pages piled high not earn
and keep some fair companion? Why now
this incorporeal Angel accusing him?

To Loneliness

He thinks, but does not say:
Angel, leave me. You have
no words to lend me, no hand
with willing grasp to lead me
to table, bed, or precipice.
I am defined by solitude!

How common is loneliness,
sadness in singleness, unique
yet everywhere alike!
No census counts it,
yet its needs outweigh
all measure and taxation.

Everything with a name
is lonely. Call not a thing
a member of its class only,
assembly-line identical:
no, each and every thing
lives in a solitude entire,
a dim and fading aureole
of assured existence. The stars
with all that space between
are lonelier than we;
and surely the last
great condor is lonely
on his volcano peak.

The crying child fears
that no one will come,
molds in his heart
the carbuncle of singularity.
The well-loved wife,
each moment her back is turned
from her constant husband,
holds within her a loneliness

like a still-born egg;
the revered grandfather
surrounded by progeny,
looks off afar and sees it all
as no assuage for the void
inside his ever-stirring soul.
He wanted more; he settled
for this, and these, and
what was it all for?

The more the crowd, the more
the weight of solipsist woe
that none are real, that nothing *is*
except one's inner emptiness,
the Ego's echo chamber.

He does not fear this. His drear
self-haunted palace is all he knows.
All art is loneliness.
Why sex is at the center
of everything is that
it is the loneliest act:
completion's quest,
conquest's charade,
the pride of possession's
protectorate, the final ache
of disillusion. No poem
can be as lonely or sad
as a kiss.

— From *Fatal Birds of the Soul*,
poems adapted & expanded from Rilke,
(The Poet's Press, 2021)

Judge Hathorne's Grave, At Salem

At Salem,
the burying ground
is a garden of stones,
an orchard of oaks.
Acorns burst to grow,
tombstones erase
their shallow tattoos,
becoming anonymous —
Death's heads
and angel wings,
bad poems
consumed by moss,
the promise of Heaven
like Confederate money.

Still there is some
justice — an oak trunk
engulfs the stone
of a solemn Puritan,
roots clinging like
rabid dogs.

He doomed the innocent
as witches and wizards,
to infamy and hanging,
to a farmyard burial
in family shame.

Imagine this —
his grave invaded
by inexorable roots,
the frail box split,
his gradual awakening
as vampire tendrils
invade his ears,
his mouth, his nostrils,
the circling of taproot
to snap his neck,
his arms and legs
broken and useless.

Doomed to immortal
consciousness
(the Life Eternal!),
nerves and ganglia
a web of pain receptors.

An old woman
condemned him to this.
She spoke the words
on a Candlemas midnight,
took from the hanging tree
where her mother's mother
died innocent,
the patient acorn of revenge.

She wrote his name on it,
pushed it with thumb
into the loam of his grave,
traced runes in blood
upon his stone,
danced the wild dance
of his resurrection —

sang things that the wizened
old ladies of Salem never knew

as there were no witches
in Salem
then.

— From *May Eve: A Festival of Supernatural
Poetry* (Grim Reaper Books/
The Poet's Press, 1975).

An Expectation of Presences

“To die is far different from what anyone supposed ... and luckier.”—Walt Whitman

This gravesite, phantomless, does not appease my walk — not for myself alone have I come, but in an expectation of presences drawn forth like tides from that alluring moon, to sit and hear the chattering of ghosts for the dead must have many songs to sing: their dire complaints, their unrequited loves, their broken oaths, their bony fists clenched in the earth for some unsweet revenge; their pleas that some neglected deed be done to free them from a wormy pilgrimage; their wry requests to know what souls once famed to them, now call such pits a hearth. But here’s no tombly talk; none but a nightbird and a tapping branch reply to my arcane soliloquy.

My eyes, as keen for darkness as those of an owl, spy nothing; my ears, keen almost to the ultrasonic hear nothing but the bird-stir and the limestone lap of lake-bed.

Where are the ghosts?
These peaceful dead, this tranquil town sleep far too well reposed.

Doubts do not stalk these penny plots, no killers wring remorseful hands, not one protesting atheist is doomed to somnambulist stumbling.

Can it be that in their simple times (the whole of the 1800s buried here!) mere faith could be a perfect opiate, that life within a wall of hymns led to this silent, dreamless death?

Ah, so they die, who *believe* in Death, they never rise, who sell their souls into a cleric’s dull paradise; they never fly, who think their wings are promises, to be attached in worlds not one can wake to see.

O fraud of frauds, and no recourse:
no lawyer can sue an evangelist.

Yet in my heart of hearts I wish for ghosts. For here is the depth of all possible woe — to leave *nothing* behind, nothing to strain against stars from the haunted tips of trees; nothing to drift like summer heat and catch a gable’s underside; nothing to gust from cellar doors or brood with the trunks in the attic; nothing to serve as a core for leaves as they fly in autumn deviltry; no remnant left to walk the town, no shadow over the bed, no chill or mystery for the nervous ones — those living yet who think they see the dead — to be lost from the hands of conjurers, not even a gleam, a shard of phosphorescent ooze?

Oh, no, if the choice be God’s heaven or earth-bound ghost, I’ll keep my anchorage to moonlit nights, take deed to swamps and vacant lots, turn houses to renounced estates abandoned to fright’s hostelry; sunbathe on monuments, dance wild in summer thunderstorms.

Then, I shall wait for the night when a dreaming poet comes to my scarcely-legible tombstone, mad as myself, my laughing heir. What things I shall whisper into his modern, doubting, skeptical ear, as I reach out ... and take his hand.

— From *An Expectation of Presences*
(The Poet’s Press, 2012).

To the Arc of the Sublime

In nights beneath the stars,
sometimes alone — sometimes
with one I loved
(in futile or secret urgency) —

I have outwaited
the rise and fall of Scorpio,
arc of its tail
stinging the treetops.

I have traced the inconstant moon,
the indecisive Venus;
feel more assured

by the long, slow haul of Jupiter,
the patient tread of Pluto
(whom they pursue
in their frigid outer orbits

I cannot guess)

Such solitude,
millennia between
the fly-bys of comets,
perhaps is why
they need so many moons,
why rings of ice
encircle them like loyal cats.

It is lonely in space,
far out
where the sun is merely
a star among stars.

It is lonely in autumn.
I sit in midnight woods.
A trio of raccoons, foraging,
come up to me,
black mask eyes of the young ones
interrogating the first cold night,

the unaccustomed noisiness
of bone-rattle maple leaf
beneath their paws.

How can I tell them
these trees will soon be skeletons,
the pond as hard as glass,
the nut and berry harvest over?

These two are young —
they would not believe me.

Their mother rears up protectively,
smells me, scents out
the panic among the saplings,
the smell of rust and tannin.

We share a long stillness,
a moment when consciousness
is not a passive agency.
Our sight invades the countryside,
embracing everything —
sleepers in beds in a concrete tower-
earthworms entwining in humus rot —
goes up and out through the limpid sky,
streaming past moon —
— moon's lava'd seas —
out, out, to the arc of the sublime,
tracing the edge of great Antares,
leaping to other galaxies unafraid.

(Let space expand as though the worlds
still feared their neighbors!

Let miser stars implode,
their dwarf hearts shriveling
to cores of iron!)

We are the scourge of entropy.
We sing the one great note
through which new being
comes out of nothingness.

Does it have meaning,
this seed-shagged planet
alive with eyes?

Is earth the crucible,
sandbox of angry gods,
or is it the eye of all eyes,
ear of all ears,
the nerve through which the universe
acquires self-knowledge?

But these are weighty thoughts
for man and mammal!
We are but blood and minerals,
upright for an instant,
conscious for but a moment,
a grainfall of cosmic hourglass.

Yet I am not ephemeral:

I freeze time,
relive moments
chronicle the centuries
re-speak Shakespeare,
beat out the staves of Mozart,
read the same books
my forebears knew
make of old words
my wordy pyramid.

I am the one
snapping the pictures of solar systems,

sending myself
an outside-in self-portrait.
I send my name and signature
on bottles spinning past Uranus.
I am the one who asks, Is it worth it?
I who hear the X-ray wind reply, *It is!*
I am the one who would not stay in caves,
I was discontent in the treetops.
I wanted to be bird and whale and rocket.

Ever, o ever more mortal now —
— friends falling away
like withered leaves —
still I find joy in this subliminal shrine
of autumn.
My hand is full of fossil shells
picked up from the lake shore rubble,
scallop enduring with the same rock faith
(an implicit minimum vocabulary):
I live, and the increase of my consciousness
is the span of my life.

— From *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn*
(The Poet's Press, 2011).

The Dresser in Emily's Bedroom

Right there, feet from the bed she died in,
were the poems, sewn up
in tiny fascicle bundles,
unread, not to be read, not to be published,
monoprint chapbooks arranged and re-
arranged to suit intended readers
she was too reticent to address,
ever, except from behind a door, ajar.

They came from *there*, her writing table
(no bigger than a *ouija* board),
from planchette pen to folded leaf
stitched shut and mummy-wrapped,
living and smothering just feet from where
a gasp and pen-dab and a foot-tap
telegraphed them into being.

How many enwrapped, entombed inside
that oblong, moth-proof drawer?
how many survivors of admonition
a poet should never ... a lady does not?

Eighteen hundred tightly-wound mortars
she wryly called her "little hymns"
huddled like captives in a slave-hold,
sea-echoes lost in suffocated nautilus,
an unlit library with no borrowers —
how many silent nights did she browse there,
and turn the pages, and close them,
and push the drawer shut?

Emily Dickinson at Amherst,
I in your room as close to fainting
as ever in my adult existence,
at tear-burst, with a strangled cry I dare
not utter. A life, a life's work,
a soul's compression that one executor
could have tossed away for kindling,
or suppressed for jealousy or malice!
But we have you, Emily, we have you always,
your words in a fascicle of stitched stars.

— From *Crackers At Midnight*
(The Poet's Press, 2018).

Lyric

Come that downward plummet of the world
and the stone-gray sun's last sigh,
somewhere I will be waiting at the end;
be time or age or death the house of my
endurance, I am assured of biding you.
For in the waning orbit of your life, I am
that one and only who, loving you
more than yourself, will be left by you;
but with some gravitation
more divine than will I watch your ellipse
fade, and spend my scant affections
as the dying sun warms with his own
last fire the fleeting earth.

— From *The Pumpkined Heart*
(The Poet's Press, 1973).

BORIA SAX

Boria Sax is a poet, translator, and scholar, a world-renowned figure in the area of Animal Studies. He has a doctorate in German and Intellectual History from SUNY Buffalo. The Poet's Press has published two collections of his poems and stories, *I Am That Snowflake* (1988), and *The Raven and the Sun* (2010), and also his translations of East German poet Lutz Rathenow, *Contacts/Kontakte* (1986). Our Yogh & Thorn imprint has also published Sax's study, *Animals in the Third Reich* (2013) and his memoir, *Stealing Fire: Memoir of A Boyhood in the Shadow of Atomic Espionage* (2021).

The Physicist

Even in matter, in barren earth and stone,
 there is something straining
 to find a voice, to walk upright, to love.
He will come home at midnight to stare
 at a page full of numbers
 and envy their immortality.
Outside, the darkness heaves and sighs, to circle
 around his house and frighten him.
Like something in a microscope, they move —
 the plates and graphs, the arrows,
 broken lines and winding arcs.
Is there a rip in the fabric of reality?
 The sky could become unraveled,
 the stars fall in a sparkling heap.
Like the curtain going down after a carnival,
 to be raised as another one begins.
He wonders if those fragments of the night
 might rise from the white ocean of his page
Like the first men appearing on this earth.

Something About The Weather

Overcome by rage, a waiter
Shatters his tray against the grass.
It is something about the weather,
The way shadows fall.
Something is wrong. Even pigeons
Flutter nervously about.

It is a day for suicide,
For revelations, for secret joy.
An undertaker realizes
He has been talking to the dead,
And it occurs to a nurse —
She is no longer moved by pain.

A banker stares out the window
To dream of ecstasies known only to the poor.
There is the moan of the refrigerator,
The painful grinding of the clock.
The water moves as if it were alive.
The thunder rises slowly from the ground.

Poetry After Auschwitz

“After Auschwitz, to write poetry is barbaric.”

— Adorno

Must we be silent and bow our heads
Before the endless mystery of pain?

Here is a poem after Auschwitz:
It has snowed the entire night.

The last remaining stars are blown away.
We stare out of our window at the field.

Here is a poem after Auschwitz:
I am numb from walking in the snow.

Inside a pocket, I clench my fist
To remember that — indeed — I am alive.

Suit and Tie

Inside an alley with a knife,
Inside an office with a job,
They lead a single kind of life,
Each has a different way to rob.

I wonder if perhaps the tie
Once meant the rope around the throat,
A robber baron had to die,
He swam across the castle moat.

Perhaps a suit was once the cape
He wore at night amid the grey
And black of cities when he'd rape
A peasant's wife then run away.

The Job Interview

I walk into a stuffy room.
Already, they begin to scold.
Do I know how to push a broom?
Would I do everything I am told?

They stare. They say they'll call me soon,
Like kids who will take off their ties
And use a Sunday afternoon
To tear the wings off butterflies.

I leave and they go to the bank
Then home to sleep and dream they run
The factory that made the crank
That spins the earth around the sun.

The Lovers

Let me hear stories of great love and anger,
Of sorrow, magnificent as stars over Babylon
Or dinosaurs on a volcanic plain.
The earth continues turning in its sleep,
Blessed by the darkness and the light.
Men die in turmoil; other men are born.
Centuries of battle. Books written.
 Towns destroyed.
Terror and indifference in each face.

Freud and Marx have not changed much.
Nor has Auschwitz, nor the atom bomb.
Still an old story of lovers
Who would die rather than be untrue
Can move us more, far more
Than all the pages of analysis and dates
That any shelf of books will ever hold.

Grandmother, 1983

Four miles to the nearest shop or town,
A single mile to the nearest farm,
Grandmother owns a ragged plot of land
And no one knows exactly where it starts.
There was barbed wire there when I was small,
Behind it was a field of grazing cows.
The wire has disappeared. The field
 is overgrown.
A few trees are cut down, but yet the cottages
Have only lost some paint in all these years.
They needed a coat then — and need it still.

She was as old as anyone could be,
Or so we thought, but she is older now.
Her husband, son and daughter all are dead.
One grandchild has died. The rest have grown.
A neighbor painted her, a gnarled cane in hand,
The long white hair bound up upon her head,
The trees above her, taller every year.
She walked the road she's walked
 so many times.
When she too dies, then all of this will change,
Weeds overwhelm the paths her feet have worn.

A Russian village was her only home.
She never felt at ease upon these shores
With autos, bank accounts, computers, bills,
Policemen shouting, planes and neon signs
(No more am I, but somehow I get by).
She always shouted on the telephone.
It may be she still plots against the Tsar,
But he is dead. And she will die as well.
The rooms that she has lived in fifty years
Will fall into decay or else be sold.

— From *I Am That Snowflake*
(The Poet's Press, 1988).

One Being

An owl seizes a mouse,
And, in an instant,
They become one being,
Knowing both triumph and terror.
The mouse, for the first time,
Glimpses the roofs of houses
And the tops of pines
As he dies, while the owl
Forgets him, passing
Across the moon.

— From *The Raven and the Sun*
(The Poet's Press, 2010).

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER (1759-1805)

A Group in Tartarus

Hark, as hoarse murmurs of a gathering sea —
As brooks that howling through black gorges go,
Groans sullen, hollow, and eternally.
One wailing Woe!
Sharp Anguish shrinks the shadows there;
And blasphemous Despair
Yells its wild curse from jaws that never close;
And ghastly eyes for ever
Stare on the bridge of the relentless River,
Or watch the mournful wave as year on year it flows.
And ask each other, with parch'd lips that writhe
Into a whisper, "When the end shall be?"
The end! — Lo, broken in Time's hand the scythe,
And round and round revolves Eternity.

— Translated by Edward Bulwer Lytton.
From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Supplement 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2021).

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832)



Sir Walter Scott was an avid researcher of Scottish history and prepared editions of Scottish ballads and their background stories. His own epic narrative poems set in Scotland were wildly popular, and, despite their rather predictable rhyme schemes, were still innovative metrically and permitted a looser manner of story-telling. Scott acknowledged his limitations, ceded the laurels for poetry to Lord Byron, and went on to write his long series of best-selling “Waverly” novels. His most Gothic creation, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, inspired Donizetti’s opera *Lucia di Lammermoor*, one of the pinnacles of Romantic opera. The fame of his novels far outstripped that of his poems, and since most were of epic length, there are very few short poems by Scott to be found in anthologies. For our *Tales of Terror* series, we extracted four poems that Scott embedded in his novel, *The Monastery*. The first two parts are reproduced here.

To the White Lady

I. INVOCATION

*Thrice to the holly brake,
Thrice to the well —
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!*

*Noon gleams on the lake,
Noon glows on the fell, —
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel.*

II. THE WHITE LADY SPEAKS

Youth of the dark eye, wherefore didst thou call me?
Wherefore art thou here, if terrors can appal thee?
He that seeks to deal with us must know no fear nor failing;
To coward and churl our speech is dark, our gifts are unavailing.
The breeze that brought me hither now must sweep Egyptian ground,
The fleecy cloud on which I ride for Araby is bound;
The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the breeze sighs for my stay,
For I must sail a thousand miles before the close of day.

What I am I must not show —
What I am thou couldst not know —
Something betwixt heaven and hell —
Something that neither stood nor fell —
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good — may work thee ill.
Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
Haunting lonely moor and meadow.
Dancing by the haunted spring.

Riding on the whirlwind's wing;
Aping in fantastic fashion
Every change of human passion,
While o'er our frozen minds they pass
Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.

Wayward, fickle, is our mood,
Hovering betwixt bad and good,
Happier than brief-dated man,
Living twenty times his span;
Far less happy, for we have
Help nor hope beyond the grave!
Man awakes to joy or sorrow;
Ours the sleep that knows no morrow.
This is all that I can show —
This is all that thou may'st know.

Ay! and I taught thee the word and the spell,
To waken me here by the Fairies' Well:
But thou hast loved the heron and hawk,
More than to seek my haunted walk;
And thou hast loved the lance and the sword,
More than good text and holy word;
And thou hast loved the deer to track,
More than the lines and the letters black;
And thou art a ranger of moss and of wood.
And scornest the nurture of gentle blood.

Thy craven fear my truth accused;
Thine idlehood my trust abused;
He that draws to harbour late,
Must sleep without, or burst the gate.
There is a star for thee which burn'd,
Its influence wanes, its course is turn'd;
Valour and constancy alone
Can bring thee back the chance that 's flown.

Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race.
To whom God has granted grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

Many a fathom dark and deep
I have laid the book to sleep;
Ethereal fires around it glowing —
Ethereal music ever flowing —
The sacred pledge of Heav'n
All things revere.

Each in his sphere,
Save man for whom 'twas giv'n:
Lend thy hand, and thou shalt spy
Things ne'er seen by mortal eye.

Fear'st thou to go with me?
Still it is free to thee
 A peasant to dwell;
Thou may'st drive the dull steer,
And chase the king's deer,
But never more come near
 This haunted well.

Here lies the volume thou boldly hast sought;
Touch it, and take it, — 'twill dearly be bought.

 Rash thy deed,
 Mortal weed
To immortal flames applying;
 Rasher trust
 Has thing of dust.
On his own weak worth relying:
Strip thee of such fences vain,
Strip, and prove thy luck again.

Mortal warp and mortal woof
Cannot brook this charmed roof;
All that mortal art hath wrought
In our cell returns to nought.
The molten gold returns to clay.
The polish'd diamond melts away;
All is altered, all is flown.
Nought stands fast but truth alone.

Not for that thy quest give o'er:
Courage ! prove thy chance once more.

Alas! alas!
Not ours the grace
These holy characters to trace:
 Idle forms of painted air.
 Not to us is given to share
The boon bestow'd on Adam's race.
With patience bide,
Heaven will provide
The fitting time, the fitting guide.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2015).

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT (1812-1890)

The Norns Watering Yggdrasil

For a picture

Within the unchanging twilight
Of the high land of the gods,
Between the murmuring fountain,
And the Ash-tree, tree of trees,
The Norns, terrible maidens,
For evermore come and go.

Yggdrasill the populous Ash-tree,
Whose leaves embroider heaven,
Fills all the grey air with music —
To gods and to men sweet sounds,
But speech to the fine-eared maidens
Who evermore come and go.

That way to their doomstead thrones¹
The Aesir² ride each day,
And every one bends to the saddle
As they pass beneath the shade;
Even Odin, the strong All-father,
Bends to the beautiful maidens
Who cease not to come and go.

The tempest crosses the high boughs,
The great snakes heave below,
The wolf, the boar, and antlered harts

¹ *Doomstead thrones*. The Norse gods know that their world will be destroyed when Ragnarok comes to pass. They can only delay the time, but not prevent it.

² *Aesir*. Collective name for Odin and the Norse gods, as distinguished the rival Vanir, whom they had vanquished, similar to the relationship between Olympians and Titans.

Delve at the life-giving roots,
But all of them fear the wise maidens,
The wise-hearted water-bearers
Who evermore come and go.

And men far away in the night-hours
To the north-wind listening, hear,
They hear the howl of the were-wolf,
And know he hath felt the sting
Of the eyes of the potent maidens
Who sleeplessly come and go.

They hear on the wings of the north wind
A sound as of three that sing,
And the skald,³ in the blae mist wandering
High on the midland fell,
Heard the very word of the o'ersong
Of the Norns who come and go.

But alas for the ears of mortals
Chance-hearing that fate-laden song!
The bones of the skald lie there still, —
For the speech of the leaves of the Tree
Is the song of the three Queen-maidens
Who evermore come and go.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2015).

³ *Skald*. Poet.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)

On the Medusa of Leonardo Da Vinci¹ In The Florentine Gallery

1.

It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
Upon the cloudy mountain-peak supine;
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;
Its horror and its beauty are divine.
Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie
Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
The agonies of anguish and of death.

2.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace
Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone,
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face
Are graven, till the characters be grown
Into itself, and thought no more can trace;
'Tis the melodious hue of beauty thrown
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

3.

And from its head as from one body grow,
As []² grass out of a watery rock,
Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow
And their long tangles in each other lock,
And with unending involutions show
Their mailed radiance, as it were to mock
The torture and the death within, and saw
The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

4.

And, from a stone beside, a poisonous eft
Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;
Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft
Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise
Out of the cave this hideous light had cleft,
And he comes hastening like a moth that hies
After a taper; and the midnight sky
Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

¹ Leonardo Da Vinci's *Medusa*, now lost, was a work of the artist's youth. Vasari claimed that the work so horrified Leonardo's father, that he sold it. The painting seen by Shelley, shown on the following page, is now attributed to an unknown Flemish artist, circa 1600 CE. (Uffizi Gallery).

² Shelley leaves a blank space for a word here.



5.
'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;
For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare
Kindled by that inextricable error,
Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air
Become a []³ and ever-shifting mirror
Of all the beauty and the terror there —
A woman's countenance, with serpent-locks,
Gazing in death on Heaven from those wet rocks.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume 1 (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2015).

³ Shelley leaves a blank space where a single-syllable word should be. I find the word “cold” acceptable here. Mrs. Shelley published this nearly-complete poem in Shelley's *Posthumous Poems* in 1824.

JOSÉ ASUNCION SILVA (1865-1896)

“Nocturne” was written in 1892 by Colombian poet José Asuncion Silva. He had lived in Europe and knew Mallarmé and other leading French poets. His work is a precursor of modernism in Latin American poetry, and, in this one in particular, he inhabits the world and esthetics of Poe’s poems. Suggestive of “Ulalume,” hypnotic with its repetition and its shadowy images, this production was also doubtless provoked by the death of his beloved sister in the same year. Three years later, all the poet’s unpublished works were lost in a shipwreck. A year after that, Silva committed suicide.

Nocturne III

On such a night — how shall I describe it? —
A night all full of murmurings, of the brush
of invisible wings, of perfumes indefinable,
a night within whose glooms of vague forest,
fireflies went on and off sepulchrally —
or was it a nuptial flickering that led us on? —
as meekly you accompanied me, silent,
slender, hushed, and pale,
 as though such thoughts,
such double presentiments of joy and doom
troubled the very depths of your soul, too.
Glow-worms and the night-ghosted asphodels
spelled out our distant path across the plain.
One sandaled foot before the other tread,
you walked with me, and the spherical moon,
bloated in heaven’s serge and indigo,
shed light, a beacon out of infinity.

Your shadow, so delicate and languid,
and my shadow, graven by white lunar light
upon the sands of the path before us,
were joined together
deep umbra as one, indefinite shades
of edged penumbra, joined as one,
two as one in a great, single shadow,
two as one in a great, single shadow,
two as one in a great, single shadow,

Gone is that night! Gone! But now another,
solitary, choked full of infinite
woes and the sharp agony of mourning,
on the same path as then, still and lonely
I came — why here again on such a night? —

parted from you by the passing of time,
by the door of your tomb, by arguments
unreconciled, the leaden density
which neither your voice nor mine
 pierced through.
Still and lonely — why here again at night?

And the hounds of the wood
 (or were they wolves?)
bayed at the moon (did they not care for it,
this moon of pale visage, bloodless?)
Were they not troubled, as I was,
by the frogs’ croak at the bottomless mere?

Cold came and pierced me to shuddering,
cold such as the chill that on your bed
stole color from your cheeks
 and neck and hands,
the chill in its snowy whiteness, the white
of the winding sheet, the bleached shroud.
It was the cold of mausoleum air,
it was the chill of the advancing tread
of Death, the unwanted frost of shut eyes.

And my shadow, graven by white lunar light,
went on the path alone,
went on the path alone,
not calling out your name (I have no right!),
went on the path to the wastes of solitude.

But then your shadow, so delicate and languid,
slender, hushed, and pale, as on that night
of your dying on the first moon of Spring,
as on that night all full of murmurings,
of the brush of wings, of perfumes indefinable,

came up close by and walked with me,
came up close by and walked with me,
came up close by and walked with me —
my shadow with its black umbra,
my shadow with its vaguely-edged penumbra
(yours the fluttering edge of penumbra only,
O shadow without a living source!)

two as one joined in a great, single shadow,
two as one joined in a great, single shadow.
Oh, shadows of the living
 and of the dead, joined
as one, two shadows running
each to the other in nights of woe and tears.

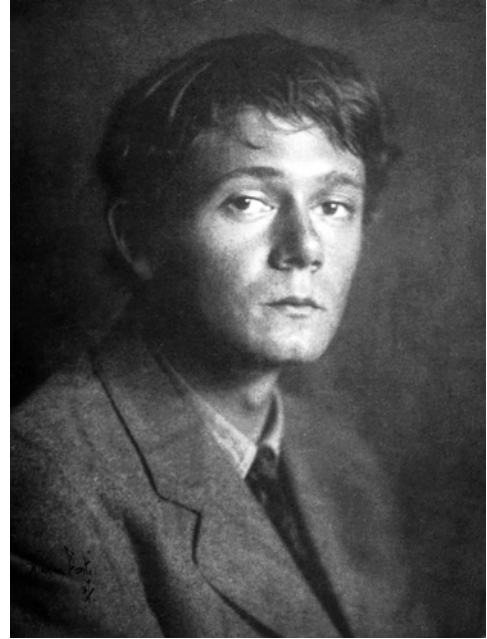
Translator's note: "Nocturne," written in free verse, defied the classical, formal mode of most poetry in Spanish. In this adaptation I have made the supernatural suggestiveness of the poem stronger — it is not possible to work on a piece such as this without being completely overshadowed by "Ulalume." I have also introduced the concept of the double-shadow: the

umbra is the dark, solid part of a shadow, and the penumbra is a shadow's vague, poorly-defined edges. Silva does not employ these terms, so this is my addition. I have also removed the gender of the dead loved one, because, well, that is what I do. Silva repeats lines almost with a hypnotic intent, so I have done the same in my version, also permitting some exact phrases from the opening of the poem to find their way in again near the end, like a musical reprise. It is simultaneously, a very Gothic poem, and a very modern poem. It is one of the most important Spanish-language poems I have engaged with.

— Adapted from the Spanish
 by Brett Rutherford.
From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem
 Since 1800*, Supplement 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2021).

CLARK ASHTON SMITH (1893-1961)

Like his friend H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith was a self-educated author and poet. A protégé of George Sterling, Smith briefly gained fame and honor as a West Coast Romantic. If you visit California libraries and talk to bibliophiles there, volumes of Smith's poems are regarded as treasures, especially *The Star Treader and Other Poems* (1912) and *Odes and Sonnets* (1918). Despite this promising beginning, Smith wrote far less poetry than prose after 1925, and despite his acclaim in weird fiction, for many years he had to do menial labor jobs to survive. After 1935 he spent much of his time doing sculpture and paintings.



Medusa

As drear and barren as the glooms of Death,
It lies, a windless land of livid dawns,
Nude to a desolate firmament, with hills
That seem the gibbous bones
 of the mummied Earth,
And plains whose hollow Face is rivelled deep
With gullies twisting like a serpent's track.
The leprous touch of Death is on its stones,
Where, for his token visible, the Head
Is throned upon a heap of monstrous rocks
Rough-mounded like some shattered pyramid
In a thwartly cloven hill-ravine, that seems
The unhealing scar of huge Tellurian wars.¹
Her lethal beauty crowned with twining snakes
That mingle with her hair, the Gorgon reigns.
Her eyes are clouds wherein
 black lightnings lurk,
Yet, even as men that seek the glance of Life,
The gazers come, where, coiled
 and serpent-swift,
Those levins² wait. As round an altar-base
Her victims lie, distorted, blackened forms
Of postured horror smitten into stone —
Time caught in meshes of Eternity —

¹ *Tellurian wars*. Refers to the chthonic battles of the Titans, monster predecessors of the Olympian gods.

² *Levins*. Lightning flashes.

Drawn back from dust and ruin of the years,
And given to all the future of the world.
The land is claimed of Death:
 the daylight comes
Half-strangled in the changing webs of cloud
That unseen spiders of bewildered winds
Weave and unweave across the lurid sun
In upper air. Below, no zephyr comes
To break with life the circling spell of doom.
Long vapor-serpents twist about the moon,
And in the windy murkness of the sky
The guttering stars are wild as candle-flames
That near the socket.
Thus the land shall be,
And Death shall wait, throned in Medusa's eyes,
Till in the irreameable webs of night
The sun is snared, and the corroded moon
A dust upon the gulfs, and all the stars
Rotted and fallen like rivets from the sky,
Letting the darkness down upon all things.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Volume II (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY (1895-1915)



The Poet's Press edition of the poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley attracted attention on both sides of the Atlantic during the World War I Centennial period. Our annotated edition illuminated the British, Biblical, and Classical allusions in this young poet's work, and letters, footnotes, and photographs fill out Sorley's brief life: school days at Marlboro in Wiltshire, studies in Germany, and then the enlistment in World War I that led to his death in the Battle of Loos in 1915. He was only 20. Robert Graves called him "one of three poets of importance killed during the war," despite the fact that he had written little and published even less. His haunting poems refuse to engage in jingoism and he resolutely refuses to hate Germany. The hints of what he might have become are embedded in his brave lines.

Sonnet¹

When you see millions of the mouthless dead
Across your dreams in pale battalions go,
Say not soft things as other men have said,²
That you'll remember. For you need not so.
Give them not praise. For, deaf, how should they know
It is not curses heaped on each gashed head?
Nor tears. Their blind eyes see not your tears flow.
Nor honour. It is easy to be dead.
Say only this, "They are dead." Then add thereto,
"Yet many a better one has died before."
Then, scanning all the o'ercrowded mass, should you
Perceive one face that you loved heretofore,
It is a spook. None wears the face you knew.
Great death has made all his for evermore.

— From *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*
Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press (2010, 2017).

¹ This sonnet was found in the author's kit sent home from France after his death.

² *As other men have said...* The "soft things" said may be a Lucretian rebuttal to Rupert Brooke's famous sonnet "The Soldier," which evokes flowers and English air, and the dead adding a bit of English dust to a foreign field. Sorley's poem is the antithesis of Brooke's sentimentality.

ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774-1843)

You would think that a British Poet Laureate would not need attention from a small American press. Like his friend Sir Walter Scott, Southey devoted a great deal of his career to writing epic poems, almost none of which are read today. Yet we discovered some delightful poems and ballads, mostly from Southey's early years when his works were scooped up by Matthew Gregory Lewis for his *Tales of Wonder* (1805). Like many of his contemporary Romantic poets, he was fascinated by Continental tales and ballads of the supernatural. He translated *The Chronicle of the Cid* from Spanish, as well as Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Like Coleridge and Wordsworth he was mocked for having started his career as a radical supporting the French Revolution, only to turn to more conservative politics in later life, enjoying three decades as Poet Laureate. He appears to have been somewhat insane during his last five years.



Bishop Bruno

Bruno, the Bishop of Herbipolitanum, sailing in the river of Danubius with Henry III, then emperor, being not far from a place which the Germanes call Ben Strudel, or the devouring gulfe, which is neere unto Grinon, a castle in Austria, a spirit was heard clamouring aloud, 'Ho, ho, Bishop Bruno! whither art thou travelling? But, dispose of thyselfe how thou pleaseth, thou shalt be my prey and spoil.' At the hearing of these words, they were all stupefied; and the bishop, with the rest, crost and blessed themselves. The issue was, that within a short time after, the bishop feasting with the emperor in a castle belonging to the Countess of Esburch, a rafter fell from the roof of the chamber wherein they sate, and strooke him dead at the table. — Heywood's *Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels*.¹

Bishop Bruno² awoke in the dead midnight,
And he heard his heart beat loud with affright;
He dreamt he had rung the palace bell,
And the sound it gave was his passing knell.

Bishop Bruno smiled at his fears so vain,
He turn'd to sleep, and he dreamt again;
He rung at the palace gate once more,
And Death was the porter that open'd the door.

He started up at the fearful dream,
And he heard at his window the screech-owl scream;
Bishop Bruno slept no more that night,
O glad was he when he saw the day-light.

¹ This prefatory note was always affixed to the poem in Southey's own editions. Lewis omitted it. Thomas Heywood (c. 1570-1641) wrote *Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels*, in 1635.

² Bishop Bruno was the son of Henry II, Duke of Bavaria and brother of Henry II of Bavaria (Holy Roman Emperor and later, Saint Henry). Bruno was Bishop of Augsburg, Germany, circa 1006 until his death in 1029.

Now forth he goes in proud array,
For he with the Emperor dines to-day;
There was not a baron in Germany,
That went with a nobler train than he.

Before and behind his soldiers ride,
The people throng'd to see the pride;
They bow'd the head, and the knee they bent,
But nobody bless'd him as he went.

He went so stately and so proud,
When he heard a voice that cried aloud —
— “Ho! ho! Bishop Bruno! you travel with glee,
But know, Bishop Bruno, you travel to me.” —

Behind, and before, and on either side,
He look'd, but nobody he espied;
And the Bishop he grew cold with fear,
For he heard the words distinct and clear.

And when he rung at the palace bell,
He almost expected to hear his knell;
And when the porter turn'd the key,
He almost expected Death to see.

But soon the Bishop recover'd his glee,
For the Emperor welcom'd him royally;
And now the tables were spread, and there
Were choicest wines, and dainty fare.

And now the Bishop had bless'd the meat,
When, a voice was heard, as he sat in his seat;
— “With the Emperor now you are
dining in glee,
But know, Bishop Bruno, you sup with me.” —

The Bishop then grew pale with affright,
And instantly lost his appetite;
And all the wine and dainty cheer
Could not comfort his heart so sick with fear.

But by little and little recover'd he,
For the wine went flowing merrily,
And he forgot his former dread,
And his cheeks again grew rosy red.

When he sat down to the royal fare,
Bishop Bruno was the saddest man there;
But when the maskers entered the hall,
He was the merriest man of all.

Then from amid the maskers' crowd
There went a voice hollow and loud;
“You have pass'd the day, Bishop Bruno,
with glee,
But you must pass the night with me!”

His cheek grows pale, and his eye-balls glare,
And stiff round his tonsure rises his hair:
With that there came one
from the maskers' band,
And he took the Bishop by the hand.

The bony hand suspended his breath,
His marrow grew cold at the touch of Death;
On saints in vain he attempted to call —
Bishop Bruno fell dead in the palace hall.

Cornelius Agrippa's Bloody Book

Cornelius Agrippa¹ went out one day,
His study he lock'd ere he went away;
And he gave the key of the door to his wife,
And charged her to keep it lock'd on her life.

— “And if any one ask my study to see,
I charge you trust them not with the key;
Whoever may beg, and intreat, and implore,
For your life let me only enter that door.”

There lived a young man in the house,
who in vain
Access to that study had strove to obtain,
And he begg'd and pray'd the books to see,
’Till the foolish woman gave him the key.

On the study table a book there lay,
Which Agrippa himself had been reading
that day;
The letters were written with blood within,
And the leaves were made of dead men's skin.

¹ Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) was an alchemist, occultist and philosopher. His legendary *De occulta philosophia libri tres* (1531-1533) remains a landmark of medieval thinking about the supernatural. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Agrippa's book is young Victor Frankenstein's adolescent passion until he discovers modern science with its allure of delivering one of the broken promises of alchemy: to create the *homunculus*, an artificial person. The speechless horror with which the student greets the Devil in this poem parallels young Victor Frankenstein's reaction when first confronted with his own animated monster.

And these horrible leaves of magic between
Were the ugliest pictures that ever were seen;
The likeness of things so foul to behold,
That what they were is not fit to be told.

The young man he began to read
He knew not what, but he would proceed;
When there was heard a sound at the door,
Which, as he read on, grew more and more.

And more and more the knocking grew,
The young man knew not what to do;
But trembling in fear he sat within,
'Till the door was broke, and the Devil came in.

Two hideous horns on his head he had got,
Like iron heated nine times red-hot;
The breath of his nostrils was brimstone blue,
And his tail like a fiery serpent grew.

— “What would'st thou with me?”
the wicked one cried,
But not a word the youth replied;
Every hair on his head was standing upright,
And his limbs, like a palsy, shook with affright.

— “What would'st thou with me?”
cried the author of ill,
But the wretched young man was silent still;
Not a word had his lips the power to say,
And his marrow seem'd
to be melting away.

— “What would'st thou with me?”
the third time, he cries,
And a flash of lightning came from his eyes;
And he lifted his griffin-claw in the air,
And the young man had not strength
for a prayer.

His eyes with a furious joy were possess'd,
As he tore the young man's heart
from his breast;
He grinn'd a horrible grin at his prey,
And with claps of thunder vanish'd away.
Henceforth let all young men take heed
How in a Conjuror's books they read.

— From *Tales of Wonder*, Volume I
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2010).

VINCENT SPINA

Vincent Spina was born in Brooklyn, NY. He received his Ph.D. from New York University in Latin American and Brazilian Literature, and is a Professor Emeritus of Modern Languages and Cultures. His poems have appeared in various magazines over the years, and his first book of poetry, *Outer Borough*, was published in 2008. He is also the author of *El Modo Epico en José María Arguedas*, a study of the Peruvian author's novels and their basis in the cosmology of the Andean people of Peru. His articles on Latin American writers have also appeared in magazines and anthologies.

East End

Assortment of periwinkles, slipper
and corrugated scallop shells in magentas,
the varied lives of pinks and creams,
scattered among pebbles bled
from the sides of maternal mountains ...
pincers of a small spider crab
washed into close proximity
by the last full-moon tide as if
the body that once joined them were
still there. One more
palm at the end of mind, song
without human meaning. Yet the question
of observer and observed winds through
the morning like an unrequited sea-worm
through ocean bottom ... how one may
alter the other: principle of uncertainty,
a change of place to potential.
I, for one, am touched: how the shore
is an endless graveyard of mollusk
and crustacean shells, and ground
of endless restoration.
One mile east from where I stand
Long Island ends its edgy New York
dialogue with self on a beach
of foam and detritus,
perhaps to be picked up once more
on any day like today, brimming
with quick overtures and vast
and shoreless endings ... deeply,
mightily, though in a different language,
ancestral yet still ours:
a vocabulary of waves,
syntax of empty shells,
the luster of sea-washed pebbles.

Fossil Shark Tooth

Waves
and the countless breath of tides:
the cutting edge is gone. Serration
relaxes into a smooth, continuous surface
I rub to please the tip of my finger
as boys run their surf boards
into the surf, or, waist deep in the tepid,
gulf water, climb onto each other's shoulders
like wrestlers or lovers.
See.
Petrifaction changes the simple
innocence of the carnivore into something
not so simple: the white kill, into shades
of brown and ocher
that shine in the fading sun.
Much like the old need for defense
and the need to penetrate the defense of others
soften into
more lasting and complex longings,
disperse
into a memory someone might find
in the sand.
The impression those lovers,
who now pick up their blanket to leave,
have left in the sand.

County Fair

On the floor of a fossil sea
it is a sultry evening in late August.
The judges have met and made their decisions.
Red, blue and gold ribbons hang above
the stalls of Guernsey cows with the most nutritious milk
and the stall of the finest sloe-eyed Jersey heifer,
and merino ram with softest fleece. A first place
jungle Banty crows in dazzlement of gas lights, town
and country folk, come to admire him, as well as each other.
A herd of lumbering Leedsichthys float in, hungry
for the plums of pink plankton radiating
in swirls above the midway grills where sweaty hot dogs
roast alongside sizzling burgers and sausages
smothered in onions and peppers. Nearby, the aroma
of funnel cakes. The ubiquitous presence of pizza.
Always pizza.
A lone trilobite scuttles along the perimeters, seeking
comfort among the horseshoe crabs, who,
early in the season, spawned along this Appalachian ridge,
and now seek only nourishment and rest.
She is the last of her kind.
But what force binds words to word to express
the electromagnetic fields of young girls who cluster
in threes and fours, revealing/concealing the newly found
secrets of hips and breasts, whose eyes meet and avoid
the gaze of young boys clustered in threes and fours
lighting their cigarettes with the fallen embers
of a distant volcano? Words fall apart. Syllables
float away like fireflies or tiny stars: tension wrapped
in calm ... the moment captured in amber.
A white county transport van parks nearby
a medium-sized gazebo, a cargo
of the elderly descends from the sliding door
like drops of colored water,
wanting and not wanting to stay
or be assumed into a vast and unknown sea.
They each take a seat under the gazebo as
volunteer wives of the local Knights of Columbus
serve them the regional specialty of chicken
and dumplings. "We can't recall,"
they whisper, "who was the banker
among us or an ammonite,
who fought in a civil war, or
was a refugee hidden in a ship's galley,
or fossil displayed in a museum
or on a shelf in a jewelry store."
Tomorrow will be the demolition derby,
tonight grey doo-woppers with silver
comb-overs wonder, "Who Wrote the Book
of Love?"

A leopard tamer in leopard leotards
prepares her leopard act ... hardest of the big
cats to train. She spiels to an audience —
young and old — as wild leopards
filament gills swim in every ocean dingle
and coral shelf, dreaming life and fear into
relentless leather-backed archelons and
emerald and ruby protostegas, their distant cousins.

For now
the public is pleased
— hunger, suspended, the lure of future
and the pull of past are suspended. We have become
a people, neither hollow nor full ...
our heads, only heads, as we watch a school
of incoming plesiosaurs, enormous necks
and minute heads, breaching the surface
in search of horizon we may live in more
than just in a dream of ourselves — time
between the last act and the next.
“A hundred times,” the silver voices sing,
“they’ve told me you were leaving.” A hundred times
we sit before this simple meal. In a next time around
perhaps there will be cities. Taxies like
yellow blood cells will bring nourishment and oxygen
to ever more labyrinthine interiors, but here
on the floor of a shallow vanished sea, the cupboard
and closets are bare, save the many things
we have no use for anymore. Vast creatures
float by nudging us like kittens
wishing to be petted. They pet us in return.
Sometimes we weep and call out
like an echo calling out and weeping love
and compassion back to us,
but mostly we forget.

— From *Dialogue* (The Poet’s Press, 2019).

JOHN COLLINGS SQUIRE (1884-1958)

John Collings Squire was an influential editor, a fine lyric poet, and a translator of the poetry of Baudelaire. As editor of *The London Mercury*, he published many of the poets now known as “The Georgians,” among them some of the last holdouts for more traditional verse. In his 1931 essay collection, *If It Had Happened Otherwise*, he invented the genre of Alternative History.

Meditation in Lamplight

What deaths men have died, not fighting but impotent.
Hung on the wire, between trenches, burning and freezing,
Groaning for water with armies of men so near;
The fall over cliff, the clutch at the rootless grass,
The beach rushing up, the whirling, the turning headfirst;
Stiff writhings of strychnine, taken in error or haste,
Angina pectoris, shudders of the heart;
Failure and crushing by flying weight to the ground,
Claws and jaws, the stink of a lion’s breath;
Swimming, a white belly, a crescent of teeth,
Agony, and a spurting shredded limb,
And crimson blood staining the green water;
And, horror of horrors, the slow grind on the rack,
The breaking bones, the stretching and bursting skin,
Perpetual fainting and waking to see above
The down-thrust mocking faces of cruel men,
With the power of mercy, who gloat upon shrieks for mercy.

O pity me, God! O God, make tolerable,
Make tolerable the end that awaits for me,
And give me courage to die when the time comes,
When the time comes as it must, however it comes,
That I shrink not nor scream, gripped by the jaws of the vice;
For the thought of it turns me sick, and my heart stands still,
Knocks and stands still. O fearful, fearful Shadow,
Kill me, let me die to escape the terror of thee!

A tap. Come in! Oh, no, I am perfectly well,
Only a little tired. Take this one, it’s softer.
How are things going with you? Will you have some coffee?
Well, of course it’s trying sometimes, but never mind,
It will probably be all right. Carry on, and keep cheerful.
I shouldn’t, if I were you, meet trouble half-way.
It is always best to take everything as it comes.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume 2 (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet’s Press, 2016).

LUDWIG TIECK (1773-1853)



Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) was a prolific writer in many genres, best-remembered today for his works in a fairy-tale mode such as *Little Red-Riding Hood* and *Puss in Boots*. His darker tales are wildly Romantic and his psychological astuteness anticipates Freud. Sudden cataclysms and events of great violence abound in his stories, interrupted by remarkable digressions and observations. Publishing wild tales of this sort as early as 1797 in the collection *Völksmärchen von Peter Leberecht*, Tieck mined the fantastic vein, soon to be joined by writers like Novalis, Brentano, Arnim, and the Brothers Grimm.

Courtship of the Hunchbacks From "Pietro of Abano"

XII

ANTONIO HAD NOT been mistaken. It was in fact the old woman he had caught sight of in the crowd. She was living in a little hut, behind some semi-ruined houses, not far from the Lateran. Persecuted, destitute, deserted and hated and dreaded by all the world, she was here, in an abode of wretchedness, reduced to the brink of despair. She seldom ventured to show herself abroad, and on this day too had only gone out from necessity, to bring her Crescentia, who had run away from her, back again.

As everybody shrank from her path, as it was hard work for her even to obtain here and there an alm, and as her former arts found few clients, she was therefore quite astonished that evening to hear a knock at her door, while cries and shouts were tossing without. She took her lamp, and, opening the door, saw a swarm of street-boys and of the lowest rabble, at the heels of a little crooked figure fantastically clad in red velvet and gold.

"Does not the worthy Pancrazia live here?" screamed the deformed dwarf over the crowd's jeering.

"Yes, to be sure!" said the old woman, as she admitted him and forcibly banged the door to, and tried to drive away the people on the outside by abuse. "Who are you, worthy Sir? What do you seek from an old forlorn lady?"

"Set yourself down," said the little stranger, "and kindle some more light, that we may spy and look at

one another. And since you call yourself poor, take these gold pieces, and we will sip a glass of wine together to our better acquaintance."

The old woman smirked, lighted some wax-candles which she kept locked up in a drawer, and said, "I have still a flask of good Florence, worshipful sir, that shall warm our insides." She opened a little cupboard and placed the red comforter upon the table, pouring out the first glass for her unknown guest.

"Why do you call me worshipful?" asked he.

"Don't the pieces of gold declare it?" answered she, "and your doublet, and the lace upon it, and the feather in your hat? Are you not a prince, not a magnate?"

"No!" howled the little one. "What, odds bodkins! cousin, don't you know me in the least? and yet in my younger days people wanted to flatter me by assuring me that we in some degree resembled each other, and faith! when I come to look thus closely at your figure, your physiognomy, your expression, your sweet smile, and those twinkling stars in your eyes there, and when I weigh all this with scrupulous impartiality, why, cousin Pancrazia of the house of Posaterrena in Florence, and little Beresynt of the family of Fuocoterrestro in Milan, are for such degrees of kin, as cousinhood, like each other enough."

"O Gemini!" shrieked the old woman in delight. "So you are the Beresynt of Milan about whom I heard so much talk in my childhood. Hey! Hey! so am I at this late hour in the day, in the depth of old age,

to become acquainted with such a lovely cousin face to face?”

“Indeed!” pronounced the dwarf, leaning into the old woman’s face without flinching. “Just nose to nose, for that great bastion thrown up there is certainly the biggest piece of bonework in our faces. For curiosity’s sake, dear cousin, let us make an experiment for once, whether we can manage to give each other a cousinly kiss No, purely impossible! the far outjutting promontories immediately begin rattling against each other, and forclose our lowly lips from everything like a soft meeting. We must force our noble Roman noses aside with our two fists. So! Don’t let it fly, my lady cousin! I might come by a box on the ears that would make my last teeth tumble out.”

With a hearty laugh the hag took his hands in hers and cried, “Hey! I have not been so merry this long time. But what did they want with you outside the door there, cousin?”

“What?” sighed the little one. “The usual: to look at me, to delight their eyes with me, nothing more. Is not man, my highly esteemed cousin gossip, a thoroughly silly animal? Here in Rome now, hundreds of thousands have been assembled whole months, for their Redeemer’s honor, as they give out, and to do penance for their sins and get rid of them. But the moment I peep out of the window (I only arrived here the day before yesterday) be it merely in my nightcap, and still more when I come forth at full length and in my Sunday suit into the marketplace, one can’t help swearing that the whole gang of them have started out of every hole and corner in Europe merely for my sake. They leer, they ogle me, and whisper, and ask questions, and laugh, and are in ecstasies. I might grow rich, methinks, were I to let myself be stared at for money while I stay here. If I chance to give them all this pleasure *gratis*, forthwith a pack of blockheads begin barking and hallooing at my tail. To see a long-tailed monkey, apes or seals, these dogs must put themselves to some expense, yet instead of enjoying my magnanimity quietly and like sensible people, they rave and revile me all round, and hunt for every expression of loathing they can root out of the animal creation, to display their gross ignorance.”

“Very true! very true!” the old woman commiserated. “It fares no better with me. Are the beasts such sheer fools, then? Only let a body have a regular, average, commonplace nose, eyes, and chin, and all goes on quietly. Who would have thought there was such virtue in not being noticed at all?”

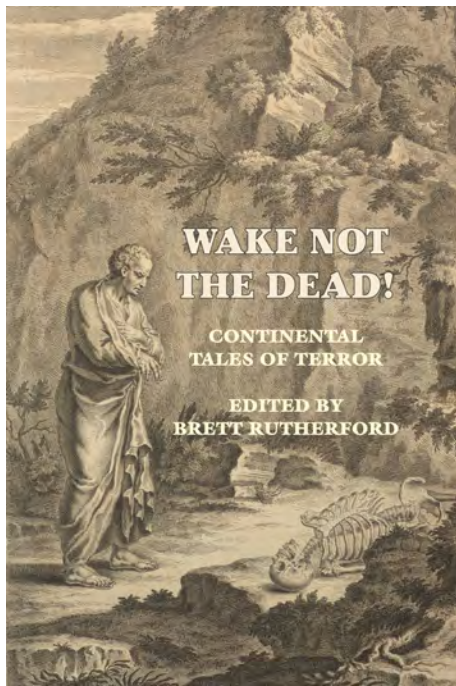
“Look at the fish,” continued Beresynth, “who are dunces in many things. What philosophical tolerance! and yet among them many a fellow is all snout, and confronts the learned physiognomists of the ocean with a countenance, grave, cold, calm in the consciousness

of its originality. Look to the oceans: the whole deep brims and swims with one-cannot-count-how-many eccentric faces, and gills, and teeth, and eyes a-start from their sockets, and every other kind of striking contour. Yet in the sea, every monster there floats his own way quietly and peaceably, without having his sleeve twitched or any other annoyance. Man alone is so absurd as to laugh and sneer at his fellow creatures.”

“And on what,” said the beldam, “after all does this mighty difference turn? I am sure I never yet saw a nose that was but a single yard long: an inch, at most two, hardly ever three, make the vast distinction between what they call *monsters*, and what they are pleased in their modesty to style *beauty*. And now to come to a hump. If it were not in one’s way sometimes in bed, as you know, coz, it is in itself far more agreeable to the eye than those dull flats by way of backs, where in many a lank lathy booby the tiresome straight line stretches up as far as one can see without a single twist, or curl, or flourish.”

“You are in the right, my dame cousin!” cried Beresynth, already intoxicated, to his drunken hostess. “What can Nature be about when she turns off the things they christen beauties from her pottery-wheel? Why, they are not sculpted, but molded, all alike, like the cheapest potteries! Why, they are hardly worth the trouble of setting to work at them. But such cabinet pieces as you and I! there the creative power, or the principle of nature, or the soul of the world, or the mundane animal, or whatever title one chooses to give the thing, can look at its product with a certain degree of complacency and satisfaction. For it has your curved lines: it starts off into noticeable angles; it is jagged like corals; it darts forward like crystals; it agglomerates like basalt; nay, there is no conceivable line that does not hop, skip, and jump about our bodies. We, coz, are the spoiled, the sublime children of the body’s formation. And this is why the common rabble of nature are so malicious and envious toward us. Their slim, wretched fashion is next door to the slimy eel — there is nothing edifying in such an edifice. From that piece of monotony to the prawn is already a good step; and how far above that is the seal! how do we surpass them both, as well as the sea-star, the crab, and the lobster, my trustiest cousin, in our excursive irregularities, which defy all the mathematicians in the world to find an expression for their law. But coz, pray where did you get those two gorgeous teeth? the incomparable couple cut a grand and gloomy figure there across the chasm ... of your unfathomable mouth, and form a capital bridge over the gulf that gapes between the dark cliffs of your gums.”

“O you rogue! O you flatterer!” laughed the old woman: “but your darling chin that comes forward so complacently, and is so ready to wait upon you and



In *Wake Not the Dead!*, Brett Rutherford has adapted, revised, and expanded eight tales and one novella by the Germans Ernst Raupach and Ludwig Tieck, and the French writing duo Erckmann-Chatrion. In this literary experiment, the earliest English translations of these stories are modernized and sometimes expanded and embellished. Although the additions are new, the period style of the writings is maintained. As a literary entertainment, think of these as re-told classics as they might have been adapted for 1970s Hammer Horror films.

spread itself out like a table — don't you think you could put a good-sized platter upon it comfortably, where your mouth might then quietly nibble away, while your hands were seeking work elsewhere? This I call an economical arrangement."

"We won't spoil ourselves by too much praise," said the dwarf. "We are already, it seems, vain enough of our advantages, and after all we did not give them to ourselves."

"You are right," said she. "But what profession are you of, cousin? where do you live?"

"Oddly enough," answered Beresynth: "sometimes here, sometimes there, like a vagabond. However, I now mean to settle quietly, and as I heard there was still a near kinswoman of mine living, I resolved to seek her out and beg her to come and live with me. This is what brought me here. In my youth I was an apothecary in Calabria. There they drove me away, because they fancied I *manufactured love-powders*. O dear, as if there was any need of 'em nowadays, where the rooftops undulate with lovers! Then once upon a time I was a tailor. The outcry was, *I thieved too much*. A pastry-cook: all accused me of *thinning the cat and dog population*. I wanted to put on a monk's cowl; but no monastery would let me in (monks like their young brethren pretty nowadays). Then came my doctoring days, and I was to be burnt; for they muttered about, what think you? I needs must whisper it — *Witchcraft*. I became a scholar, wrote essays, systems of philosophy, poems: those who could not read were sure I was *blaspheming God and Christianity*, and that was too bad. After many long years I betook myself to the man who was making such a bother in the world, Pietro Apone,

and became his familiar, next a hermit, and what not? The best is, that in every state of life I have made money and hoarded it up, so that I can now lay down my gray head free from want and care. And now, coz, for your history."

"Just like yours," answered she. "The innocent are always persecuted. I have had a few times to stand in the pillory. I have been banished out of half a dozen countries. Among other things they even wanted to burn me. They would have it *I conjured, I stole children, I bewitched people, I fabricated poisons*."

Their accused crimes now mutually stated like a playing cards laid on the table, the two eyed one another and smiled in the way silent conspirators recognize one another in a crowd, a kinship of psyches.

"And coz," said Beresynth in the openness of his heart, "there was some truth in all this, was not there? Innocent as you are, of course, of course! I at least must confess it as to myself, and perhaps it may lie in the family, that I have given in to more than one of the aforesaid practices. My amiable gossip, he who has once swallowed a tid-bit of dear witchcraft, can never keep his fingers from it afterward as long as he lives. The thing is just like dram-drinking: once get the taste for it, and tongue, and throat, and gums, and marry! even lungs and liver, will never let it go. The first time you throw a spell and it works, and ... *so it goes!*"

"You know human nature, I see, my dear cousin," said the hag, with a grin that tried to be a simper. "Such trifles as a little murder and witchcraft, poisoning and stealing, run in the blood even of the most innocent. Bawding was a thing in which I could never hit the mark, for men do not look of *me* and think those

thoughts. If I had one about me who — but no! And what shall one say when one has to endure thanklessness and woe from one’s own children? My daughter, though she has seen how I suffer hunger and trouble, and how I have stinted and starved my old mouth, merely to put her into fine clothes, the graceless wench would never let me coax her into earning but a single half-crown. Some time since she might have made a good match of it! there were Ildefonso and Andrea, and many other brave fellows besides, who supported our whole house, herself among the rest. But she set up the paltry pretense that the gentry were robbers and murderers, and that she could not let them into her heart. The gallants were such generous spirits, they meant to have the baggage actually tied to them in church, but silly youth has neither sense nor truth. Now they are lying in their graves, those worthy men, and have been turned out of life’s doors in a most scandalous way. But this does not move her a whit more than my sorrow and distress. I cannot make her consent to live with a rich young noble cavalier, the nephew of a cardinal, who could floor this whole room with gold. The silly jade has run away, and those who have her now, absolutely won’t give her back to me again. Such is the respect shown to a mother in these days.”

“Let her go, the worthless trumpery!” cried Beresynth. “We shall live happily together without her, I warrant. Our ways of thinking and feeling are so well paired. And with a little money, we shall make money more.”

“But why should she run away?” continued the old woman. “She’s like a faithless cat after a flogging. We might have parted as if we loved each other, and like two rational beings. Surely some occasion would have turned up before long of selling the green-sick minx advantageously to an old lover or a young one. And

this might have succeeded too — why should not it? — if she had not locked up a silly young fellow in her heart, whom she loves, as she tells me.”

“Oh, have done, gammer!” screamed Beresynth, reeling and already half asleep. “If you begin to talk about love, coz, I shall tumble into such a laughing convulsion that I shall not recover from it for this next three days. Love! that stupid word broke the neck of my famous master, Pietro. But for this tarantula-dance the great hawk-nose would still be sitting as professor at his lecturing desk, and tickling the young goslings with philosophy and wisdom as they perked up their yellow beaks to catch the crumbs he dropped into them. Marry! old beldam, this monkey-trick of love, this Platonic drunkenness of the soul, was the only thing wanting to us, to me as well as you, and then the miracle of our heroic existence would have been quite perfect. We could have made a fortune in spun-out Philosophy. Why, old Plato is as good as any conjuring trick, and with no equipment! Well, goodbye, old dame; tomorrow night about this time I’ll come to fetch you, and then we never part more.”

“Cousin,” said Pancrazia, “Goodbye, till we meet again. Since you came through my door, I have grown quite a different creature. We will make a royal house-keeping of it hereafter.”

“So we too have had our jubilee now!” stammered Beresynth, who was already standing in the street, and who reeled through the dark night to his lodging.

— From *Wake Not the Dead: Continental Tales of Terror*
(Grim Reaper Books/The Poet’s Press, 2021).

JOHN TODHUNTER (1839-1916)



Irish poet John Todhunter fell under the spell of Celtic mythology early on, but he was also a fine translator of the poetry of Heinrich Heine. His 1891 verse-play, *The Poison-Flower*, is an elegant adaptation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's tale, "Rappaccini's Daughter."

"The Banshee" is steeped in the tone and color of the Gothic, but uses mythic personae as means to an end. "Erin" is of course Ireland, and as she invokes the banshee, the spirit who warns of impending death, she wraps a lament around all the people of Ireland, including those who were forced to flee across "the ocean of Columbus." In the aftermath of years of famine and depopulation, it is hard not to personify this green Island as a sorrowful figure.

The Banshee

Green, in the wizard arms
Of the foam-bearded Atlantic,
An isle of old enchantment,
A melancholy isle
Enchanted and dreaming lies:
And there, by Shannon's flowing,
In the moonlight, specter-thin,
The specter Erin sits.

An aged desolation,
She sits by old Shannon's flowing,
A mother of many children,
Of children exiled and dead,
In her home, with bent head, homeless,
Clasping her knees she sits,
Keening, keening!

And at her keen the fairy-grass
Trembles on dun and barrow;
Around the foot of her ancient crosses
The grave-grass shakes and the nettle swings;
In haunted glens the meadow-sweet
Flings to the night wind
Her mystic mournful perfume;
The sad spearmint by holy wells
Breathes melancholy balm.

Sometimes she lifts her head,
With blue eyes tearless,
And gazes athwart the reek of night
Upon things long past,
Upon things to come.

And sometimes, when the moon
Brings tempest upon the deep,
And roused Atlantic thunders from his cavern in the west,
The wolfhound at her feet
Springs up with a mighty bay,
And chords of mystery sound from the wild harp at her side,
Strung from the heart of poets;
And she flies on the wings of tempest
Around her shuddering isle,
With grey hair streaming:
A meteor of evil omen,
The specter of hope forlorn,
Keening, keening!

She keens, and the strings of her wild harp shiver
On the gusts of night:
O'er the four waters she keens — over Moyle she keens,
O'er the Sea of Milith, and the Strait of Strongbow,
And the Ocean of Columbus.

And the Fianna hear, and the ghost of her cloudy
 hovering heroes;
And the swan, Fianoula, wails o'er the waters of Inisfail,
Chanting her song of destiny,
The rune of the weaving Fates.

And the nations hear in the void and quaking time of night,
Sad unto dawning, dirges,
Solemn dirges,
And snatches of bardic song;
Their souls quake in the void and quaking time of night,
And they dream of the weird of kings,
And tyrannies moulting, sick
In the dreadful wind of change.

Wail no more, lonely one, mother of exiles wail no more,
Banshee of the world — no more!
Thy sorrows are the world's, thou art no more alone;
Thy wrongs, the world's.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Supplement 1
(Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2021).

PIETER VANDERBECK



Writing in a lean and angular style like a cross between Nicolai Gogol and terse comic-book script, this Providence, Rhode Island-based artist and poet has created a body of writings rich in urban and cosmic menace and alienation, with frequent nods to H. P. Lovecraft. The real-life horror of totalitarian regimes has been another persistent subject in his poems as well. His tens of thousands of pen-drawings and conte crayon color artworks depict the cityscape of Providence, Rhode Island's Lincoln Woods, and the landscape of the Adirondacks. The Poet's Press also published his radio drama, *Coffee Break*, and featured his poetry in two of the *Tales of Terror* anthologies.

Two Figures

One trudges through the snow.
Flakes fall around him.
There are some pine trees.
He leaves a row of tracks behind.

He has something on his mind.
He has something of a mind.
He thinks of planets and death.
He also thinks of fate and music.

He looks behind.
His tracks dwindle into the haze.
But in the direction they suggest
there is a distant standing figure.

He has seen it before.
He trudges on,
welcoming the thickness increasing,
wishing a wind to cover his tracks.

The other has one purpose:
to follow him,
note his every movement,
assemble a file.

What he thinks,
what he says,
who he is,
to whom he speaks.

Always the same distance behind,
always there somewhere,
amassing a biography
that can be an indictment.

The great eye sees.
Nothing can escape it.
What it thinks
is known to none.

What Will Happen to Lenin?

*On the toppling of Soviet statues of Lenin, and
the possible closing of the Lenin Mausoleum.*

Comrades!:
What will happen to Lenin?!
Who wants him?!
Where will he go?!
The building is coming down!,
Or turning to a restaurant!
No more a reviewing stand!
His place is needed!

He's being at last kicked out!
No rent, no tent!
Shall we put him in the ground?
Shall he nourish flowers?
Who will give the plot?
The party has not dough to buy one!
Does charity raise a hand?
Does memory?
Nostalgia?

Do you not miss that knock on the door?
The electric air of sustained terror?
The structured line of ideology?
The warmth of the factory party cell?
The squint of the knowing secret agent?
The railroad to Siberia?
Shall we send him where your family is?
Kolyma? Verkhoyansk? Fahrenheit
minus ninety-two?
Freeze him in the permafrost?
Sell Lenin steaks and Lenin cubes?
Comrades!, He deserves an answer!
He gave you all an answer!
What answer will it be?

Comrades!, We must act!
The landlord, he is coming,
in his hand a writ,
the other hand a fist!
The landlord comes on many legs,
and wears out many shoes!
He has many writs to serve!
Upwards of five thousand!
We cannot merely burn him!
Can we?

Farewell to Earth

My heart sinks for the ground I stand on,
the honest, noble Planet.
Man has defaced It for as long as he could
move on land,
but now, he has done it,
all and forever.
The Air is of a different composition,
causing changes in weather patterns.
The water is befouled and undrinkable,
poisoning and killing its contents of life.
The land is covered with sewage and garbage,
and seeped with industrial toxic waste.
People live longer, but maintained by machines,
spending half their lives

with newly discovered diseases.
Major blocks of insect species, reptiles,
birds, animals, plants,
disappearing by the decade,
knocking out food chains.
Industries, governments, banks, failing
and falling apart.
More radiation every day, all over the Earth,
as transuranium elements are produced
and stored.
In time there will be no sweet wind to waft
through forests,
no shimmering crystal lakes
of delicate rising mists,
no cries and twitters of birds
in the morning and evening,
no beauty of Nature remaining in pockets,
only a barren waste-strewn desert,
a lifeless Planet whose only sound
is empty wind.

— From *Twilight of the Dictators*
(The Poet's Press, 1992, 2009).

The Cyclist

Beware that gaunt and lanky shape,
that silhouetted skeleton, its bones
at improbable angles,
bent and limping, crane-like and grotesque,
surmounted by half a head,
the cranium cut short
at a hemisphere,
wheeling around a lamp-lit corner
at any moment,
furiously pedaling its rickety bicycle,
as it mutters to itself while on some
unspeakable errand.

Not entirely of human parents,
at least degenerate ones,
perhaps neither human, perhaps only one,
its alien countenance, not unlike that
of a melted plastic toy,
bespeaks a retrogression far darker
and degraded
than that of its ancestors who first emerged
from the sea,
or began.

Beware! For he could be there any second,
unheralded in daylight or the shadows of night,
he without a name and yet with many!
He who cannot die, for he was but part-born,
stays apart from those of more wholesome
constitution.

Rarely is he seen in a tavern,
and each place only once,
before he is evicted and banned.
A scourge of dark rumor surrounds
his oily miasma.

Some say he was his own ancestor,
and the only one.
Others say he escaped from a cupola
at the top of the hill,
or from a basement, even a tunnel.
It is said that he is rich, that he has millions.
He goes to the bank once a month.
They have a special door for him.
They all know each other. It goes way back.

He is Providence, he can exclaim,
at least in bubbles through those
flopping slobbering lips
that hang like an egg white at the bottom
of a rounded yolk.
But do not talk to him.
He will drive you crazy with his voodoo curses,
and poison you with flying spittle.
Run and hide, before he sees you with an eye,
an ancient horrible one that burns
with the power of demons.

Listen for that sound!
At the creaky sound of a turning wheel, dash
into the nearest doorway,
for, though unacquainted, it belongs
to zoological kin.

There have been others.
There will be others.
Be thankful that you are not one,
for there are many, mostly tucked away.

Shadows

They lurk about the city,
unseen.
A shadow in an alley,
a human shape on a building-side.
Look upon it,
its eyes appear,
it looks back.
Speak to it,
it speaks back,
with your own cadence.

They do not like to be seen,
they traffic with the unconscious.
When addressed, they hiss.
They are the energy farmers.
They direct the mind.

Bloodless, they are transparent.
Bodiless, they are silent.
They congregate, confer,
walk off in pairs.
They are the second population.
They have no name.

Their apartment is your own.
Their lineage is older than the earth:
they began with time,
and will end with time.
Where there is sunlight,
they dart past quickly,
casting no shadow,
residing in your own.

Every man has a private companion,
someone to confess to,
in his darkest night,
racked with doubts.
For every man, a wife.
For every woman, a silent lover.
When you weep,
they drink the tears.
At the last extremity,
accompany you to suicide,
to oversee and supervise.
Then they take your substance,
to enter society,
and act.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since
1800*, Volume II (The Poet's Press, 2016).

Halloween

She goes down the dark street
barely illuminated
by widely interspersed lamp lights,
from shadow to shadow,
alone,
always alone,
smiling to herself,
keeping her secret world aloof
from that irrelevant one around her.

For how many years, decades,
that she has been here,
not once, ever, has she spoken to,
associated with,
another figure in human form.

More compressed than a block
of solid neutrons,
more solid than the Earth itself,
harder than steel, heavier than plutonium,
her shape glides by in silent menace.

Something of a face may be there,
but no one has seen it.
Any who looked went blind,
at least temporarily,
until she passed.

It is a she.
It wears a dress.
It has long hair,
wrapped tightly in a bun.

There must be eyes,
a mouth, a nose.
There must be!
It could not be blank.
Could it?
That is impossible!
There is no one like that!
Not listed in the encyclopedia.

What errand is she on?
Why is she here?
What brings her to Earth,
to the surface?
Why will she speak to no one?
Who?
What?
One can stay up nights wondering,
until she passes beneath the window.
Then, turn away, do not look,
and do not think of her.

— *From Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since
1800, Supplement 1* (Yogh & Thorn Books/
The Poet's Press, 2019).

JACK VEASEY (1955-2016)

Jack Veasey was a Philadelphia native who lived in Hummelstown in Central Pennsylvania for over two decades, where he was active in the Harrisburg regional arts scene. The Poet's Press published his first poetry chapbook, *Handful of Hair*, in 1975, and then published his last three books, *Shapely: Selected Formal Poets* (2017), *The Dance That Begins and Begins: Selected Poems 1973-2013* (2015), and the posthumous *Sonneria: Collected Sonnets and Other Poems* (2018). His poems also appeared in many periodicals and a number of anthologies, including *Common Wealth: Contemporary Poets On Pennsylvania* (Penn State University Press), *Sweet Jesus: Poems About The Ultimate Icon* (Anthology Press, Los Angeles), and *A Loving Testimony: Remembering Loved Ones Lost to AIDS* (The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA). His plays were produced by Theater Center Philadelphia and Theater of the Seventh Sister (Lancaster, PA). He hosted literary radio programs for WITF FM in Harrisburg and WXPB FM in Philadelphia. He spent the 1970s and 1980s working as a journalist for publications including *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, and *The Philadelphia City Paper*, and was an editor with *The South Street Star*, *The Philadelphia Gay News*, and *FirstHand Magazine*.

Misreflection

Now it's like pulling teeth to speak of it,
the brutal injury you can't forgive.
The heart's blood he shed
 from your silhouette —
a shadow of yourself; no longer substantive,
you've lost so much, you don't know
 what is left,
you're not sure how you've changed.
The face is pale
and strange that greets you in the glass, bereft
of warm expressiveness, suddenly frail
beyond its years. How long the doomed
 love held
even deceives you now, the gap between
the length you knew and length you felt.
You can't say what it really is you've seen.
You hadn't known him for a year; it felt like ten.
You'd thought him soul-mate;
 he was not even your friend.

Slur

No, this is not a superficial wound,
although not one that anyone could see;
no salve can soothe, no bandage can entomb
an ache from which no pill can set you free.
Remembering the moment of attack,
you flinch again, recoiling from the blow;
that voice again, that sneering voice
 comes back,
and all your best defenses are too slow.

The weapon left its mark — you feel it still,
although its tracks are not blue, black, or red.
The moment's passed, but now you walk uphill,
with every step a new throb in your head.
The wound feels deep, although
 it seems absurd —
although made by no knife, but by a word.

Fear of the Dark

There is a monster underneath the bed
of every toddler on a stormy night
when clouds collide and flash an awful light
unlike the sun's, and bang to wake the dead.

The monster flails its slimy tentacles
as if to snatch any uncovered limb
that hangs unblanketed, thus tempting him
to drag the whole child down
 to where he dwells.

All kids know this, and all parents dismiss
the whole idea that monsters can exist.
They don't see how a monster in the head
is clearer than the one under the bed.

And so we hide our heads, imagining
that our dear parents don't know everything.

An Empty House in Anytown

That old house has a role in this small town.
Nobody buys it, though it's big and cheap.
You'd think someone at least might

tear it down,
and use the land for something. It runs deep

beneath the ground, this reputation that
hangs on despite how many years have passed.
A dark thing happened there. Some say no rat
would even make its nest inside. The blast

the sawed-off shotgun made still echoes there;
the floorboards scream,

like Maryanne must have.
The cops arrived too late. They say the stairs
are stained with blood forever, and old Dave

still shakes the walls with his humongous laugh.
Just pass the place; you'll feel you need a bath.

From Puberty to Poetry

Because I was a gawky kind of guy,
with thick bifocals and burgeoning zits;
because my laughter was a tone too high,
and I, a size that no known clothing fits;
because the music I loved wasn't cool,
much like the books I read, and things I said;
because we were all kids, and kids are cruel,
and, if you don't exactly fit, you're dead —
I didn't rise to top the class like cream;
I didn't study and apply myself;
I didn't even try to make the team,
or pave my way for future ease and wealth.
I cherished all they pressured me to hide —
and refused to prove them right by suicide.

— From *Sonneteria* (The Poet's Press, 2018).

The Bloodhound Spell

I wish I had a bottle of your sweat;
I'd open it each night to taste your smell.
I treasure all my photographs of you,
But need to keep the scent of you as well.

I'd wear it on a chain about my throat —
A chain too thick to break, a chain of gold —
To ease those times when you'd grow
too remote,
Too mad with your own guilt, too hard to hold.

I would enchant the sweat so it would last,
And never lose strength or evaporate.
I'd cork it; shield it from the sun; the glass
Would be dark brown — no rays
could penetrate.

I'd rub it on a candle, like an oil
And light that candle, murmuring your name —
And anywhere you were, you'd think of me,
And feel a longing you could not explain.

Contagious magic, fragmentary hope
Clutched in the breast of one who cannot sleep;
Though threatened with the fire
or hangman's rope,
These remnants of you I would fiercely keep.

And, though emotion drove you off, in time
Your inner coin would show its other side.
And it would be my face that you saw shine —
You can't pocket the sun, can't run, can't hide.

For I'd call to an empty space in you
With room enough for so much echoing
That, though you held your ears,
word would come
through. That word would be my name.
You'd feel a sting

I wish I had a bottle of your sweat —
The sweat not of your labor, but of sex
But all I have are fading photographs,
And this temptation to attempt a hex.

Sorry, Emily Dickinson

Binoculars, kaleidoscopes,
And other vision toys,
Diminishing the distance
Between us and our joys;
What we see may be accurate,
But still it's out of reach —
Its closeness an illusion,
With lessons cold to teach.

A memory's a souvenir,
And so is every scar.
Though you're a map
Of where you've been,
You don't fit where you are.
You visualize strange continents,
And hope to see your soul —

Afraid to look inside yourself
And find a gaping hole.

Confusion talks itself into
A first attempt at Art,
And finds in indecision
Odd wisdom from the heart.
The poet in seclusion
may not see all that much —
but, if she babbles long enough,
she's bound to get in touch.

Some may not see the point of
So much talking to yourself;
Though you do it on paper,
And store it on a shelf.
At best, you're an eccentric;
At worst, you're called insane —
Until History validates
The contents of your brain.

You long for recognition;
You send out through the mail
Your mind's peculiar images,
Your heart pierced by a nail.
You get a stuffy answer
Spawned by a stuffy head —
Professors just won't catch your drift
Till after you're long dead.

— From *Shapely: Selected Formal Poems*
(The Poet's Press, 2013).

Note for the Teacher

when i was nine
i threw rocks,
had dreams, had
you

you were forty,
you were the reason i behaved so badly.

the cardboard boxes
were houses
only to hide me from you.
my plastic spacemen gunned for you
inside their bag.

you stood in the daytime pointing;
at night

your fingers sprouted from the fields
i dreamed through, running,
tripping, ankles
tangled in that poison grass.
your face

was the sky, a balckboard screaming
in my handwriting a hundred times,

I MUST NOT ACT LIKE AN ANIMAL.

i didn't act;
i was.

you trained me.

the absence of your handprint dangled
bonelike near my face.

i sniffed, i sniffed; i followed;
you will never know the things i learned.

your screams broke those windows
heat from slaps left your face red.

most important,
forty was your age;
nine was mine;

students eventually will outlive their
teachers.

that burning house i drew in class
was yours.

“Loving...”

loving,
in your language,
means i tear chunks from you like some
half-starved bird;
in my language,
means i tear them from myself.

we talk all night.

— From *Handful of Hair*
(The Poet's Press, 1975).

DON WASHBURN (1932-2021)



Donald E. Washburn was born in 1932 and grew up in Easton, PA, a small town he portrays lovingly in his first poetry book, *The Boy from Under the Trees*. A long-time English professor at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts at North Adams, MA., his intellectual life and teaching journey spanned Jungian psychology, general semantics, poetry, Sufism, digital music composition, and, in his last years, a return to his Protestant roots. His sonnet cycle of love poems, *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk*, was written at age 70, and his final book of poetic meditations, *Prayer Beads*, display a fluency of style and voice that make his lines flow like natural speech.

From “The Boy From Under the Trees”

2

Paint a water-color sky,
a haze of maples, and beneath
the tangled neighborhoods that lie
transubstantiate as breath.

And in this nook of time define
gable, gate, grackle, grapevine,
the countless exactitudes of place,
And at the window pane, my face.

4

Sparrow street, wheel-barrow street,
windows like faces in a dream.
Hazy in the summer heat,
things become the things they seem.

Sparrow street, narrow street,
chirping voices and flying feet.
Around me here, like wings are swirled
intimations of my first world.

6

These disorderly neighborhoods
address me without hesitation
like urchins. Each turning alludes
to some suspended conversation.

Free as an imbecile, I eavesdrop
on sparrows and sunporches. Or I stop
to see what an unkempt garden discloses.
Loitering, I gather poems like roses.

7

Long, how long I lay in the grass
one summer night and looked high
into the heaven’s dark looking-glass,
dusty with light, far as the eye

could see — stars, and stars behind
the stars, without end — staring to find
in all that unreflecting space
a face to fathom my own face.

8

I am the boy from under the trees.
The hours, like clouds, go drowsing by.
Wonder enough I find in these
slow funerals of earth and sky.

In a heaven of leaves the summer dies.
Rooted in earth, the dead will rise.
I am the boy from under the trees,
learning by heart these mysteries.

12

“Choose these workaday people,”
The angel said, “and their homely decencies.
Vices abound. The sow of evil
feeds on its farrow. Trust to their mercies

and envy no rich man’s son.
They will free you, strong in the run
of the world. Eat their coarse bread
And be hearty.” And so I did.

18

We packed a lunch and climbed the humped
wood. Rank thickets scourged us as we bent
along the paths. The green flies jumped.
We breathed thick sun on the long ascent,

but at the springs we sat in the shade
and listened to the music the waters made.
On the cool rocks it dripped like jewels.
We drank at the fern scented pools.

21

We imagined the mausoleum was where
Old Man Death had his house, and deep
inside he waited. And by day slept there,
the same sleep the dead sleep,

but might be awakened if we should dare
to rattle the iron gate, or to stare
through the stained-glass window, or shout
his name — half afraid he might come out.

22

Like soaked punk, the drowned kitten
floats, yellow and hairy, pug
nose up. The fat entrails are hidden
beneath lily pads. The smile is smug.

Summer rain pocks and grooves
the surface. Slowly the kitten moves,
making indolent designs among
the prim, white blossoms on the pond.

25

At hide and seek among the firs
in the dark churchyard, I lay still
and heard the wordless universe
hunting me along the long hill.

Among the needles, under the black
belfry and wintry zodiac,
I was discovered and came home
to a silence deeper than my own.

30

Carnival organ, musty tunes,
music rank as the sweat of man,
humorless freaks, bloated balloons,
faces old when the world began.

The stripper's lips purse and pout.
Wheels are spinning as luck runs out.
Carnival organ, colored light:
Ancient music on a summer night.

34

One window on this quiet street
drowns my eyes like a shadowy pool:
Leaves engulf the window seat.
The unseen room is green and cool.

Who lurks, I wonder, behind the sill?
What Scylla, submersible and still,
tending dim grottos of oblivion,
though children of the sun peer in?

46

We leap into this bon³re heap
of crackling leaves, pungent as smoke,
stoking the furnaces that keep
the seasons sane. And, trusting in a cloak

that rustles with these rusts, we brave
the pyrogenic mulch, the grave
composts where salamanders swarm.
Shoot up again without harm!

51

What did we learn in school today?
Even the straightest line can skew.
A lie may have its sidelong way.
Words are a trapdoor to fall through.

From a pit of smiles rage may leap.
In a crack in the wall a dream can keep.
Clocks have hands, but do not play.
We learned all this in school today.

55

MISS CRAWLEY, LIBRARIAN the plaque
forewarned. Behind the marble desk
she sat, ³erce as Cerberus, her back
to the cave of books. I went unblest.

But, Odyssean, I won the farther
shore, jubilant in that other
kingdom, consorting with the dead,
forgetful of time in the time I read.

— From *The Boy From Under the Trees*
(The Poet's Press, 2012, 2017).

The Starship

Or maybe I am a starship, circling an unknown world. Your face, a mystery. Your secret mind, a colony. Think what earth births, all overgrown with the profligate prodigies of animal kind. What forms can take shape in an alien wilderness? What dragons lurk there, breathing fire? What mermaids tangle the senses? What shadowy abysses lie in wait? What predators ply their trades? When our eyes lock, sometimes I feel in that stare a certain ruthlessness. An arctic terrain inhospitable to love. But I appeal the evidence of instruments. They are too quick. Captains must see for themselves. Scotty, beam me down! And keep me safe if I dream.

Waters

Angels envy us the waters. The blood's tides and the wash of senses. The tsunami of passion that wrecks our shores. These will be our guides: The star who has a double and looks to fashion herself like a starfish in the cove. The dolphin who lifts to gulp the air but takes delight in the surge of the surf. The gull who skims in playful waters, another kind of flight. Cherish spirit, but the body too will teach, where the watery blood burns like a sun. Let us dive and be submerged, each in the other, becoming for a moment one. Grow wings we must. But grow also fins, to swim in love's seas, our bright origins.

First Date

OK, don't call it a date. Say I just happened to pull into the parking lot. And there you were. Enough of patriarchy and the vapid conventionalities that compromise allure. Call it an accident, an act of God, a freak of nature. Make it as unofficial as you like. And if I pick up the check, stop me, make it something you're doing yourself, as impersonal as this cup. Maybe it is just "hanging out," something that could easily dissolve and float away. There are no meanings here. Just the ping of dishes in the kitchen. Just another day. Have it any way you want. My eyes look straight to where yours look. With them I am having a date.

Personal History

God knows we've both been around the block and stood in many lines. The old movies keep cranking. When you spin your tales, the clock stops. I need to concentrate and take a deep breath. I listen as though my life depended on it. Your ancient mariner's eyes skewer me. The plots thicken. You tell me how you fended off one disaster after another. Prisoner of catastrophe, your life unfolds just this side of death. Could be the astonished Caliph was heard to say — when Scheherazade paused to catch her breath — "I've hearkened to a lot of yarn-meisters in my day, hawking calamities and close calls too. One more won't matter if she's as plucky as you."

— From *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk*
(The Poet's Press, 2017).

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN (1803-1878)

The Poet's Press has done much to promote the literary posterity of Providence poet Sarah Helen Whitman, who was much more than the one-time fiancée of Edgar Allan Poe. The book *Last Flowers: The Poetry and Romance of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman* (1987, 2011), presents an essay on their doomed romance and the poems they read to one another and addressed to each other. Whitman was also one of America's first female literary critics, and we collected and published, for the first time ever, all of her known literary essays on Poe, Shelley, Lord Byron, Bronson Alcott, Emerson, and Goethe, in *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence — Literary Essays and Selected Poems* (2019).

From "Conversations With Goethe" (1839)

THE OPPOSERS OF German literature are fond of advocating the claims of common sense over those of philosophy, of elevating the actual over the ideal. They talk much, and rather vaguely of Transcendentalism, — they tell us of the folly of believing in innate ideas, and triumphantly quote Locke and his "*tabula rasa*." They are afraid of all vagueness and mysticism, and tremble like children at the shadowy appearances seen in the twilight. They will have nothing to do with that which they cannot handle, — they will receive nothing which they cannot fully comprehend, — they like to see all objects clearly and sharply defined in the broad light of day. Yet at night, in the darkness, we may see much that cannot be seen by day. The near glare of the sun conceals from us those far lights of heaven, that are forever burning in the vaults of space, even as the acute, shrill sounds of day, prevent us from hearing the deep voices of nature. The Shechinah, 'which was by day only a cloud of smoke, became by night a pillar of fire.

In literature their favorite models are those writers who are most remarkable for clearness, polish and precision. They seem to prefer vigorous rather than comprehensive thinkers, — writers whose vision is clear but limited, — who deal manfully with facts and events, but care not to penetrate beyond the surface of being, showing us things as they are, without questioning of the how and the why. They love to "pace steadily and safely along with the smooth-tongued Addison, the gorgeous Johnson, and the sublime Burke," never deviating from the direct path, and looking upon all who go down in diving-bells, or mount up in balloons, as hair-brained tempters of fate.

They fear all new aspects of truth, and gravely tell us, that "it is better with our fallible natures and limited capacities, to rest with humble reliance upon certain ideas and opinions that have been received as plausible,

¹ Shechinah, Hebrew Shekinah, for "dwelling," or the resting place of God.

rejecting all speculations upon subjects which can never be decided nor farther developed, while the soul remains in the thralls of flesh."

Supposing a reflective mind could bring itself to act upon this suggestion, or rather to cease from acting, for ourselves, we know of no opinions which have been universally received as "plausible," and did we know any such, we could not receive them as truths, until they had been submitted to the test of our own reason. Who shall tell us, that any man or class of men have monopolized the right of thought? What is truth to another is not truth to us, until our own understanding has verified it. Whatever danger there may be in leaving every man to decide for himself, there is surely far less than in any attempt to restrict the individual right of opinion, through regard to expediency or respect for authority.

We could not, if we would, have every man a philosopher, and we think there need be little fear, that our countrymen will become infected by any undue fondness for abstract researches. The mind that has never tried to grasp the great problems of human life and destiny, — that has never sought to wrest a reluctant meaning from the hieroglyphic characters inscribed on the broad page of nature, needs no such restriction, — the mind that has done this, will hardly be checked in its onward impulse by the *cui bono* of the utilitarian. It sounds almost like mockery, to ask one who has ever caught a single ray of the warm, living light of the sun of truth, to satisfy himself with the frippery, gilt-paper toy of "plausibility."

These timid counselors remind us of Solomon's slothful man, who keeps housed and says, "there is a lion in the streets, if I go forth I shall be slain."² There are some who cannot be thus easily restrained, — they must "go forth," even at a worse peril, — they must meet the lion and wrestle with it as they may, — and often do they find, that when they look their formidable

² Proverbs 26:13.

foe calmly in the face, he loses all his terrors and becomes at once harmless and tractable.

These people are constantly opposing Revelation to Nature, and Faith to Reason. We cannot agree with them in apprehending any danger to Christianity, from the investigation of calm, tolerant, philosophic spirits, who fear not to look at both sides of a question, lest they should meet with something opposed to established and time-hallowed opinions.

The timid faith that fears to question, cannot satisfy us, — such assent is far worse than honest denial. The only fatal skepticism, as it seems to us, is that of the man who wants faith in the human soul and fears to trust its promptings.

For ourselves, we rejoice in the increasing number of those, who are willing to follow truth wherever she may lead them, in the spirit of that child-like confidence and perfect love which casteth out fear. We look for the time when philosophy shall aid in reconciling reason and faith, — not by depressing faith but by elevating reason. When we shall be able to interpret in all its beautiful simplicity the word of him, who taught us to read the gospel of nature, — to observe the lilies of the field, — and to seek for the kingdom of heaven within our own hearts.

The enforcement of this self-reliance, this faith in the power of the individual to discover for himself truth, is one of the leading heresies of which the “New School” is accused. Yet highest stars of heaven may beseen mirrored within the single drop of dew that trembles within the heart of the violet.

This faith in truth and nature, — this desire to free the mind from its slavery to creeds and conventionalities, though the growth of no particular school, has, it is true, within the last twenty years been more profoundly felt, and more earnestly inculcated, than at any former period. It gives a tone to all the noblest literature of the day, and is slowly but surely working a change in the character of the times.

It is this which prompted the obnoxious declaration of Dr. Channing,³ that “man is great as man, be he what and where he may.” This is what was implied by Emerson, when he said, “Let a man plant himself on his instincts, and the whole world will come round to him,” — or in other words, everything will work in harmony with him. It is this which illumines every page

³ William Ellery Channing. “Self-Culture.” 1838 lecture. Its tone of elevating the masses (“the truly great are to be found everywhere”) seems somehow to have offended Whitman. Perhaps the entire clan was disliked: his nephew William Henry Channing (1810-1884), was minister, editor of *The Present* (1843-44), and co-author of the *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller*. A Socialist, he rejected many of the individualist ideas of Emerson and Thoreau. W. H. Channing’s 1843 Essay, “Oneness of God and Man” seems to damn Transcendentalists with faint praise as mere harbingers of a religious awakening.

of Carlyle as with the glory of an inspired scroll, and imparts to the profound philosophy of Cousin⁴ its vivifying power.

This doctrine which was taught by a few sincere and simple spirits, amid the darkest gloom of Jewish superstition and bigotry,⁵ has caused one of the most true-hearted believers of our own day to assert, that the vital truths of Christianity are too deeply inwrought into the very nature of the human soul, to be in any danger from a free and fearless examination into the true character of the Christian miracles. It is this growing conviction, which is beginning to render all persecution for opinion’s sake as disgraceful as it ever was futile, — and this it is, above all, which is teaching the instructors and guardians of youth, that the great objects of education are not to be achieved by the exhibition of facts, or the inculcation of theories, but by developing and strengthening the powers of the mind for individual and independent action.

Much, though not all of this is, we think; attributable, more or less directly, to the Germans. Much, that in our own literature is but faintly and dimly shadowed forth, is in theirs developing itself in free and luxurious growth. In the German literature, to use one of their own expressive phrases, “Man finds himself.” — The “sweet, sad music of Humanity” pervades every department of it. In its deep, earnest, philosophic spirit; in its fearless, trusting, transparent simplicity; in the holy fervor of its poets, the serene, spiritual, far-reaching gaze of its theologians and moralists, we may find much which even the rich classical literature of England cannot supply.

To us Germany has ever been a bright land of promise, since first in early youth we listened, with kindling heart and eager sympathy, to the tidings which Madame De Stael had brought us of a people, who, in an age of artificiality, had dared to follow the suggestions of their own spirits, and to show us nature, as she had mirrored herself within their own hearts. And now, having possessed ourselves of the golden key, which is to unlock to us this rich world of thought, we cannot but glory in our new found treasures, and endeavor to win others to become partakers of our joy.

— From *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence* (Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet’s Press 2019).

⁴ Victor Cousin (1792-1867), a French philosopher who tried to meld together German idealism and Scottish common-sense realism. He also helped introduce Prussian education methods into French schools, and his ideas on this subject were influential in the United States as well.

⁵ *Jewish superstition* ... I take this to mean merely the theology of Old Testament literalism among hard-line Protestants, of which Whitman experienced plenty.



The Raven

Raven, from the dim dominions
On the Night's Plutonian shore,
Oft I hear thy dusky pinions
Wave and flutter round my door —
See the shadow of thy pinions
Float along the moon-lit floor;

Often, from the oak-woods glooming
Round some dim ancestral tower,
In the lurid distance looming —
Some high solitary tower —
I can hear thy storm-cry booming
Through the lonely midnight hour.

When the moon is at the zenith,
Thou dost haunt the moated hall,
Where the marish flower greeneth
O'er the waters, like a pall —
Where the House of Usher leaneth,
Darkly nodding to its fall:

There I see thee, dimly gliding —
See thy black plumes waving slow —
In its hollow casements hiding,
When their shadow yawns below,
To the sullen tarn confiding
The dark secrets of their woe:—

See thee, when the stars are burning
In their cressets, silver clear —
When Ligeia's spirit yearning
For the earth-life, wanders near —
When Morella's soul returning,
Weirdly whispers "I am here."

Once, within a realm enchanted,
On a far isle of the seas,
By unearthly visions haunted,
By unearthly melodies,
Where the evening sunlight slanted
Golden through the garden trees, —

Where the dreamy moonlight dozes,
Where the early violets dwell,
Listening to the silver closes
Of a lyric loved too well,
Suddenly, among the roses,
Like a cloud, thy shadow fell.

Once, where Ulalume lies sleeping,
Hard by Auber's haunted mere,
With the ghouls a vigil keeping,
On that night of all the year,
Came thy sounding pinions, sweeping
Through the leafless woods of Weir!

Oft, with Proserpine I wander
On the Night's Plutonian shore,
Hoping, fearing, while I ponder
On thy loved and lost Lenore —
On the demon doubts that sunder
Soul from soul forevermore;

Trusting, though with sorrow laden,
That when life's dark dream is o'er,
By whatever name the maiden
Lives within thy mystic lore,
Eiros, in that distant Aidenn,
Shall his Charmion meet once more.

Noon

from *Hours of Life*

"The mysterious silence of full noon."
— Bailey. *Festus*.¹

"Combien de fois dans le silence de minuit,
et dans cet autre silence de midi, si
accablant, si inquiet, si dévorant, n'ai-je pas
senti mon coeur se précipiter vers un but
inconnu, vers un bonheur sans forme et sans
nom, qui est au ciel, qui est dans l'air, qui est
partout, comme l'amour! C'est l'aspiration
sainte de la partie la plus éthérée de notre
âme vers l'inconnu."

—George Sand²

Dream followed dream; and still the day
Floated on golden wings away;
But in the hush of the high noon,
Touched by a sorrow without name,
Consumed by a slow fever-flame,
I loathed my life's mysterious boon,
Unconscious of its end or aim;

Lost in a languor of repose—
A luxury of gloom —

¹ *Festus*, a giant 12-part poem on philosophy and theology, published in 1839 and expanded in 1845, by Philip James Bailey (1816-1902). Bailey's line is "The imperious silence of full noon" (p. 443). Bailey's poem appears to be a vast expansion and variation on *Faust*, with Festus/Faustus pitted against Lucifer, with a "Helen," and God, as characters as well.

² *Combien de foi* . . . "How many times, in the silence of midnight, and in this other silence of noon, so overwhelmed, so anxious, so consumed, did I not feel my heart rushing towards an unknown goal, towards a formless and nameless happiness, which is in the heavens, which is in the air, which is everywhere, like love! It is the holy aspiration of the most ethereal part of our soul toward the unknown." From George Sand's 1833 novel, *Lélia*, Chap. 18.

As when the curved, voluptuous rose
Droops with its wealth of bloom.
Decked as for a festival
Seemed the wide and lonely hall
Of Nature, but a mute despair
Filled the universal air; —
A sense of loneliness and void, —
A wealth of beauty unenjoyed, —
A sadness born mid the excess
Of life's unvalued loveliness.

Every pulse of being panting
With a bliss it fain would share,
Still there seemed a presence wanting,
Still some lost ideal haunting
All the lone and lustrous air.

Far off I heard the solemn chimes
Of Life and Death, —
The rhythm of ancestral rhymes
Above, — beneath!

"Light in shadow ever fading —
Death on Life's bright realm invading —
Pain with pleasure keeping measure,
Wasting care with golden treasure."
So the ancient burden rang,
So the choral verses sang.

Though beautiful on all the hills
The summer noon-light lay,
Far in the west a single cloud
Lay folded like a fleecy shroud,
Ready to veil its ray.
And over all a purple pall
Seemed waiting for the day.

I heard far, phantom voices calling
Over all the flowery wold, —
O'er the westering meadows falling
Into slopes of gleamy gold; —
Still I heard them calling, — calling, —
Through the dim, entangled glooms —
Far through sunless valleys falling
Downward to a place of tombs.

Near me pressed a vassal throng,
Slaves to custom, serfs to wrong —
Hollow-hearted, vain and cold,
Minions of the earthly mold;
Holding in supreme derision
Memories of the life Elysian,

Reckless of the birthright lost,
Heedless of the heavenly host,
Traitors to the Holy Ghost!

Haunted by a nameless terror —
Thrilled by a foreboding breath,
As the aspen wildly trembles
When the winds are still as death, —
I sought amid the sadness drear
Some loved familiar face to cheer
The solitude, — some lingering tone
Of love ere love and hope had flown.

I heard a low voice breathe my name:
Was it the echo of my own, —
That weird and melancholy tone, —
That voice whose subtle sweetness came
Keen as the serpent's tongue of flame?
So near, its music seemed to me
The music of my heart to be.

Still I heard it, nearer, clearer,
When all other songs had flown,
Floating round me till it bound me
In a wild world of its own.
Suddenly a chill wind leapt
Through its woven harmonies;
All its silver chords were snapt
As a wind-harp's by the breeze.
A shudder through the silence crept
And death athwart the noonlight swept.

Then came the pall, the dirge, the knell,
As, dust to dust, the earth-clods fell,
Down crumbling on a coffin lid,
Within whose narrow casket hid, —
Shut from the cheerful light of day, —
Buried, yet quick, my own heart lay.

Graves closed round my path of life,
The beautiful had fled;
Pale shadows wandered by my side,
And whispered of the dead.
The far off hollow of the sky
Seemed like an idle mockery. —
The vaulted hollow of the sky,
With its blue depths of mystery
But rounded Death's vast empery.

O'erwearied with life's restless change
From ecstasy to agony,
Its fleeting pleasures born to die,
The mirage of its fantasy,
Its worn and melancholy range
Of hopes that could no more estrange
The married heart of memory,
Doomed, while we drain life's perfumed wine,
For the dull Lethean wave to pine,
And, for each thrill of joy, to know
Despair's slow pulse or sorrow's throe, —
I sought some central truth to span
These wide extremes of good and ill —
I longed with one bold glance to scan
Life's perfect sphere, to rend at will
The gloom of Erebus, — dread zone,
Coiled like a serpent round the throne
Of Heaven — the realm where Justice veils
Her heart and holds her even scales, —
Where awful Nemesis awaits
The doomed, by Pluto's iron gates.

In the long noon-tide of my sorrow,
I questioned of the eternal morrow;
I gazed in sullen awe
Far through the illimitable gloom
Down deepening like the swift maelstrom,
The doubting soul to draw
Into eternal solitudes,
Where unrelenting silence broods
Around the throne of Law.

I questioned the dim chronicle
Of ages gone before —
I listened for the triumph songs
That range from shore to shore,
Where the heroes and the conquerors wrought
The mighty deeds of yore, —
Where the footprints of the martyrs
Had bathed the earth in gore,
And the war-horns of the warriors
Were heard from shore to shore.

Their blood on desert plains was shed, —
Their voices on the wind had fled, —
They were the drear and shadowy DEAD!

Still, through the storied past, I sought
An answer to my sleepless thought;
In the cloisters old and hoary
Of the mediaeval time —
In the rude ancestral story
Of the ancient Runic rhyme.

I paused on Grecian plains, to trace
Some remnant of a mightier race,
Serene in sorrow and in strife,
Calm conquerors of Death and Life,
Types of the god-like forms that shone
Upon the sculptured Parthenon.

But still, as when Prometheus bare
From heaven the fiery dart,
I saw the “vulture passions”³ tear
The proud Caucasian⁴ heart —
The war of destiny with will
Still conquered, yet conflicting still.

I heard loud Hallelujahs
From Israel’s golden lyre,
And I sought their great Jehovah
In the cloud and in the fire.
I lingered by the stream that flowed
“Fast by the oracle of God”⁵—
I bowed, its sacred wave to sip —

³ Placing the word “vulture” one line above “Caucasian” suggests the punishment of Prometheus in the mountains of “the Indian Caucasus,” in Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound*, but Whitman’s choice to place “vulture passions” in quotes leads to other possible sources. In Byron’s 1819 *Prophecy of Dante*: “for the mind/ Succumbs to long infection, and despair,/ And vulture Passions flying close behind,/ Await the moment to assail and tear” (Canto III, ll. 172-175). Earlier still, a well-known American political tract by Tunis Wortman elaborates on the self-punishment of evil-doers: “[L]et corroding envy, sickening Jealousy, and vulture passions torture and prey upon my heart.” (*Treatise*, p. 171). This in turn may be a paraphrase of lines in Thomas Gray’s 1747 poem, “Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College”: “These shall the fury Passions tear,/ The vultures of the mind.” (ll. 61-62) —BR.

⁴ *Caucasian heart*. Gustav Klemm, in a work entitled *Allgemeine Culturgeschichte der Menschheit [General Cultural History of Mankind]*, divides the human races into the active and passive: the former (embracing only the so-called Caucasian race) marked by restless activity and aspiration, progress and the spirit of doubt and inquiry; the latter (comprising all the remaining races), by an absence or inferiority of these characteristics — SHW. [Klemm (1802-1867), was an anthropologist and librarian, and his ten-volume production, not surprisingly, classed Germans as the highest type of Caucasians. The “passive” races were Mongoloids, Negroids, Egyptians, Finns, and Hindus. So much for 19th-century anthropology.—BR]

⁵ “Fast by the oracle of God.” Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I;12.

Its waters fled my thirsting lip.
The serpent trail was over all
Its borders — and its palms that threw
Aloft their waving coronal,
Were blistered by a poison dew.

Serenely elements I sought,
Sublimely altitudes of thought,
The truth Saint John and Plato saw,
The mystic light, the inward law;
The Logos ever found and lost,
The aureola of the Ghost.

I hailed its faint auroral beam
In many a Poet’s Delphic dream —
On many a shrine where faith’s pure flame
Through fable’s gorgeous oriel came.

Around the altars of the god,
In holy passion hushed, I trod,
Where one the mighty voice of Jove
Rang through Dodona’s haunted grove.⁶
No more the dove with sable plumes
Swept through the forest’s gorgeous glooms;
The shrines were desolate and cold,
Their paeans hushed, their story told,
In long, inglorious silence lost,
Like fiery tongues of Pentecost.

No more did music’s golden surge
The mortal in immortal merge:
High canticles of joy and praise
Died with the dream of other days;
I only heard the Maenad’s wail —
That shriek that made the orient pale:
Evohe! — ah — Evohe!
The mystic burden of a woe
Whose dark enigma none may know;
The primal curse — the primal throe.⁷

⁶ “The priestesses of Dodona assert that two black pigeons flew from Thebes in Egypt; one of which settled in Libya, the other among themselves: which latter, resting on a beech tree, declared with a human voice that here was to be the oracle of Jove.”— Herodotus, Book II, ch 55 — SHW.

⁷ “The Maenads, in their wild incantations, carried serpents in their hands, and with frantic gestures cried out Eva! Eva! Epiphanius thinks that this invocation related to the mother of mankind; but I am inclined to believe that it was the word Epha or Opha, rendered by the Greeks, Ophis, serpent. I take Abaddon to have been the name of the same ophite God whose worship has so long infected the world. The learned Heinsius makes Abaddon the same as the serpent Python.”—Jacob Bryant, *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*. — SHW. [Bryant’s speculations may be safely

Evohe! — ah — Evohe!
Nature shuddered at the cry
Of that ancient agony!

Still the fabled Python bound me,—
Still the serpent coil inwound me,—
Still I heard the Maenad's cry,
Evohe! — ah — Evohe!

Where the Nile pours his sullen wave
Through tombs and empires of the grave,
I sought, 'mid cenotaphs, to find
The earlier miracles of mind:
Alas, beside the funeral urn
How drearily the death-lights burn;
On dim Denderah's sculptured lore
How sadly the noonlight falls,
How mournfully the west wind sighs
Through Karnak's mouldering halls!
No tongue shall tell their wondrous tale,
No hand shall lift the Isis veil;
The mighty pyramids that rise
So drear along the morning skies,
Guard well the secrets of the dead,
Nor break the sleep of ages fled.
Their awful shadow passed, I stood
On India's burning solitude;
Where, in the misty morning of the world,
Life lay as in a dream of beauty furled.

I saw the mighty altars of the Sun, —
Before whose fires, the star-gods, one by one,
Paled like thin ghosts, — in lurid splendors rife;
I heard the Persian hail him Lord of Life!
I saw his altar flames rise wild and high,
Veiling the glory of the noon-day sky,
Hiding the holy heavens
with their ensanguined dye.

I turned, and from the Brahmin's milder law
I sought truth's mystic element to draw,
Pure as it sparkled in the cup of Heaven, —
The bright Amreeta to the immortals given, —
To bathe my soul in fontal springs, that lie
Veiled from the careless and incurious eye.

dismissed. His writings from the 1770s are based on the assumption that all mythology is derived from Hebrew Scripture. His work, with elaborate "proofs" employing etymological guesswork, influenced William Blake, who had illustrated Bryant's work. —BR].

"While Maenads cry Evoe, Evoe! That voice that is contagion to the world."—Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound* — SHW.

Half wakened from the brooding sleep
Of Nature ere she felt the leap
Of sentient life, the Hindoo seemed
Sad as the faith his fathers dreamed;
Like his own rock-hewn temples, wrought
From some obscure and shadowy thought
Of ancient days — some formless dread,
In the gray dawn of ages bred, —
Prone on his native earth reclined,
To endless reveries resigned,
His dull song lapsing on the Lethean stream,
Lost in the dim world of a lotus dream.

Still, still the eternal mystery
The shadow of the poison-tree
Of Good and Evil haunted me.
In Religion's holy name,
Furies fed her altar-flame,
Sophists gloried in her shame.
Still the ancient mythus bound me,
Still the serpent coil inwound me,
Still I heard the Maenad's cry,
Evohe! — ah — Evohe!

Wearied with man's discordant creed,
I sought on Nature's page to read
Life's history, eye yet she shrined
Her essence in the incarnate mind;
Intent her secret laws to trace
In primal solitudes of space,
From her first, faint atomic throes,
To where her orbèd splendor glows
In the vast, silent spheres that roll
Forever towards their unknown goal.

I turned from dull alchemic lore
With starry Chaldeans to soar,
And sought, on fancy's wing, to roam
That glorious galaxy of light
Where mingling stars, like drifting foam,
Melt on the solemn shores of night;
But still the surging glory chased
The dark through night's chaotic waste;
And still, within its deepening voids,
Crumbled the burning asteroids.

Long gloating on that hollow gloom,
Methought that in some vast maelstrom
The stars were hurrying to their doom —
Bubbles upon life's boundless sea,
Swift meteors of eternity,
Pale sparks of mystic fire, that fall
From God's unwaning coronal.

Is there, I asked, a living woe
In all those burning orbs that glow
Through the blue ether? — do they share
Our dim world's anguish and despair?
In their vast orbits do they fly
From some avenging destiny —
And shall their wild eyes pale beneath
The dread anathema of Death? —
Our own fair earth — shall she too drift,
Forever shrouded in a weft
Of stormy clouds, that surge and swirl
Around her in a dizzy whirl: —
Forever shall a shadow fall
Backward from her golden wall,
Its dark cone stretching, ghast and gray,
Into outer glooms away? —

From the sad, unsated quest
Of knowledge, how I longed to rest
On her green and silent breast!

I languished for the dews of death
My fevered heart to steep, —
The heavy, honey-dews of death,
The calm and dreamless sleep.

I left my fruitless lore apart,
And leaned my ear on Nature's heart,
To hear, far from life's busy throng,
The chime of her sweet undersong.
She pressed her balmy lips to mine,
She bathed me in her sylvan springs;
And still, by many a rural shrine,
She taught me sweet and holy things.
I felt her breath my temples fan,
I learned her temperate laws to scan,
My soul, of hers, became a conscious part;
Her beauty melted through my inmost heart.

Still I languished for the word
Her sweet lips had never spoken,
Still, from the pale shadow-land,
There came nor voice nor token;
No accent of the Holy Ghost
Whispered of the loved and lost;
No bright wanderer came to tell
If, in worlds beyond the grave,
Life, love, and beauty dwell.

— From *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry
of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*
(The Poet's Press, 1987, 2011).

OSCAR WILDE (1854-1900)



We associate Oscar Wilde with decadence and gay scandal more than with horror, but his 1890 novel, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, combines decadence with horror, and his drama *Salomé*, culminating in a naked dance with the head of John the Baptist, was the most gruesome thing seen in stage since the days of Monk Lewis's penny-dreadful Gothic plays. In the Wilde poems selected for our *Tales of Terror* anthology, Wilde plays with a theme that other English horror writers like Arthur Machen dwell on: the horrified encounter with the excesses of paganism, spiritual and sensual. In "The Sphinx," the alarming possibilities of the matings of the Sphinx provide a disquieting element. This 1909 poem has been neglected, and this is probably its first annotated publication. In Wilde, as in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, the supernatural begins to acquire a more overtly erotic face, and what had previously only been suggested with nixies, fairies and witches, becomes overt and explicit.

The Sphinx

(To Marcel Schwob in friendship and in admiration)

In a dim corner of my room for longer than my fancy thinks
A beautiful and silent Sphinx has watched me through the shifting gloom.

Inviolat and immobile she does not rise she does not stir
For silver moons are naught to her and naught to her the suns that reel.

Red follows grey across the air, the waves of moonlight ebb and flow
But with the Dawn she does not go and in the night-time she is there.

Dawn follows Dawn and Nights grow old and all the while this curious cat
Lies couching on the Chinese mat with eyes of satin rimmed with gold.

Upon the mat she lies and leers and on the tawny throat of her
Flutters the soft and silky fur or ripples to her pointed ears.

Come forth, my lovely seneschal! so somnolent, so statuesque!
Come forth you exquisite grotesque! half woman and half animal!

Come forth my lovely languorous Sphinx! and put your head upon my knee!
And let me stroke your throat and see your body spotted like the Lynx!

And let me touch those curving claws of yellow ivory and grasp
The tail that like a monstrous Asp coils round your heavy velvet paws!

A thousand weary centuries are thine while I have hardly seen
Some twenty summers cast their green for Autumn's gaudy liveries.

But you can read the Hieroglyphs on the great sandstone obelisks,
And you have talked with Basilisks,¹ and you have looked on Hippogriffs.²

O tell me, were you standing by when Isis to Osiris knelt?
And did you watch the Egyptian³ melt her union for Antony

And drink the jewel-drunken wine and bend her head in mimic awe
To see the huge proconsul draw the salted tunny from the brine?

And did you mark the Cyprian kiss white Adon⁴ on his catafalque?
And did you follow Amenalk, the God of Heliopolis?

And did you talk with Thoth, and did you hear the moon-horned Io⁵ weep?
And know the painted kings who sleep beneath the wedge-shaped Pyramid?

Lift up your large black satin eyes which are like cushions where one sinks!
Fawn at my feet, fantastic Sphinx! and sing me all your memories!

Sing to me of the Jewish maid who wandered with the Holy Child,
And how you led them through the wild, and how they slept beneath your shade.

Sing to me of that odorous green eve when crouching by the marge
You heard from Adrian's gilded barge the laughter of Antinous⁶

And lapped the stream and fed your drouth and watched with hot and hungry stare
The ivory body of that rare young slave with his pomegranate mouth!

Sing to me of the Labyrinth in which the twi-formed bull⁷ was stalled!
Sing to me of the night you crawled across the temple's granite plinth

When through the purple corridors the screaming scarlet Ibis⁸ flew
In terror, and a horrid dew dripped from the moaning Mandragores,⁹

¹ *Basilisks*. Legendary reptiles capable of killing with a glance.

² *Hippogriffs*. Mythic flying creatures in the form of a horse with eagle's wings. These creatures were known to the Romans, and also feature in the Italian epic poem, *Orlando Furioso*, by Ariosto.

³ *The Egyptian*. Cleopatra, in her affair with Roman Mark Antony.

⁴ *Cyprian ... Adon*. Aphrodite, also known as the Lady of Cyprus, mourning the young Adonis.

⁵ *Io*. A young girl beloved by Zeus, changed into a heifer and angrily pursued by a gadfly, thanks to the jealousy of Hera. In her tormented flight, Io winds up in Egypt.

⁶ *Adrian ... Antinous*. The Roman Emperor Hadrian's favorite, the beautiful Antinous, died during a trip up the Nile. Hadrian decreed the deification of his lover and statues and temples in his honor were erected all over the Empire.

⁷ *Twi-formed bull*. The Minotaur.

⁸ *Ibis*. Egyptian bird, the totem symbol of the god Thoth.

⁹ *Mandragores*. Mandrake plants, whose roots resemble human bodies.

And the great torpid crocodile within the tank shed slimy tears,
 And tare the jewels from his ears and staggered back into the Nile,

And the priests cursed you with shrill psalms as in your claws you seized their snake
 And crept away with it to slake your passion by the shuddering palms.

Who were your lovers? who were they who wrestled for you in the dust?
 Which was the vessel of your Lust? What Leman¹⁰ had you, every day?

Did giant Lizards come and crouch before you on the reedy banks?
 Did Gryphons¹¹ with great metal flanks leap on you in your trampled couch?

Did monstrous hippopotami come sidling toward you in the mist?
 Did gilt-scaled dragons writhe and twist with passion as you passed them by?

And from the brick-built Lycian tomb what horrible Chimera¹² came
 With fearful heads and fearful flame to breed new wonders from your womb?

Or had you shameful secret quests and did you harry to your home
 Some Nereid¹³ coiled in amber foam with curious rock crystal breasts?

Or did you treading through the froth call to the brown Sidonian¹⁴
 For tidings of Leviathan, Leviathan or Behemoth?¹⁵

Or did you when the sun was set climb up the cactus-covered slope
 To meet your swarthy Ethiop whose body was of polished jet?

Or did you, while the earthen skiffs dropped down the grey Nilotic flats
 At twilight and the flickering bats flew round the temple's triple glyphs,

Steal to the border of the bar and swim across the silent lake
 And slink into the vault and make the Pyramid your lupanar¹⁶

Till from each black sarcophagus rose up the painted swathed dead?
 Or did you lure unto your bed the ivory-horned Tragelaphos?¹⁷

Or did you love the god of flies¹⁸ who plagued the Hebrews and was splashed
 With wine unto the waist? or Pasht,¹⁹ who had green beryls for her eyes?

¹⁰ *Leman*. Lover.

¹¹ *Gryphon*. A creature with the head, talons and wings of an eagle, atop the body of a lion.

¹² *Chimera*. A nightmarish, fire-breathing creature that is an amalgam of several animals. Etruscan and Greek depictions show a lion with a goat's head in the middle of its back, and a tail ending in a snake's head.

¹³ *Nereid*. This would be a lesbian coupling since Nereids are sea nymphs.

¹⁴ *Sidonian*. A Phoenician sailor.

¹⁵ *Leviathan ... Behemoth*. Leviathan, usually a whale. The Behemoth is an imaginary creature mentioned in the Old Testament, possibly hearsay from sightings of elephants or rhinoceros, but generally treated as a chaos monster from the time of Creation.

¹⁶ *Lupanar*. A brothel, suggesting that the Sphinx was sleeping with mummies.

¹⁷ *Tragelaphos*. Legendary creature, half goat, half stag, known as *hircocervus* in Latin.

¹⁸ God of flies. *Beelzebub*.

¹⁹ *Pasht*. Another same-sex coupling. Pasht or Baast, was goddess of cats.

Or that young god, the Tyrian,²⁰ who was more amorous than the dove
Of Ashtaroth? or did you love the god of the Assyrian²¹

Whose wings, like strange transparent talc, rose high above his hawk-faced head,
Painted with silver and with red and ribbed with rods of Oreichalch?²²

Or did huge Apis²³ from his car leap down and lay before your feet
Big blossoms of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured nenuphar?²⁴

How subtle-secret is your smile! Did you love none, then? Nay, I know
Great Ammon²⁵ was your bedfellow! He lay with you beside the Nile!

The river-horses in the slime trumpeted when they saw him come
Odorous with Syrian galbanum and smeared with spikenard and with thyme.

He came along the river bank like some tall galley argent-sailed,
He strode across the waters, mailed in beauty, and the waters sank.

He strode across the desert sand: he reached the valley where you lay:
He waited till the dawn of day: then touched your black breasts with his hand.

You kissed his mouth with mouths of flame: you made the horned god your own:
You stood behind him on his throne: you called him by his secret name.

You whispered monstrous oracles into the caverns of his ears:
With blood of goats and blood of steers you taught him monstrous miracles.

White Ammon was your bedfellow! Your chamber was the steaming Nile!
And with your curved archaic smile you watched his passion come and go.

With Syrian oils his brows were bright and wide-spread as a tent at noon
His marble limbs made pale the moon and lent the day a larger light.

His long hair was nine cubits' span and coloured like that yellow gem
Which hidden in their garment's hem the merchants bring from Kurdistan.

His face was as the must that lies upon a vat of new-made wine:
The seas could not insapphirine the perfect azure of his eyes.

His thick soft throat was white as milk and threaded with thin veins of blue:
And curious pearls like frozen dew were broidered on his flowing silk.

On pearl and porphyry pedestaled he was too bright to look upon:
For on his ivory breast there shone the wondrous ocean-emerald,

²⁰ *Tyrian*. Possibly Ba'al Hammon, god of fertility.

²¹ *God of the Assyrian*. Ashur.

²² *Oreichalch*. A mysterious metal associated with Atlantis.

²³ *Apis*. The Egyptian sacred bull.

²⁴ *Nenuphar*. Water-lily.

²⁵ *Ammon*. Amun-Ra, king of the gods.

That mystic moonlit jewel which some diver of the Colchian caves
 Had found beneath the blackening waves and carried to the Colchian witch.²⁶

Before his gilded galiot²⁷ ran naked vine-wreathed corybants,²⁸
 And lines of swaying elephants knelt down to draw his chariot,

And lines of swarthy Nubians bare up his litter as he rode
 Down the great granite-paven road between the nodding peacock-fans.

The merchants brought him steatite²⁹ from Sidon in their painted ships:
 The meanest cup that touched his lips was fashioned from a chrysolite.³⁰

The merchants brought him cedar chests of rich apparel bound with cords:
 His train was borne by Memphian lords: young kings were glad to be his guests.

Ten hundred shaven priests did bow to Ammon's altar day and night,
 Ten hundred lamps did wave their light through Ammon's carven house — and now

Foul snake and speckled adder with their young ones crawl from stone to stone
 For ruined is the house and prone the great rose-marble monolith!

Wild ass or trotting jackal comes and couches in the mouldering gates:
 Wild satyrs call unto their mates across the fallen fluted drums.

And on the summit of the pile the blue-faced ape of Horus sits
 And gibbers while the fig-tree splits the pillars of the peristyle

The god is scattered here and there: deep hidden in the windy sand
 I saw his giant granite hand still clenched in impotent despair.

And many a wandering caravan of stately negroes silken-shawled,
 Crossing the desert, halts appalled before the neck that none can span.

And many a bearded Bedouin draws back his yellow-striped burnous
 To gaze upon the Titan thews of him who was thy paladin.

Go, seek his fragments on the moor and wash them in the evening dew,
 And from their pieces make anew thy mutilated paramour!

Go, seek them where they lie alone and from their broken pieces make
 Thy bruised bedfellow! And wake mad passions in the senseless stone!

Charm his dull ear with Syrian hymns! he loved your body! oh, be kind,
 Pour spikenard on his hair, and wind soft rolls of linen round his limbs!

Wind round his head the figured coins! stain with red fruits those pallid lips!
 Weave purple for his shrunken hips! and purple for his barren loins!

²⁶ *Colchian witch*. Medea.

²⁷ *Galiot*. A boat with oars. It can also be a horse-drawn barge.

²⁸ *Corybants*. Dancers.

²⁹ *Steatite*. Soap-stone, used for carving.

³⁰ *Chrysolite*. General term for gemstones such as topaz or tourmaline.

Away to Egypt! Have no fear. Only one God has ever died.
 Only one God has let His side be wounded by a soldier's spear.

But these, thy lovers, are not dead. Still by the hundred-cubit gate
 Dog-faced Anubis sits in state with lotus-lilies for thy head.

Still from his chair of porphyry gaunt Memnon strains his lidless eyes
 Across the empty land, and cries each yellow morning unto thee.

And Nilus³¹ with his broken horn lies in his black and oozy bed
 And till thy coming will not spread his waters on the withering corn.

Your lovers are not dead, I know. They will rise up and hear your voice
 And clash their cymbals and rejoice and run to kiss your mouth! And so,

Set wings upon your argosies! Set horses to your ebon car!
 Back to your Nile! Or if you are grown sick of dead divinities

Follow some roving lion's spoor across the copper-coloured plain,
 Reach out and hale him by the mane and bid him
 be your paramour!

Couch by his side upon the grass and set your white teeth in his throat
 And when you hear his dying note lash your long flanks of polished brass

And take a tiger for your mate, whose amber sides are flecked with black,
 And ride upon his gilded back in triumph through the Theban gate,

And toy with him in amorous jests, and when he turns, and snarls, and gnaws,
 O smite him with your jasper claws! and bruise him with your agate breasts!

Why are you tarrying? Get hence! I weary of your sullen ways,
 I weary of your steadfast gaze, your somnolent magnificence.

Your horrible and heavy breath makes the light flicker in the lamp,
 And on my brow I feel the damp and dreadful dews of night and death.

Your eyes are like fantastic moons that shiver in some stagnant lake,
 Your tongue is like a scarlet snake that dances to fantastic tunes,

Your pulse makes poisonous melodies, and your black throat is like the hole
 Left by some torch or burning coal on Saracenic tapestries.

Away! The sulphur-coloured stars are hurrying through the Western gate!
 Away! Or it may be too late to climb their silent silver cars!

See, the dawn shivers round the grey gilt-dialled towers, and the rain
 Streams down each diamonded pane and blurs with tears the wannish day.

What snake-tressed fury fresh from Hell, with uncouth gestures and unclean,
 Stole from the poppy-drowsy queen and led you to a student's cell?

³¹ *Nilus*. The river Nile personified.



Oedipus and the Sphinx. Gustave Moreau. 1864.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

What songless tongueless ghost of sin crept through the curtains of the night,
And saw my taper burning bright, and knocked, and bade you enter in?

Are there not others more accursed, whiter with leprosy than I?
Are Abana and Pharpar dry that you come here to slake your thirst?

Get hence, you loathsome mystery! Hideous animal, get hence!
You wake in me each bestial sense, you make me what I would not be.

You make my creed a barren sham, you wake foul dreams of sensual life,
And Atys with his blood-stained knife were better than the thing I am.

False Sphinx! False Sphinx! By reedy Styx old Charon, leaning on his oar,
Waits for my coin. Go thou before, and leave me to my crucifix,

Whose pallid burden, sick with pain, watches the world with wearied eyes,
And weeps for every soul that dies, and weeps for every soul in vain.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*,
Volume II (Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press, 2016).

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939)

The Stolen Child

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats;
There we've hid our faery vats.
Full of berries,
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
*For the world's more full of weeping than you
can understand.*

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim gray sands with light,
Far off by furthest Rosses
We foot it all the night,
Weaving olden dances,
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight;
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep.
Come away, human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
*For the world's more full of weeping than you
can understand.*

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glen-Car,
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star,
We seek for slumbering trout,
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams;
Leaning softly out
From ferns that drop their tears
Over the young streams,
Come away, human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
*For the world's more full of weeping than you
can understand.*

Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed:
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside;
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal-chest.
For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
*From a world more full of weeping than he
can understand.*

The Song of Wandering Aengus

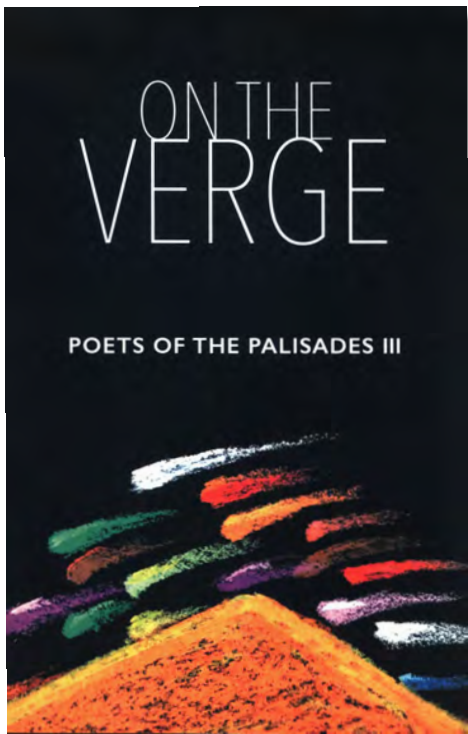
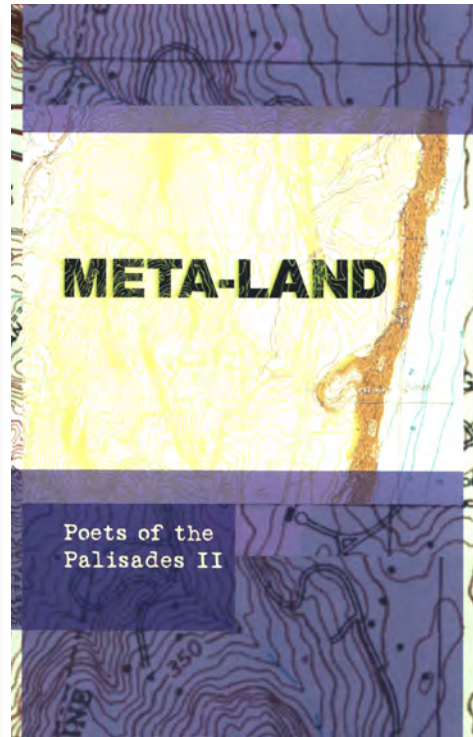
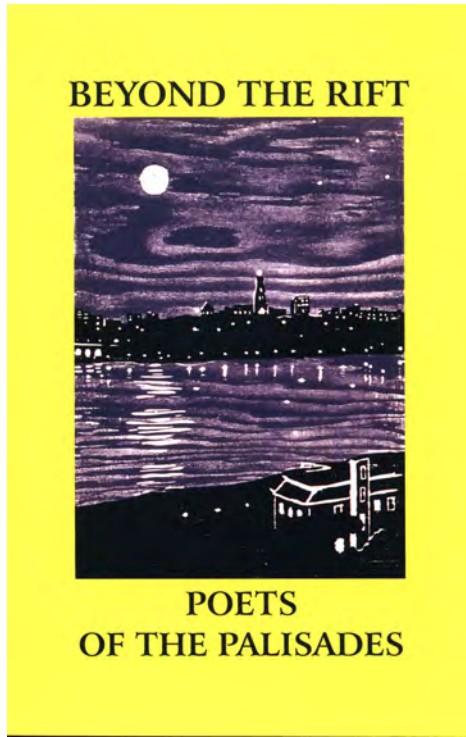
I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And some one called me by my name:
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

— From *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural
Poem Since 1800*, Volume II
(Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press, 2016).

**A SELECTION FROM THREE
“POETS OF THE PALISADES”
ANTHOLOGIES, 2010-2020**



The Poet’s Press published three anthologies of poetry from the poetry community loosely known as “The Palisade Poets,” centered around readings sponsored by the North Jersey Literary Series, an offshoot of the The Rift Arts Forum started in 1996. The editors considered submissions from poets of the Tri-State area who had been featured readers at the series. The anthologies were edited by Paul Nash, Denise La Neve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John. J. Trause.

The editors proposed a list of favorite and representative poems from the three anthologies; the final, narrower selection of poems was made by The Poet’s Press. The selection excludes prior Poet’s Press authors who already have their own entries in this book.

DOROTHY ALEXANDER

When Gravity Stops Working

There are days
when you feel
your wings growing in,
long and sleek,
and oiled with promise.

Preen them.
Ruffle them.
Hear them clatter
together.
Then run them
over your breast.
Feel them brush against
your sides, your back.
Let them be a reminder:
there is more to you
than only earth.

These are the days
when you press
your elbows together,
arch your back and feel
the air
cupped and rounded and solid
beneath you.

Your usual gravity
will not suck you down
this day,
won't bruise you
against the carpet.
Leap off
the arm of the couch.

Snap out
your feathers
like geisha's fans
and hang
in the air.

Lean into the glide.
Trust you will come
to your perch and settle
on your own two feet.

Gravity only stops working
when you jump.

RENÉE ASHLEY

Glass

for Michael Madonick

Endlessly, me clattering
behind you, one ticklish
step, one brittle shoe, one
stumble behind — the heart's
clickety lag, the slick,
exquisite path . . . See,
it's tricky in the stunning
dark — clear stones
like potholes, inverted
ankle twisting
sons-of-guns
I've got to leap
over like a goddamn
stag. It's all so
fragile — the delicate road,
the intricate race.
Listen, let's grab
a shard of what you see
up there — you're
the wild-assed and prodigal boy.
I'm merely your tremor,
your faint, giddy shadow
watching while you quick-step
over the lightless track.
But I believe in smithereens.
I know lucid splinters
when I see them.
(They tell me
the sun shines
white-blue here —
platinum, fulsome &
blinding.)
Breathe deeply
think:
steady and stalwart
(think: luminous) —
this is perfidious darkness.
You've got to consider
our common
glass footprints,
the lucid rain,
our common glass,
our weary hearts.

RAPHAEL BADAGLIACCA

García's House

for Gabriel García Márquez

Thank you for inviting me to your house.
From the outside this stone hut seems so small,
Not much more than a window and a door;
But when I enter I find myself
In rooms opening into other rooms,
Each more astonishing than the last,
With exotic hangings and fantastic clutter
Immaculately arranged.
Like no one else, you turn abundance into clarity.

Thank you for inviting me to sit on this bench
And share this artichoke.
As the story unfolds, the thing comes apart,
Leaf by leaf,
Until, at last, we reach the heart.

There is a warp in the wood of this bench,
And the tiny houses were evenly arranged
So that no one house would get more sunlight
Than any other house,
And they would not belong to the land
Until they had buried one of their own
Like a memory,
Like the memory of the morning
When his father took him to discover ice.

Thank you for walking with me in the garden
Where grapes are the size of lemons
And lemons the size of grapefruits
And blood oranges are everywhere
Telling their tales of love and despair.

AMY BARONE

Defying Extinction

We were playful gazelles in an early era,
before the songs of my sisters died.
A circle of three has vanished.

I endure aftershocks of a family breakdown
like a cheetah — no longer fighting
but running fast and hiding.

A chirrup conceals endless distress
that replaced hope, noble goals.
Back home, I place potted plants
on graves of souls who sowed seeds.

Near hissing summer lawns, I bury keys
to family property in crimson rosebeds.
Hollows of trees hold childhood laughter.

Exile begets peace and freedom.
Memory softened by changing seasons.

At night, dreamscapes whitewash remnants of rage.
Loved ones appear and approve the change.

Inheritance is a white horse, keeper of secrets, a new best friend.
Together we seek destiny as we dance with sky and wind.

JOHN BARRALE

From the Long Year of Saying Goodbye

Old age
is mostly silence,
but sometimes
I hear the birds
calling to each other
from their places
in the trees,
and I can still imagine
their shapes
and the way
sunlight settles
on resting
wings.

This morning
you brought in
yellow blossoms
and we shared
an orange.
Color is sound,
you said.

CATERINA BELVEDERE

Misericordia

Michelangelo's Pietà

*"I merely uncover what God has already placed
inside the stone." — Michelangelo Buonarroti*

This rock, this stone,
white pure
like her love, like her son
in her hands, in my hands,
empty and wanting —
his soul reborn inside the stone,
this mass to be form, to be shape.
Inside my head I see his face.
This rock, this stone,
it is heavy
like a mountain on my chest,
a Madonna, it is pain,
like a spear in my side.
In his side
I split the veins
hidden in the rock,
and I chisel the veins
that bulge in his neck.
Then I hammer his back
like my heart that pounds,
and pound on his chest,
and form his hands
with hands that bleed,
and I curse this rock
as they cursed my lord.
Now I smooth my sins
like wounds he healed
and I cleanse his feet —
He cleansed our sins.
Inside the rock, my death,
there's a canyon of stone
on the folds of her dress,
and I carve his soul inside the rock
and breathe his life inside the stone,
and pound and chisel and carve and cut
his hands, her hands, my blood, my bones.
In the rock, in the stone,
I die his death a thousand times
and birth divinity white as hope.

Sacco and Vanzetti

July 14, 1921

I speak to you only with respect,
Signore Giudice.
I am Nicola Sacco. I am Bartolomeo Vanzetti.
I am innocent. I am innocent.
Innocenti.

Guilty only of an extreme hunger.
The hunger that has haunted our people
across the Atlantic
like a dead ancestor.
Slaves of their immediate fate,
our bambini are breastfed by poverty,
educated by violence.

Our young ones
thrown into the arms of adversity,
live with a language that does not express
our passions.
Knowing the misery of childhood
in a foreign land,
their only hope
is to have no hope.

We left our clear lakes, olive trees, sheep trails.
Tend not our own vineyards
under the ardent sun.
We as a people have come to this
"terra promessa,"
this promised land.
This is for us the new world.
Our roots cross an ocean of history.
Our ideas to be planted in your American soil.

Our children will thrive, reborn
from your prejudice.
They will watch as your giant oaks
are cut down,
watch as the sins of your fathers
pollute rivers and streams.

I speak to you only with respect,
Signore Giudice.
I am Nicola Sacco. I am Bartolomeo Vanzetti.
Italian by blood, American by choice.
Foster children who have been abused
and beaten;
called pigs, dagoes, wops, dogs
and grease-ball guineas by our adopted
brothers and sisters.
We are clean in a land that is indeed tainted.

Today we speak to all who sit in judgement
of us,
to those who would see us hanged from a tree
so high.

“We do not wish to a dog or to a snake
what we have been made to suffer.
I suffer because I am an Italian,
and indeed I am an Italian.
I am so convinced to be right,
that if you could execute me two times,
and if I could be reborn two times,
I would live again to do
what I have done already.”¹

¹ From the original transcript of the sentencing of Sacco
and Vanzetti.

I speak to you only with respect
Judge ... Webster ... Thayer.
I am Nicola Sacco. I am Bartolomeo Vanzetti.
We are not dogs or pigs.
We are the sons of the sons of the sons of
Dante Alighieri, Alessandro Volta, Virgil, Verdi,
Leonardo, the Medici, Michelangelo, Marconi,
Meucci, Galileo Galilei, Giulio Cesare,
Giuseppe Garibaldi, Giovanni Caboto, Seneca,
Stradivari,

WHO IN THE HELL ARE YOU?

LAURA BOSS

Snapshot

In the 1940 snapshot, my Aunt Rose is perched
on this ship's railing her legs crossed movie star style
over the white canvas round life buoy
with letters spelling *SS Jamaica*, New York
on the polished wooden deck
She is a Ginger Rogers look-alike
in her stylish black dress
with two slanted white pockets
each with a black button for decoration
She wears a wide brim picture hat
and an even wider smile that seems to welcome
whatever adventure will come her way
on this cruise ship
In her smile there is no hint
of the war rumbling waves
on this smooth sea beneath her —
no men her age in uniforms
soon to ship out to Europe —
out to Pacific waters
on a bon voyage of blood and death
that awaits her at 32

She is like America at that moment
caught in dazzling peaceful sunlight —
no indication of the shipwreck waiting
in nearby harbors.

LAURIE BYRO

The Other Vincent

Theo, I never told you or our parents that the other Vincent,
the one who was born dead, whispers to me from the dark cloak

he wears as he grows tall like a shadow on the days I am alone.
When I look out at the Rhone, he walks toward me carrying

his armfuls of stars. They are really chrysanthemums, don't tell him
I know, but in his hands they glow off the water like sticks of fire.

Is he preparing a pyre for the second Vincent? Do you miss him
like I do? Little stranger, he died without sin. He was good

at mathematics, he was smart at school. He may have been a priest
so often he hears my confession. I worry for his ears in frost.

He glows as if he is covered in snowy moths. I was his best
brother. He never complains like you about my voices.

You take after Mother in worry. Theo, sadly, I am again in need
of certain colors. Please send as you can, bolts of canvas and tubes.

You can help match my moods, azure and grey for dreary Wednesday.
Cornflower, cobalt, aquamarine. Oh that glorious gold of angels.

Oh the sooty overcoats of crows, of brothers. There are brothers
to spare, angels everywhere I look. You are my favorite, really.

CATHY CAVALLONE

On the Cape of New Jersey

The fog lifts over tree tops
adorning the hem of the sky
with cornices and crenellations.

Clouds unfist their gauzy breath and
splinters of mist settle over the lowlands.
The buckwheat and hollyhocks stop
to consider
their
fading . . .

to ephemeral dust every night.

This town, this
slumbering wharf,
time-worn by decades of
unlocked doors,
sits on the crest
of a wisp of time,
keeping track of the sunsets
and coaxing the ships
to the shore.

And the sky, stippled with night signs,
turns over and sighs
branch over branch,
like naked brown legs
shifting in their meditations
along the horizon —
a deep crimson blood spill
of lush flesh and faded lace
kissing us
with quivering lips.

JUDITHA DOWD

What, Where?

Audubon toted paper for his drawings,
tools and preservatives to keep the skins.
He posed his endless questions to the earth —
estuary's muck and distant mountain —
where he'd daily wander fifty miles or more
in moccasins, his gun across his shoulder.

Today we run our marathons in spandex,
our shoes are the handiwork of engineers,
and the remnant wilderness is wholly owned.
Gone, the profusion that lit his waking dreams:
Forty beavers glistening in their winter coats,
the sandhill cranes a river in the sky.

LAURA FREEDGOOD

You Are

gorgeous
he says.
Appraises your

grass-green eyes,
the hilly slope of your neck.

Gorgeous.
You want to think
he means

your heart's faint alarm,
the etched veins
along the inside of your wrist,

the breath that comes
uncertain at night,
struggles for dawn.

Anyone can dazzle
held up against candlelight,
backlit by fireflies.

You want him
to see you
unshielded,

crinkled,
the way you were born
the way you will leave.

DAVIDSON GARRETT

A Fifteenth-Century Monk Laments His Vocation Illuminating Manuscripts

It is the frigid monastery room —
where my bony fingers paint away
day after day — I most despise.
After Matins in the stained glass chapel

and cold gruel in the refectory,
I sit before this hard stone table
hunched back for hours
grasping my hog bristle brush

as I dip ultramarine pigments
coloring the Virgin Mary's cursive robe
with touches of sunburnt vermilion
contrasting the ivory holiness

of a fleshy face. It's an ordeal
to capture those immaculate lips
a crack-of-dawn pink, complementing
her wimpled head with blue veil.

My worn eyeballs
glitter with gold-leaf dust
causing watery tears to drip
on vellum — which has the foulest odor

I have grown to passionately hate
since it irritates my sensitive nostrils
with smells of dead animal skins.
I'm always stressed, in a mad frenzy

for the portrait to be reasonably
perfect, so that the finicky scribes
who first copied the inked text
might impress a pretentious Medici.

Such tedium challenges my faith
and I wonder if I still believe
any of this sacred mythology
rushing to finish as daylight fades.

DEBORAH GERRISH

Windthrow

I smell winter; it's only October.
Wings of rustling dead leaves wrinkle,
fireplace smoke slaps the air, and hundreds
of acorns pucker our front yard.

I've had enough of sadness.
Traveling south on the Harlem River
Drive to the hospital, a naked man stops
traffic. On the radio, a brisk black lab

has swallowed a knife. Owners take a limo
twice a week to the east side veterinary
hospital. There's a rash of hurricanes, uprooted
trees, earthquakes — every loss, colossal.

It's mother's third visit to this hospital bed —
the charge nurse scrawls on the board
9am-7pm as she signs in. Thick sheets, fluffed
pillows, mechanized bed, untouched tray

of tea, oatmeal, and peaches. On television, palm
tree-marine ads lessen the mist of aches. I fear
the absence of light. Sunflowers loom on the table
next to the urinal pan. I melt into her room —

study every fold of her face, her perfect teeth,
her mouth curved upward in the corners.

Semiconscious. Breathes with a threatening
rattle as I flip pages of the burgundy devotional —
her arthritic hand covers mine. The smell
of death, the smell of resurrection.

The Gift

“The world is but canvas to our imaginations.”
— Henry David Thoreau

I made you a poem packed with galaxies
out of map-green tint from the nettle tree —

swaddled in bark of birch’s silky scent
twined in spirals with milk-white parchment

I stitched in bright berries from holly
the high-pitched *qui-qui* of brown coqui

wove diaphanous shells of cicadas
falling chimes of rain from La Paz

robed it with flossy ribbons
of peony petals and phlox.

Another world of other worlds I place
on your doorstep in the evening’s haze.

Quietly. Listen past the music against
the scented page — Let it whisper its galaxies.

GEORGE GUIDA

In a café, killing time,

you find nothing done.

The music breathes too loud,
the counter orders fill in shouts.

A pretty young boy is
casting grasping eyes your way.

On the sidewalk an endless cast
of unknowns lead their dogs and kids

on glacial rounds, while purpose rests
with joggers, buses, Ubers and e-bikes.

For you with dreams and magazines,
losing this hour is art as hard

to master as what happens now
or promises not to happen at all.

THERÉSE HALSCHEID

The Bottom Stones

The Natives say that stones hold the history of a place,
they say you can hold a stone in your hand
and discern its mystery

that your palm will read it,
that your palm too can be read, like rivulets
its lines go outward in meaningful phrases, like tributaries
they drain into the knowing sea of your hand.

If all can be known by touch all has a message
even the tiniest pebble, even today
standing beside an untamed brook
as I peer through its clear look down to
its gravel bed

I understand how the current takes to it things
like my own path on land
and its sudden events

I notice the bottom stones
who hear laps of water and remember them right,
are constantly talked to by current.

Today, while brook announces itself, my hand skims
its surface before sinking
down to these small bodies of rock, back
to the clarity our fingers first had
before time.

PATRICK HAMMER, JR.

In Moloney's Front Field

for Joan

High on a hillock
in Moloney's Front Field,
in Farrihy, Limerick,
it stands iconic. And open,
it waits unbending
against the low horizon:
a living lunette suspended
yet without leaves.

In the dying light, the night
I see it after so long — dumbstruck —
as if meeting it for the first time.
The sun's last rays caught
in the latticework of a spider's web
and so am I.

At the base rocks half-cover
exposed roots — the movements
and machinations of earlier generations.
Grass grows long and wild, ever widening.
Piss-a-beds and bluebells share
lazy legroom in the dirt.

Moss climbs lichen-like
on two ancient trunks
that twine and hold up this tree
like the bloodlines and branches
of this Irish family — the living
and the gone.

What appears dead this late
April, already at its ends
shows signs of greening
once again.

Each Time a Person Dies, a Library Burns

— based on a quote by Jandy Nelson

And when I die, cross over, lift the veil, meet the maker,
I plan on taking some of my favorite words with me —
from my poems, my books, my everyday speaking. Some
will have to stay behind, but I am holding on to *aspergillum*
to sprinkle the journey before me with gems.
I'm taking *illumination*, *incandescence*, *diaphanous*,
effervescence, *ephemeral*, *opalescent* under my arm.

All my life I thought of the dead, just like other people
we no longer see, as having gone to some distant foreign city,
not dead at all, having only to learn
a new lexicon of sounds and meanings to go on living.
So I will pack as souvenirs: *gossamer*, *halcyon*, *harbinger*,
labyrinthine, *inglenook*.

Some of the dead, if not all, are always with us, lingering on
as we live. And so I share, in both worlds no more solid
than paper turned to ash, words we can live with, die for:
lithe, *penumbra*, *corona*, *scintilla*, *susurrus*, *conundrum*,
and *woebegone* — until all our libraries have burned,
and we are truly gone.

JOSH HUMPHREY

Spontaneous Poem for the Actor John Garfield

They called him a Communist, but he was
no Communist. The girls knew better
just by looking at him, the soul inside the eyes
where our mothers told us it would be,
although we never saw it inside anyone else.
Just John. Just John could look out at us
from a movie screen, from inside a character
we didn't care about, and tell us
everything we needed.

He died in bed with a woman. Our husbands
joked about it on our lawns. He died
in the saddle, they would say in that knowing way.
But they didn't know.

Every one of us, their quiet wives quietly
making dinner, forbidden by our mothers to go
to the funeral because we were married and silly.
Any of us would have traded our lives
to have been that woman there at the end,
even if he would have died afterwards
in our arms.

We were just girls but we still knew better.
We knew how the love was different, how
we would never love anyone the same way
ever again. We would have kissed him, kissed
the last breath from his mouth and been
the happiest of our lives.

VASILIKI KATSAROU

Elements

Light: first source
of fruit,

fruit: gifts of the tree
and the sea,

see, seek shelter in its shade

let shade scissor light
from dark

weave

we've a pattern
of these elements

and draw from them a home

dance in its shadow

Time
whirls
through us demi-
urgically

let the wind connect us
to the tree

let the rain connect us
to the sea

DENISE LA NEVE

The Constancy of Radioactive Decay

“Our instructors told us to point them with our lips. I think I pointed mine with my lips about six times to every watch dial. It didn’t taste funny. It didn’t have any taste, and I didn’t know it was harmful.”— Grace Fryer, Orange, N.Ĵ., The Daily Courier, April 30, 1928

1917-1926: **U.S. Radium — Orange, New Jersey**

Tango boots click over floorboards.
Women paint dials marked with numerals
as *Undark*’s¹ luminous radiance
forms a spectral yellow-green halo
around lips softly pursing camelhair brushes.

Tango boots scrape floorboards.
Women polonium lit,
are poisoned by lies — whispers of syphilis
as isotopes supplant calcium,
decomposing and deforming bone.

1918-1936: **Radium Dial — Ottawa, Illinois**

Cuban heels click over floorboards.
Girls laugh and giggle,
their wedding bands and bracelets all aglow
while they are encouraged to
“kiss the brush between your lips.”

Cuban heels scrape floorboards.
Kept innocent of dangers,
legs break in mid-fall;
wrists fracture at mere touch,
and all laughter is silenced.

1921-1930s: **Waterbury Clock Company — Waterbury, Connecticut**

Mary Janes click over floorboards.
Through the Great War
and as it fades,
radium watches are still the rage.
Undark, darkness — lingering luminescent lips.

Mary Janes scrape floorboards.
Voices are not heard
amidst rotting abscesses,
extracted teeth,
necrotic pieces of jaw.

¹ *Undark*. A trade name for luminous paint made with a mixture of radium and zinc sulphide.

1937-1978: **Luminous Processes** — Ottawa, Illinois

Sandals click over floorboards
as maidens talk and dream,
applying the iridescent compound
while clocks mark time's passing.
Lips touching — testing, but tasting nothing.

Sandals scrape floorboards
as beauty degrades, disintegrates,
darkens into leprotic silhouettes
with hollowed out cheeks, tumorescent chins.
Death acceptable now, even welcome.

Yellow Mum Next to a Cabin at Lake Atsion

for Roy Lucianna

Spring whispers cedar-scented breezes,
stirring dandelions and tussocks of grass
as male carpenter bees swarm cabin walls,
hovering in anticipation
before females in wood bowers.
Geese with goslings paddle tannic waters
while we chat on pine-planked porches.

The kitchen spices the air with delectable
 fragrances;
an overabundance of food appears and
 is consumed.
Philosophies are argued, humorous stories
 retold,
poetry recited.

A solitary mum blooms next to the log cabin,
its yellow petals curving inward,
sparking color against the sandy soil.
A bee lands on one of its florets
seeking pollen and nectar.
The flower willingly yields for the chance
 of dispersion,
extension beyond life.

A fireplace warms the breakfast room,
emitting a burnt bouquet
as flames shadow dance on andirons.
Canoes meander back from a morning sojourn.
Robins, hawks, even goldfinches glide
on cool circulating air.

Waiting for the outfitter's retrieval,
kayaks are beached on level ground,
life vests piled high.

I touch the amber-clear water
lapping against the shore
and notice the wilted chrysanthemum ...
an invisible breath has scattered its atoms
 before dawn's light.

A spirit is left behind to skim along ripples with
damselflies,
brush against sweet clover
where a praying mantis slowly sways,
seep to the level of pine root,
and sail with bees into the sunlight.

ROY LUCIANNA

Orion

The giant Orion the Hunter
appears when the air turns cold,
pushes angular above the horizon,
intact and active
towards the end of the year.
You might say he's some chance-cast die,
like a five,
thrown by the hand of Invisible Chaos.

Or you might say he's some chance gathering
of deep and closer stars
in a pattern which does not exist
from any other view in the universe.
(From here, it only seems to be Orion).

Does it matter that he inspired awe
or ridicule — the huge horny hunter,
transformed by the awesome Artemis,
pursued by the Scorpion,
pursuing the Pleiades?

Does it matter that we ourselves,
who claim this group as god or accident,
came to exist,
you might say,
by some chance?

CHARLOTTE MANDEL

Sagaponack Beach

“Tell me again how the white heron rises”— Hayden Carruth

My steps the only mark of shoes so far,
the sandbar gives and takes, spongy,
alive. Rows of waterfall glide to shore.

Fencing wire and cries of hatchlings warn
dune grass nesting plover. Farther on, aura
shimmers — a stillwater mirror, newborn

rain pond where six white herons pose like vases
to be dipped and filled with underwater selves.
Thirst dares me too close — a long neck rises

archangelic wings unfold and flare.
Water scatters image of flight reversed.
My arms carve a zero in feathered air.

MARILYN MOHR

June 18, 1940

Bernard, tall, strong with the angular
features and face of a film star,
most handsome in the portrait
of my Uncle's handsome family.

In June, after heated arguments around
the dining table, packed his bicycle,
kissed his mother's wet cheeks,
assured them all of his ability to locate
safety for them in the south,

Pedaled away, muscular legs pumping
a distance from the panic of Paris,
amidst a crowd fleeing to regions free
from the iron cross and hatred of Jews.

Roads littered with suitcases and debris,
bumped around obstacles obscured by
dust rising from thousands of trudging feet.

Cycled day and night through mists
of fear, deafened and slowed by angry winds,
he did not see the truck.

Crushed in the columbine of war,
they sent his bloodied shirt home
for his mother to weep into, her shawl of grief.

Panama Jack

Panama Jack is gone.
He has packed his monocle,
his floppy hat and his cigars
into his worn backpack, jumped
a barge on the River Styx, his
next adventure. I know this
for a fact, because I saw his suitcase
in the resale shop, packed with his
blue batik flowered shirts, imprinted with
his mustached smile searing the truth
of this last journey, the one he had to take alone.

PAUL NASH

Trace

“Yet after brick and steel and stone are gone,
And flesh and bone are dust, the dream lives on.”
— from *Only the Dream Is Real* by Anderson M. Scrugg

I

The stove’s embers are dying again
as microcrystalline runnels of frost
drift inward on sylphid wings

to stir vague recollections
of far pavilions beneath consciousness
within fleeting memories of dreams.

A snail’s trace across floorboards is lit
in raised cuneiforms under a full moon
as Selene ascends the night.

II

18,000 years ago
dragon lizards and pygmy Stegodonts¹
heard the *Hobbit Lady of Flores*²

sing to her *Ebu Gogo*³ children,
chanting amid the choral piping of
archipelagic tree frogs.

Her song was carried away
far beyond her life in the Ring of Fire —
just a whisper now, fading each dawn.

“The grave’s a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.”
— from “To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell

III

Rio Po floods this valley each year
as it flows east to the Adriatic,
covering past transgressions.

Beneath farm and industry,
preceding Capulet and Montague,
older than Rome or Iron Age rust,

the two doomed *Lovers of Valdaro*⁴
cradle each other for 6,000 years,
splintering dry brittle bones.

IV

A nearctic hush of stars
saps the last vestige of warmth or feeling
as thoughts fly to boreal passes
and high shimmering Pleistocene lakes
encircled by windswept alpine tundra
girded by basaltic crags.
Life and time are suspended . . .
gusts give way to the silence of snowfall
blanketing rock, lichen and heather.

ENDNOTES

- (1) A genus of the extinct subfamily Stegodontinae of the order *Proboscidea* (Elephants).
- (2) Purported member of a now extinct hominid species that co-existed with modern man whose diminutive fossil remains were recovered on the Indonesian island of Flores. Some archaeological evidence indicates *Homo floresiensis* lived to as recently as 12,000-13,000 years ago, while local island mythology suggests an even later date.
- (3) In the mythology of the Nage People of Flores, the Ebu Gogo are a group of diminutive human-like creatures believed to have persisted to at least the 16th century when Portuguese trading ships arrived, and some believe they survived into the 20th century. Legends tell of the Ebu Gogo kidnapping Nage children and stealing food. In the Nage Language “Ebu” means “grandmother” and “Gogo” translates to “he who eats anything.”
- (4) Named for a village in Northern Italy where the two intertwined Neolithic skeletons were first discovered.

Slipstream

“. . . the gods grow old along with the men that made them. But storms sway in heaven, and the god-stuff sways high and angry over our heads . . . Even the gods must be born again.”

— D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent* (*Quetzalcoatl*)

“I am the ‘great storm’ who goes forth out of the ‘great below.’ I am the Lord of the Land.”

— *from the Sumerian creation myth Enki and the World Order, circa 2000 BCE*

She unfurls the line
and casts it skyward,
toward those watchful eyes in the storm,

plumed serpent eyes
that welcome the clouds of dust,
cartwheeling leaves and stinging sand.

Tethered to a black ring of stone,
the massive kite bucks and rises,
a colossal manta ray rustling
in a turbulent sea of dry air.

Straining block and tackle,
she hoists with callused hands
and climbs the taut halyard,
lost above the mists and the cliff walls.

Now only distant shadow,
the great kite shivers in space
as she grips the time-worn flybar
to adjust outhaul and canvas.

To the west amidst towering cloudbanks
Lord Quetzalcoatl
stares fiercely down at her . . .
she cuts the line

*and spirals deliriously
out of control,
riding the slipstream past consciousness
into feathered oblivion.*

Soaring soundlessly above ozone,
flocks of famished songbirds
devour her fleeting thoughts

and carry them southward
to winter in Patagonia,
where they are shed like wisps of down.

They seep slowly through earth's stone pages
to an ancient shoreline,
entering the cold, petrified bones
of feathered saurian ancestors,

trespassing without hesitation,
stirring faded memories
into ghostly whispers,

blending those with her own final sigh.

SUZANNE GILI POST

At the Edge of the Forest

As we walked
hand-in-hand in the pine forest,
our legs hemming a line in unraveling ferns
(delicate twigs that we were),
our feral spirit mingled
in woodland hues of greens, arbor browns
and the rich crimson pulp of secrets.

I reminisce now over those picnics,
those safe and sacred get-us-away's,
oozing with brie and arugula
and hearty, rustic breads —
fresh, round and washed down
with a good Port —
a beating red juice pouring
into our throats, merging with fumes
left behind by our famous kisses.

Love was found. Love was lost.
Should it matter now? Yes, I think it should.
Memory, friend or foe, is after all master.
Like cement, it fills gaps in our cracked
awareness and gives us the complete story.

As a great stand of white pines at Lake Tiorati
towers over my present puny minutes,
and as their cones hold tiny seeds
for the promise of conifers to come,
I rest now and again
in a world at the edge of the forest.

Titanic

Holders of original bills of lading say
there were two million dollars' worth
of ostrich feathers aboard the ocean liner,
bound for hatters on Houston Street,
headed for the heads of millionaire lady folk
who lifted their chins over all sorts of things —
trends, sandwiches, fandangles and scandals.

We've all seen the pictures of suffragettes
and Helena Bonham Carter running
from mum
into the arms of a lover
in a tiered, whale-boned and crested
extravagance,
and we all know the outcome of what perished
on the virgin voyage aboard that
whale of arrogance,
but picture this in your lexicon
of Titanic images:

*On top an ice float,
its vane and barbs encrusted with salt,
clutching onto the slush,
lone survivor of a drowning class
shimmering in the moonlight — iridescent,
bouncing up and down,
pulsing in its last grab for attention
like a beacon in the wake of the big sink ...
one single plume.*

MORTON D. RICH

The Man Without a Zip Code

Saw Mars with his naked eyes
thought to paddle a canal with his dog
ride a big brown horse toward the moon's
reflection on the far side of the Mississippi
where Mark Twain called out his tradename
in the time of Jim, Tom, and Huck,
our best friends before *Fahrenheit 451*
set fire to libraries and bookstores
and sent living books into exile.

The man without a zip code
saw that hearing aids made food taste
like ear wax left in the sun too long
or his dog's leftover slobbered kibble,
the kind John Donne could not write about
while Death was so proud on Mars
sitting aside a big roan stallion.

The man without a zip code
had a difference of opinion with a postal clerk
who claimed that eating fried onions
before mailing a letter was unknown
on Mars and therefore he would have to ride
his big Appaloosa across the Mississippi
to deliver canceled checks and overdue books
to Mark Twain and John Donne in person.

The man without a zip code
heard from his chiropractor that fish oil
improves vision and visions of Martians
especially those riding Percherons
to moonlit circuses on the Mississippi
brought to land by side-wheelers,
the kind Sam Clemens eased among the eddies
while ranting dogs ran on both banks.

The man without a zip code
saw a quarter horse hypnotized by moonlight
eat marigolds until Martian canals turned
upstream to save humankind from radiation
or ratification or rationalization or deracination
until dunned by tightrope walkers from the CIA
warning of tax penalties delivered by dogsled
until he got himself a valid zip code.

Night Sky, March 23, 1996

We step off the porch, barely look up
and there it is — Comet Hyakutake,
clearly visible below the handle
of the Big Dipper and near Arcturus,
a tailed fuzzball in the sky where
nothing had been before. I say,
*How kind of you to drop by again
after only twenty-thousand years.*
Behind the house, making its own hammock,
the new moon reveals its craters
and shadowed bulk comfortably,
at rest above the roof, at ease
in the knowledge of its familiarity,
knowing that when the exciting intruder
is gone, we will look for our moon,
near companion in the inscrutable sky.

DENISE RUE

My Norwegian Loneliness

I like to imagine the loneliness of different landscapes,
as if heartache wrapped in bearskin would be more benign.
This morning, for example, I wrote a letter to my Viking lover, long at sea.

*Dear Ragnar, I wrote, the nights are long and even the aurora's
garish brag does not ease my longing. I imagine you in your longboat,
breastplate gleaming. How is your supply of puffin jerky holding out?
I strive to remain faithful, but Olaf the Slow-Witted courts me,
carving animal shapes from haddock and leaving them at my doorstep.
Rollo the Meek has gifted me an antler comb. I am weakening.
Return to me. Knock on my wattled door. The wolves howl.*

Perhaps the loneliness of glaciers would be easier to bear.
There would be monasteries to sack and flagons of mead to hoist.
There would be girlfriends named Astrid and Olga, days would fill
with carding and spinning and the general merriment
of the stone lifting competition. And I would be blonde.

But what if it was worse? No tangerines or Sarah Vaughn.
No Chunky Monkey or Lester Young. No penicillin.

But maybe there would be something to keep the giants at bay.
Maybe I'd believe in the one-eyed Odin, a fortress built of eyelashes.
Wouldn't it be a relief for inner and outer landscapes to match?
The sea monsters and maelstroms, that whirlpool loneliness
that ever threatens to pull us under.

Buzzard Song

A wake can pick a zebra clean in minutes.
One burrows his baldhead into an eye socket,
one slithers up a sinus as if slipping on a glove.
Expert excarnator, scrupulous tearer of flesh,
your gut can neutralize rabies, anthrax.
Like a Goth, septum pierced clean through,
stripped of song, you hiss and grunt.
Brains when dried, smoked, and mixed with mud
are said to conjure guidance from beyond.
And here you come this morning, a gargoyle
perched on my fence, settling your red head
atop folded wings, sliding your third eye shut.
Leave me — I have nothing left to give.

ALISON RUTH

paint chipped his heart

atoll blue

bruises after my only knockout
i swore on both my black eyes
i'd never smack canvas again.

granada gold

her hair twisted around my fist
cut it and sold it.
she can grow more.

cardinal red

blood, hers or mine
you always leave some behind
guess this won't be an unsolved crime.

verdoro green

the traffic light when i gunned it
zero to sixty, eight seconds flat
god i miss that car.

sierra yellow

broken bottle sunset
metallica all night
corona at dawn.

palisade green

handcuffs snag my wrists
mouth stuffed with grass
pine needle rain.

polar white

when it snows in mexico
that's when my time is served.
guys with windows tell me
it's still summer.

palladium silver

crushed beer can
flattened it with chromed out slicks.
leaving the scene of an accident
kind of in a rush.

baja gold

my cross on a chain
i snapped it around her neck.
the only thing
i wanted her to wear.

bermuda blue

i strangled my conscience.
it took a few minutes to die,
but it was worth the wait.

palamino copper

i've seen that western before.
where the white hat played the bastard.
i always wear black.

orbit orange

carnauba wax & krylon paint
the car i'll blast out to space
once they unlock my cell door.

chalk outline

White dust traces the form of a fall:
a rubber band constricts the shape
of an absence;
a piece of string ties the space of a memory.

An air pocket frozen in amber,
a breath molded in molten glass.

Every removal of a presence echoes.
When we pass through a door unlocked
after eviction,
a faucet might be turned clockwise,
a light switch might be left on.
Yet the water has been shut off,
and the electricity disconnected.

Write on the wall what a person has thought.
Carve into stone what a person was named.
Mark on the walk where a person has lain.
The space is sacred until it rains.

JOHN J. TRAUSE

What Lies Between Us

What lies between us lies between us
as lies lie between us and the Gowanus Canal,
the Hudson River, the Hackensack River, and Berry's Creek,
and attendant contamination, mercury and all.
What lies, between us.

I cross all of these and cross myself
across the waterways of youth and death,
width and depth,
amid the many isles and quays, not cays,
or pacific plastic disasters,

and I encounter counter to the red tide
a rhetoric of passive acquiescence, snide,
or pacific pleasantries,
dwarf trees
distress
stress

water
what
wawa

wa

w.....

how do you do?

Note: Written for Walt Whitman's 200th anniversary
in response to the line "what is it, then, between us"
from his "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry."

WE hold tight

I hold you tight, my love, tonight,
although we are apart.
Here is a bone, thrown from my throne,
a jewel of great delight and style,
a pendant
Darde et Fils, Paris

Cartier, London

Van Cleef & Arpels, Paris
to make you smile, while we're apart.
I hold you tighter every night;
you hold us tight the same,
un pendant d'artifice
a stratagem —

To be a queen most unforeseen
would be my great delight, a gift,
but our constitution is not strong
enough to let the bluff go off
for you, for us, a sovereign, rough
cut to the core. We wish to ask for more.

Note: King Edward VIII of England (the Duke of Windsor) and Wallis Simpson (the Duchess of Windsor) used "Hold tight" and similar phrases in their correspondence before their marriage.

DORIS UMBERS

The Absence of Crows

For my father

The sound of crows and I imagine you
kneeling on the edge of the lawn,
cutting away the stray blades of grass,
your knees sunk into the faded green foam,
which gives beneath like flesh,
 your back arched
in a kind of silence, except for the crows.

This year, in the absence of crows,
cicadas quicken in the rising heat.
I kneel to watch one emerge wet-winged
from its perfectly round hole under
the roses I cut and bring you
and where the canna erupts, a dark shape
against my new neighbor's boundary.
I touch the earth where it was and remember
the stag beetle fetched from the bottom
of the watering pail, and how I held it
out to you, a perfect specimen,
its whip-like antenna intact —
we laid it on the window sill to dry,
only to find it gone in an hour.

I will not dig up the irises this year.
Enough to have imagined you here again,
except for that moment some bird came
of a sudden, its shadow nearly palpable
in this space beside me.

Dressing in Dark

pantoum for my mother

I dressed in dark, darker
still the room in which she waits.
No good can come of this.
Morning will not make us whole.

Dark the room in which she waits.
Light seeps through casement windows.
Morning cannot make us whole.
Sparrows beyond glass take flight.

Light seeps through open windows.
Dressed, I slept beside her.
Sparrows beyond reach took wing.
I did not see them pass.

Dressed, I slept beside her
in that room. Dark, oh darker still
what passed so close to morning.
No good can come from such a loss.

GALEN WARDEN

Losing Your House Is a Hurricane

They predict it on TV with colorful radar maps
but the exact trajectory and precise destruction
are uncertain until the last minute.
Maybe it will miss us. Maybe it will mow us down.

There's no reason to be surprised
when things go wrong, badly wrong, then terribly wrong.
It all adds up. Very predictable.

Losing the house is a hurricane.
Rain like nails.
Deafening wind.
The unrelenting fear of losing it all.

You hold on tight with your heart.
But your heart is no match for that force of nature.
No job. No rich daddy. No miracle fix. It's slipping
from your grip.

The perfect storm comes to rob you of your possessions:
The details that make you you: the style, the fashion,
the image
you've built with so much effort over the years. Gone.

And you're left with nothing.

And the joy of nothing
owning you anymore.

No matter what.

GEORGE WITTE

DAK

D
A
K

Beneath the trestle pillar's pall of rust
initials burn
mysterious at dusk,
descend like carp in autotrophic gloam.
Revelation,
sign, acronym or curse,
confession to whoever's listening,
last will and testament
of death foretold,
spraypaint guide for bridge construction workers,
hieroglyphics
lost to our incumbent
language. The evening train accelerates;
we hurtle past,
today's ill news recast
as table talk, devourer and devoured
more evidence the world's
deranged by God.
Nothing to be done but wait for risen
seas' erasure
of our kind. The letters
fade unseen, disowned by all but one who
stares as if entranced through
rain-spattered glass,
anonymous, a wayward passerby
led home, by what or why
he cannot say.

ANTON YAKOVLEV

The Car You Drove That Night Was Silver

I used to dialogue with your poplar blossoms.
Swinging in hammocks,
I shared with you my whatever.
You set the tone for my snapshots
of seagulls, of faith,
lent tastefulness to my grab bags.
You were easy to talk to,
easy to hug in ballrooms.
Your notes fell into my day like weather.

A man came in from the cold.
It was very cold. It was coon hat time
for him. He headbanged that striped tail,
a pioneer. He was awkward.
He flaunted an irresistible wavelength.
Later, you walked the streets shivering.
You got support from friends who orbited you.
You learned to make cupcakes
and followed cats across bridges.

I never loved you, so I wonder why
I can no longer hum any of your carols.
From swings, I can tell you nothing.
Your curls are somewhere.
I wouldn't be able to tell what apple horseradish
you mix and match. I wouldn't be able to tell
your lips from cough drops. I don't know your coat-of-arms.
I wonder if cloud nine rained at any point.
I wonder if that water saved any trees.

DONALD ZIRILLI

Blazon

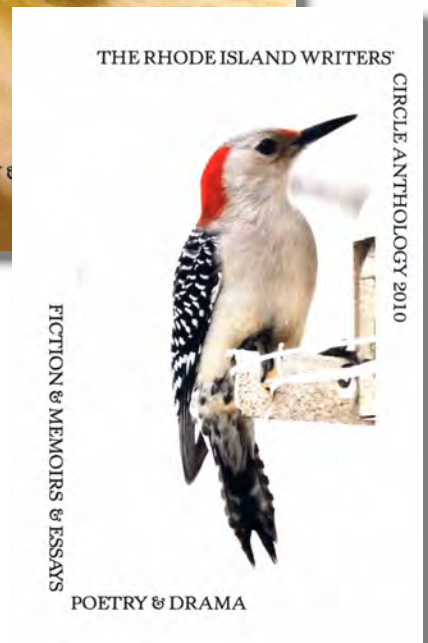
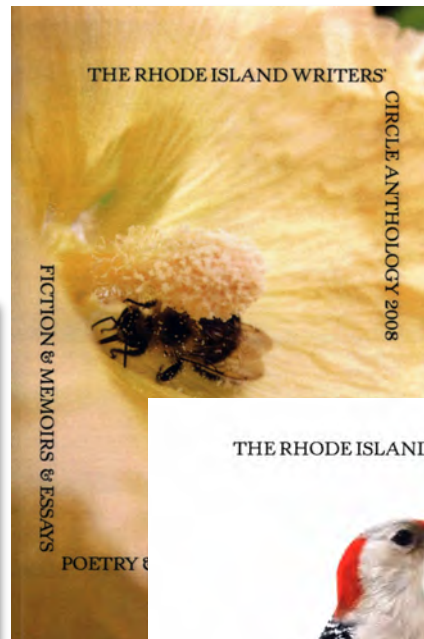
That's my old hat, crisp as a wafer,
spiders in the empty head, sitting next to
my daughter, Lachrymosa. Rub your finger
on the tight weave. Those are my feet,
tired of dancing, toe knuckles trying
to break through the surface. My bones
are deep-sea divers. My ocean recedes.

That's my summer, smothered in footprints.
Someone is dead in the woods, the usual
lossy depression. My army of skeletons
is still on its way, close enough to make
allowances for in your overall strategy,
which I would call my love. That's my view
from here, a woman in a blue dress
I could pick up like a bell but I can hear
the music already, through the holes
in the elbows of my old coat of arms.

THE RHODE ISLAND WRITERS' CIRCLE ANTHOLOGIES (2003-2010)

The Poet's Press co-published four volumes of poetry, fiction, prose, and drama with
The Rhode Island Writers' Circle.

The Writers' Circle, headed for many years by Rose Pearson, sponsored readings,
writers' workshops, staged readings of plays, and many other literary programs.



JACK COULEHAN

Babushka

Melikhovo, Russia

In endless rain the school that Chekhov built
sports fresh paint, Crimean blue and white trim.
Mud-covered village behind it — squalid huts,
stands of aspen, slat church, and barnyard geese
as skinny as ferrets. A mosquito-pricked marsh.
The babushka, wrapped in a black overcoat
with rubber boots, sits at the door. We pay her
fourteen rubles and, since she insists with a switch,
we scrape guck from our soles before entering.
In the classroom where Chekhov's sister taught —
rows of desks like polished roots and a map
depicting the world as yellow. The woman's
grudging face shows us the whole place. No tourists
this week until us. Mosquitoes' predatory whine
replacing rain. The vestibule is so damp
Babushka's knees are honking. She pantomimes
relentless hours spent alone, stamping her feet
on floorboards to pump her blood flow.
She shows us the stack of spiritual reading
her granddaughter sent from Moscow.
Meanwhile, our driver spits, *Babushka!*
Her husband drank himself to death, he says.
And she wants you to know this village
hasn't had a baby for twenty years.

— From *Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthology*, 2010.

MATTHEW GOLDMAN

Ontology Revisited

Except, as ever, I am not here.
All is always as ever before:
The wave, the wave, as ponderous;
The wind as passionate;
The offshore lurid as moon contrives;
The pebble,
Perhaps,
As rounded yet.

Except, as ever, I am not there.
And neither glide amid the wood,
Nor hang in hunting:
Stoop to the teaming field.
Lately I have not shrieked my proprium;
Clutched nor torn nor ripped nor ravened.

Again, I am gone;
And, yet again, remain.
See how my shadow starts your huddled doubt.

Look where you will —
The rank and fertile furrow measures not
The sweat and seed I lavish on this world.
The corded hornbeam strains no more than I.
Not more the dove laments
Nor trillium shies.
Not more the bat pursues
Nor moth eludes
Than I, the night;
Than I, revealing day.

I am not gone
Nor do I yet remain;
But am
And was
And will,
At some time,
Be.

There Is No Will

I am the heir of uncontained beauty and power.

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson, Journal* — 19 March 1835

There is no will save the world's will,
No way that has not been passed;
No claim co new save what is old,
No life but intends to last.

Here bides the magic of the highest order,
Where the wind shrieks wisdom to the stillborn stones;
Where the roots spread reason 'neath the kneeling hills
And the trees lean to listen to the storm.

I have known the anguish of the hounded quarry;
In the whitetail's track I have strained the wind.
Down the heaving slope I have plunged and staggered,
Agonized by the arrow.

I have leaped from the ledge with the avid moonbeam,
Laughed with the ice on the estuary,
Scooped with the hawk from the spired heavens,
Raved the dream of the flower.

I have been the river, I have been the sea,
I have been one mute, uncounted drop
In the thunderstruck forest
Held the sky in my hand!

Yet when the yellow leaves of the ash
Flutter to rest on the lawn,
I shall spread my wings o'er the echoing earth
And rise above the last dawn.

— *From Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthology, 2007.*

INGRID WILD KLECKNER (1931-??)

Ingrid Wild Kleckner, a German American, worked in the family-owned diamond and precious stones wholesale business in Germany; planned, built and ran a diamond plant in Ireland; was an international coordinator at Ogilvy & Mather; and worked for almost twenty years at Brown University before starting her own business, The German Connection, which helped new immigrants upon their arrival in the United States. She wrote short stories in both English and German and was active in writers' groups in Rhode Island.

Talking to the Moon

We who are born in July are children of the moon,
and I have been talking to you since I was a child.

They told me then you were a he,
I got to know your face, familiar now, and dear to me.
I see its features every time I look at you — craggy, old, gray creases
running down your cheeks.

And then somebody sang to me about Frau Luna,
your poetic persona,
and I saw you the first time as a woman, ethereal,
your face lovely and cool and white,
gauzy silver gowns trailing behind you,
with languid fingers spreading star dust for lovers,
enmeshing them in magic.

Until one day I met you face to face
in the flat regions of the northern parts of the land;
across the garden you stood, balancing on, the horizon,
larger than I, huge,
your golden orange sucking me in,
permeating me, filling me with warmth.

Moon, who are you really?
Will you tell me your name?

— From *Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthology*, 2007.

Life's Alphabet

The ducks draw lozenges onto the water,
weave geometric carpet patterns
from sheer
improbabilities
and non-existing premises
meant to define
an element
eluding
stubbornly the grip of our fingers.
How could we write life's alphabet
onto a slab of slate
striated by the wind,
prone to respond
to forces
we can hardly comprehend?
I'm all for science.
Let it give me explanations, manuals,
how to weave new patterns
and create arresting counterfoils
on our entry ticket into life.

— From *Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology, 2003.*

ABOUT THIS BOOK

THIS VOLUME CELEBRATES the 50th anniversary of the founding of The Poet's Press, and is the 300th production of the press. All of the principal authors published by the press are represented here, as well as poets included in Poet's Press anthologies. Books represented here appeared in print, and many in PDF ebook editions as well, ranging from limited edition, hand-bound volumes to commercially printed books, to today's print-on-demand books. Imprints of the press include The Poet's Press, Grim Reaper Books, Yogh & Thorn Books, and B. Rutherford Books.

The chronology, bibliography, and locations of the press are documented in the bibliographic pages at the end of this volume. It is as accurate as memory permits. Some chapbooks went through multiple printings impossible to document, and copies of some early books from the press are lost from our archive through flood and theft.

With the advent of the Yogh & Thorn imprint and the publication of historical anthologies, as well as the translation activities of our authors, the author-list of the press has widened, ranging from ancient Greek poets to well- and little-known Romantics and moderns. It surprises no one more than us that we now include John Dryden, Phillis Wheatley, Lord Byron, Edgar Allan Poe, Heinrich Heine, Victor Hugo, Sarah Helen Whitman, and Charles Hamilton Sorley in our catalog, and that we have published Russian, German, French, and British poetry and fiction. Perhaps this should be less of a surprise since our focus has always been on poets who connected themselves to their

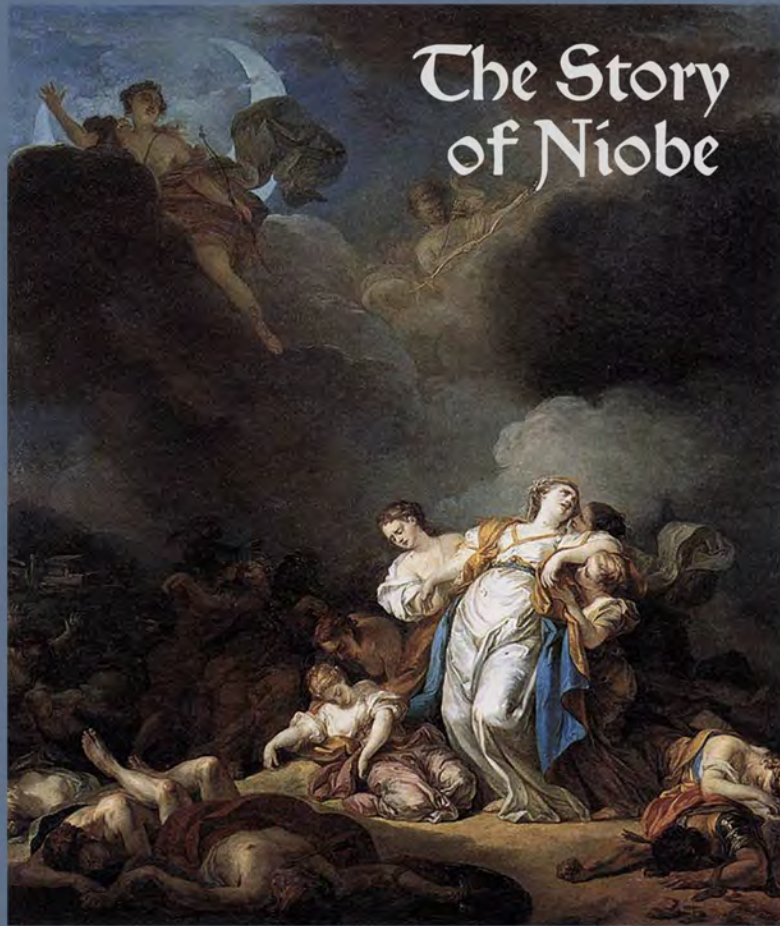
poetic predecessors, rather than those who set out to smash what came before.

Most of the poets we published from our beginnings in Manhattan in the 1970s are gone, and it has fallen to us to gather and publish all the known poems of Emilie Glen and Barbara A. Holland, and to keep in print the work of others such as Shirley Powell, Annette Hayn, and Jack Veasey, whose work might otherwise be lost. The catalog of The Poet's Press represents the vision of its founder, its family of authors, and of the editors of its anthologies. The press has never sought or accepted grants, and has never published fashionable poets.

The body text for this book is Plantin. Several attractive modern fonts, including Galliard and Plantin, are based on typefaces originally designed by Robert Granjon (1513-1589), a prolific type designer and founder active in Paris, in the shop of Christoph Plantin, and later in Rome at the Vatican. In 1913, Monotype issued several versions of Plantin, based on some of Granjon's designs. Section titles are set in Century 725 Black, poem titles in Franklin Gothic Medium Condensed.

For Robert Burns' "Tam O'Shanter," the original Aldine type from our edition of *Tales of Wonder* has been retained, in a larger size to facilitate following the many footnotes.

A detailed history of the press was envisioned for this book, but space does not permit its inclusion. It will be made available as a separate publication at a later date.



The Story of Niobe

**ADAPTED FROM
OVID'S METAMORPHOSES**
by
**BRETT RUTHERFORD,
PHILLIS WHEATLEY,
& SAMUEL CROXALL**

PUBLISHING CHRONOLOGY, 1971-2022.

1971, New York City.

Richard Lyman (pseud. Richard Bush Brown).
In the Silence of Scorpions.

Joseph Drucker. *Blood and Other Poems*.

Morris R. Morrison. *Prologue and Performances*.
The first book published under The Poet's Press imprint.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Prometheus*. Pilot issue of a journal, dated Summer 1971. Only about 50 copies bound and issued. Title-page and some ad type set by hand in Goudy types and proofed on a 9x12-inch Kelsey letterpress. Some unsold copies of the book *City Limits* are bound in as a center section.

1972, New York City.

Emilie Glen. *Up to Us Chickens*. Offset printed at The Poet's Press.

Robert Carothers. *Freedom and Other Times*.
Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

George Eklund. *The Infant Dawn*. Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Dolores Giles. *Stepchildren of Arguello East*. 32 pp. Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Stanley Murphy. *Short Poems for a Long Journey*.
Jointly published by The Poets Press and Gyro Publications. Printed offset at The Poet's Press. Covers hand-colored with pastel marbling (no two alike).

Marjorie DeFazio. *A Quiet Noise*. 32 pp. Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Louis Newman. *Burn. Yellow Candle, Burn*.
Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Ree Dragonette and Denis Sivack. *Apogee*.
Printed by The Poet's Press for the authors under the Calliope Publications imprint. 32 pp.

George Flynn. *The High Ground*. Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Bruce Gerig. *Miss Clam and Miss Claw*.
Drawings and verse. Offset printed at The Poet's Press.

Emilie Glen. *Twat Shot*. Chapbook. 12 pp.
Offset printed at The Poet's Press.

D.H. Melhem. *Notes on 94th Street*. 66 pp. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. Two printings.

Robert Carothers, ed. *Wrenches*. A collection of student writing from Edinboro State College, PA. Printed for the college.

1973, New York City.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart*. With photographs by David Murphy. 500 copies, offset printed at The Poet's Press. Only a handful of copies of this chapbook remain.

Barbara A. Holland. *Autumn Wizard*. This chapbook was a sampler of the poems to be included in the two-volume set, *Crises of Rejuvenation*, and was presented as a surprise birthday present to the poet during a reading at The Poet's Press loft. Offset printed at The Poet's Press.

Dolores Giles. *Arguello East and the Bluebird of Happiness*. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. No copies of this book remain in our archives.

Edmund Miller: *Fucking Animals*. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. No copies of this book remain in our archives.

Pomona Ellis. *The Promise of Another Tomorrow*. 88 pp. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. No copies of this book remain in our archives.

Louis Newman. *Tear Down the Walls*. Printed offset at The Poet's Press.

Poets Fortnightly. Edited by Barbara A. Holland and Brett Rutherford. This was New York City's first Poetry Calendar, listing poetry events in all New York boroughs. Also included some poems and book reviews. Subscribers sent stamps for the number of issues they wished to receive. Printed offset and mailed from The Poet's Press loft. Issued 1973-74.

Stuart Milstein, ed. *The Tenth Muse Anthology*. 1973. 64 pp. Printed offset at The Poet's Press for The Tenth Muse.

Debut. Literary Journal of Edinboro State College. Printed for the college.

1974, New York City.

Barbara A. Holland. *On This High Hill*. (reprint facsimile). Offset printed on brown kraft "butcher paper."

Barbara A. Holland. *Autumn Wizard*. This chapbook was a sampler of the poems to be included in the two-volume set, *Crises of Rejuvenation*. New cover by Scott Randall Kerr, hand-colored with water color on each copy. New title-page. Offset printed.

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*, Vol 1. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Offset printed. Hand-bound (stapled) with a wraparound dust jacket glued to a blank cover.

Bruce Gerig (as Jack Knife). *The Perfect Man*. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. No copies of this book remain in our archive

Claudia Dobkins. *First Poems*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. Offset printed. 24 pp.

Poets Fortnightly. Edited by Barbara A. Holland and Brett Rutherford. This was New York City's first Poetry Calendar, listing poetry events in all New York boroughs. Also included some poems and book reviews. Subscribers sent stamps for the number of issues they wished to receive. Printed offset and mailed from The Poet's Press loft. Issued 1973-74.

1975, New York City.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *May Eve: A Festival of Supernatural Poetry*. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). 64 pp. Offset printed. This landmark collection marked what might be called "The New York Gothic School," presenting the supernatural poems of four New York poets: Claudia Dobkins, Barbara A. Holland, Shirley Powell, and Brett Rutherford. Illustrated by Scott Randall Kerr, then a high-school student in Teaneck, NJ. The book was premiered at a gala reading in Ree Dragonette's loft in Westbeth.

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation* Vol 2. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). Offset printed.

Jack Veasey. *Handful of Hair*. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). Offset printed. 32 pp. First chapbook publication of a young Philadelphia poet.

Boruk Glasgow. *Solid State*. 64 pp. Printed offset. No copies of this book remain in our archives.

Boruk Glasgow. *Tale of a Sufi Surfer*. 68 pp. Printed offset. No copies of this book remain in our archives.

Rissa Korsun. *Crossroads of Time*. Offset printed chapbook, 32 pp.

Richard Davidson. *Song of Walt Whitman*. 40 pp. Offset printed. With an introduction by Donald Lev. A verse play. Given a staged reading that year at Westbeth, directed by Brett Rutherford with a cast of Equity Actors and poets. This book had several printings.

Brett Rutherford. *Fête: A Poem of Dark Affection*. 16 pp. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. Fifty copies hand-bound in blank red suede-finish covers. Illustrated by Scott Randall Kerr. This is the ur-text version of this poem.

1976, Manhattan and Brooklyn.

Boruk Glasgow. *Adventures of Little Self*. Offset printed. 96 pp. No copies of this book remain in our archive.

Barbara A Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*, Vol. 1. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Second printing. Offset printed. Hand-bound (stapled) with a wraparound dust jacket glued to a blank cover.

Stuart Milstein. *A Dream in Eden*. The poet's first and only chapbook. He died a year later.

Emilie Glen. *Late to the Kitchen*. Offset printed.

Annette Hayn. *One Armed Flyer*. Offset printed.

Emily Greco. *Things to Do When Dead*. Offset printed. 48 pp. With a foreword by Barbara A. Holland.

1977, Brooklyn.

Barbara A. Holland. *Burrs*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. Offset printed. 44 pp.

Barbara A Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation* Vol 2. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). Second printing. Offset printed.

Boruk Glasgow. *Rare Book Renegade*. 64 pp. Offset printed.

1978, New York City.

George Flynn. *Zingers*.

Boruk Glasgow. *A Mobile Alchemy*. 64 pp.

1979, New York City.

Emilie Glen. *A Hero Somewhat*. B. Rutherford: Books imprint. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound (stapled). 24 pp.

1980, Weehawken, NJ.

Emilie Glen. *Up To Us Chickens*. Third printing. Offset printed with blue frontispiece. Stapled, 24 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Autumn Numbers*. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint).

Barbara A. Holland. *Collected Poems* Volume 1. (B Rutherford: Books imprint). Type set in Cheltenham at Pilot Mountain Graphics, NC. Printed xerographically and hand-bound.

Annette Hayn. *Journeys Around One Point*. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). 64 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Burrs*. B. Rutherford: Books imprint. Book completely reset and redesigned with Gothic ornaments. Offset printed. 44 pp.

Richard Davidson. *Ribbon of Smoke and Stars*. 20 pp. Offset printed and hand bound (stapled).

Michael Katz. *The Crossing*. Offset printed. No copies of this book remain in our archive.

1983, Weehawken, NJ.

Emilie Glen. *Rails Away*. Limited edition, numbered and signed. Laser print on acid-free paper, hand-bound. Oversized type and wood engravings of railroad scenes of New York State.

Emilie Glen. *Dark of Earth*. 16 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper, hand bound (stapled). Title-page from hand-lettering. Type was from Olivetti typewriter. A very low-budget production from just before we shifted to custom-designed types rendered in dot-matrix.

1984, Weehawken, NJ.

Barbara A. Holland. *In the Shadows*. Frontispiece drawing by Jane Madson-McCabe. Laser print on acid-free paper,

hand-bound. 30 pp. Download and read this book in PDF format.

Emilie Glen. *Roast Swan*. B. Rutherford: Books imprint. 78 pp, Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Emilie Glen. *Roast Swan*. Poet's Press imprint. 50 pp, Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Shirley Powell. *Rooms*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound. 56 pp.

Shirley Powell, ed. *Womansong: An Anthology of Women's Poetry*. ca. 1984.

Annette Hayn. *The Crossing*. With illustrations by Deborah Leslie Hayn. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems*. First edition. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound, 40 pp. (12 numbered poems plus four miscellaneous autumn-themed poems.)

Emilie Glen. *77 Barrow Street*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 36 pp. Title-page watercolor by Jane Madson-McCabe.

1985, Providence, RI.

Hakim Bey. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Hakim Bey. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Second printing.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. First edition. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound, 84 pp.

Lutz Rathenow (Boria Sax, trans). *Kontakte (Contacts): Poems and Writings of Lutz Rathenow*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. A few hardcover copies

were also hand-bound. Facing-pages German and English.

Donald Lev. *There Is Still Time*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 34 pp.

Stone Ridge (NY) Poetry Society. *As If The World Had Not Known Sorrow: 1984-85 Contest Issue*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 44 pp.

1986, Providence, RI.

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*. Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford.

Shirley Powell. *Rooms*. Second printing. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Hakim Bey. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Second printing. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Hakim Bey. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 48 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Third printing.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems*. Second edition, expanded. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound, 26 pp. (14 numbered poems plus four miscellaneous autumn-themed poems.)

1987, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound, with custom typefaces designed for this book. 82 pp. This book was debuted at The Providence Athenaeum library, with actors portraying Poe and Mrs. Whitman in a one-act play written by Norman George.

Brett Rutherford. *Thunderpuss: In Memoriam*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 50 copies privately circulated to the poet's friends. 14 pp. [The lilac Siamese had

been The Poet's Press mascot since 1972. The poem also appears in *Poems from Providence*.]

Brett Rutherford. *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 56 pp

Joel Zeltzer. *Shadows in Light: Poems for Federico Garcia Lorca*. Laser print on acid-free paper with illustration by Goya. 20 pp.

J. J. Clarke. *The Crow of the Moon*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 32 pp.

The Poet's Press Catalog and Anthology. 72 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound (stapled). A sampler of 1987-88 Poet's Press and Grim Reaper books.

Lutz Rathenow (Boria Sax, trans). *Kontakte (Contacts): Poems and Writings of Lutz Rathenow*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Second printing. Facing-pages German and English.

1988, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound. Additional text in this volume includes, "At Lovecraft's Grave," an elegy written for the 50th anniversary of Lovecraft's death, and several other HPL-related poems. 250 copies were printed, with a handful in hardcover.

Brett Rutherford. *At Lovecraft's Grave*. Illustrated by Richard Sardinha. Hand-bound edition, oblong, 64 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Boria Sax. *I Am That Snowflake*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Tom Chandler. *The Sound the Moon Makes As It Watches*. Illustrations by Talin Megherian. 68 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

The Pawtucket Arts Council. *An Anniversary Collection 1984-1988*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 86 pp. Jointly published by The Poet's Press and Pawtucket Arts Council.

1989, Providence, RI.

The press produced no books this year.

1990, Providence, RI.

Annette Hayn. *Calendar House*. With illustrations by Deborah Leslie Hayn. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Shirley Powell. *Alternate Lives*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Brett Rutherford. *In Chill November: New Poems 1989*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Limited edition of 200 numbered copies. 32 pp.

Jacob Rabinowitz. *King Solomon's Book of Love Songs*. Co-published with Verlag Golem.

1991, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Poems from Providence*. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Offset printed in an edition of 1,000 copies.

Brett Rutherford, ed. Revival of *Poets Fortnightly*, a free poetry sampler. At least six issues published and distributed in Providence, RI.

Emilie Glen. *Glenda and Her Guitar, Emilie and Her Piano*. Laser print on acid-free paper, hand-bound. 48 pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck.

1992, Providence, RI and Boston, MA.

Tom Chandler. *One Tree Forest*. 56 pp. Offset printed.

Brett Rutherford. *Knecht Ruprecht, or The Bad Boy's Christmas: A Moral Fable and Five Christmas Verses*. 16 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Brett Rutherford and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and Liberation*. 84 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck. A few copies were also bound hardcover.

1993, Boston, MA and New York City (Brooklyn).

Brett Rutherford. *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. 2nd edition, revised, with Poetica Lovecraftiana. Laser printed on acid-free paper and hand-bound, 72 pp.

Catherine Murray. *Lights in the Water*. With an Introduction by Mary Ferrari. Laser and ink jet print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.

Shirley Powell. *Villages and Towns*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 56 pp.

1994, Weehawken, NJ.

Annette Hayn. *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. First edition was ink jet printed on acid-free paper and hand bound.

1995, Weehawken, NJ and Providence, RI.

Press issued no new titles this year.

1996, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems*. Third edition, expanded and revised. Offset printed, 98 pp. (27 numbered poems). Also a bibliography of Poet's Press books.

1997, Providence, RI.

Shirley Powell. *Other Rooms*. Laser printed on acid free paper and hand bound.

1998, Providence, RI.

Emilie Glen. *Up to Us Chickens*. 2nd edition.

Donald Lev. *There Is Still Time*. New edition.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Second edition, expanded and revised.

1999, Providence, RI.

Jody Azzouni. *The Lust for Blueprints*. First printing. Laser and dye-sub printed on acid-free paper.

2000, Weehawken, NJ and Providence, RI.

Joel Allegretti. *The Plague Psalms*. (Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint). Several different hardcover and hand-bound softcover bindings. Limited number of copies bound in black hand-made India paper, called "The Dominican Binding." A similar beige paper was used for other copies, which were called "The Human Skin" binding.

Thomas D. Jones. *Genealogy X*. 60 pp. Ink jet printed on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Two printings.

2001, Providence, RI.

Annette Hayn. *Chamber Music*. Hardcover edition. Premiered in Queens, NY one month after the 9/11 disaster.

Jody Azzouni. *The Lust for Blueprints*. Second printing. Offset printed with laser print color pages bound in.

2002, Providence, RI.

The press was on "sabbatical" in 2002.

2003, Providence, RI.

Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthology 2003. Hardcover edition. 224 pp. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Hardcover edition, 160 pp. Introductory essay expanded and revised for this edition.

2004, Providence, RI.

No new publications in 2004.

2005, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. 2nd edition, revised 2005, with "Poetica Lovecraftiana."

Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. 208 pp. 7 x 10 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. 208 pp. PDF ebook edition. As an experiment, distributed free on The Internet Archive and other online sites. More than 15,000 copies were downloaded.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Third edition, expanded and revised.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Third edition, expanded and revised. PDF ebook edition.

2006, Providence, RI.

Joel Allegretti. *Father Silicon*. 7 x 10 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press.

Brett Rutherford. *Chiggers: Poems and Writings in Progress*. (Poets Press Yogh & Thorn imprint). This limited-edition chapbook was created as part of Brett Rutherford's graduate work at University of Rhode Island.

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised). Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford, based on interviews with the poet. 106 pp., 7 x 10 inches.

Annette Hayn. *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second edition. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 64 pp.

Annette Hayn. *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second edition. PDF ebook, 64 pp.

2007, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second printing, with corrections.

Brett Rutherford. *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Oblong format. Illustrated with black-and-white photos and digital art.

Brett Rutherford. *Things Seen in Graveyards: Images*. Oblong format -- full-color photo book as a companion volume to the poetry.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2007. Hardcover edition. 224 pp. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2007. Paperback edition. 224 pp. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2003. Paperback edition, reprint of 2003 hardcover. 224 pp. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.

2008, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Fourth edition, expanded and revised; all later editions were 6 x 9 inches and repaginated. 7 x 10 inches, 272 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. 32 pp, oblong format, with color digital art.

Thomas D. Jones. *Voices from the Void*. 124 pp.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2008. 260 pp. 6x9 inches. Hardcover and paperback editions. Drama, fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.

Brett Rutherford. *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings*

of *H P Lovecraft*. Second printing of 2nd edition, revised 2005, with *Poetica Lovecraftiana*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 94 pp.

2009, Providence, RI.

Annette Hayn. *Chamber Music: New and Selected Poems*. Second edition, expanded. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches.

Annette Hayn. *Chamber Music: New and Selected Poems*. Second edition, expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

Emilie Glen. *Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. First version, with oversize type. 6 x 9 inches.

Don Washburn. *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk: An Essay on Love*. (A sonnet cycle). 80 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

Shirley Powell. *Other Rooms*. Second edition. 112 pp.

Joel Allegretti. *Father Silicon*. 72 pp., 7 x 10 inches. Third printing.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart*. With photographs by David Murphy. PDF ebook from original 1973 printing. Also published as an Issu "flipbook."

2010, Providence, RI.

Jody Azzouni. *Hereafter Landscapes*. Cover art and illustrations from the paintings of John Martin (1789-1843). Oblong book, paperback.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Only a few copies of the hardcover were ever distributed. Withdrawn when corrections were made for the second printing.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

Kathleen M. Kelley. *The Waiting Room*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 12. Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.

Paul Nash et al, eds. *Beyond the Rift: Poets of the Palisades*. 168 pp., hardcover, 6 x 9 inches.

Paul Nash et al, eds. *Beyond the Rift: Poets of the Palisades*. 168 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

A.T. Fitzroy (pseud. Rose Allatini). *Despised and Rejected*. (Novel.) Poets' Press Yogh & Thorn imprint. 300 pp. Annotated edition by Brett Rutherford.

Charles Hamilton Sorley. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 166 pp.

Boria Sax. *The Raven and the Sun: Poems and Stories*. 82 pp. 6 x 9 inches. Cover art and illustrations by Tom Fitzpatrick.

Rhode Island Writers' Circle Anthology 2010. (Drama, nonfiction, fiction and poetry.) 184 pp., paperback. 6x9 inches. Published with The Rhode Island Writers Circle.

2011, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Brett Rutherford. *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp. PDF ebook edition. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Third printing. Paperback, 7 x 10 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn*. Third edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

Brett Rutherford and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and*

Liberation. Second edition, expanded. Paperback, 132 pp., 8-1/2 x 11 inches. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Ellen Lafleche. *Workers' Rites*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 13. 48 pp. Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.

Th. Metzger. *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed: A Verse Tale of Egypt, Rommel, Angry Gods, Caligari & Amphetamines*. 134 pp. With digital montage art by Brett Rutherford.

Brett Rutherford. *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 164 pp.

2012, Providence, RI.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 2. 294 pp. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Corrected and revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford.

Lucille Burt. *Neither Created Nor Destroyed*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 14. 48 pp. Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.

Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. Second printing. 330 pp., paperback. Reset in smaller type than the first printing.

Don Washburn. *The Boy From Under the Trees*. 106 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by George Jarck.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Fifth edition, expanded and revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *An Expectation of Presences: New Poems and Revisions*. 364 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches.

2013, Providence, RI.

Moira Bailis. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1*. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 272 pp.

Moira Bailis. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 272 pp.

Moira Bailis. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 2*. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 328 pp.

Moira Bailis. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 2*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 328 pp.

David O'Connell. *A Better Way to Fall*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 15. Paperback, 36 pp., 6 x 9 inches. Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised). Second printing. Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 7 x 10 inches, 106 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors*. Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint. Second printing. Paperback, 32 pp., oblong format, with color digital art.

Boria Sax. *Animals in the Third Reich*. (History and cultural study.) Poet's Press Yogh & Thorn imprint. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 234 pp., illustrated.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn*. Deluxe color edition, from third edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 160 pp.

Jack Veasey. *Shapely: Selected Formal Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 132 pp.

Joel Allegretti. *The Plague Psalms*. Paperback, 7 x 10 inches. 78 pp. Full-color version, third edition. This full-color edition restores the color graphics that were used in the first

edition, which had been printed using color inkjet and dye-sub printing.

2014, Providence, RI.

Brett Rutherford. *Trilobite Love Song: New Poems and Revisions 2013-2014*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 56 pp.

2015, Providence, RI and Pittsburgh, PA.

Jacqueline deWeever. *Trailing the Sun's Sweat*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp.

Vincent Spina. *Dialogue*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 88 pp. Cover includes art by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Vol 1. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 314 pp. Poet's Press Yogh & Thorn imprint.

Jack Veasey. *The Dance That Begins and Begins: Selected Poems 1973-2013*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 226 pp.

Claudia Dobkins-Dikinis. *First Poems*. A PDF facsimile of a Poet's Press Grim Reaper chapbook from 1974.

Richard Davidson. *Song of Walt Whitman*. (Verse play.) PDF ebook, a facsimile of the 1975 Poet's Press edition.

Emily Greco. *Things to Do When Dead*. PDF ebook, a facsimile of the 1976 Poet's Press edition.

2016, Pittsburgh, PA.

Annette Hayn. *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 64 pp.

Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 2: Fiction and Prose Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 198 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800*, Vol. 2. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 332 pp.

Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 222 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol.

Don Washburn. *Prayer Beads: A Poem Cycle*. Set in 14-point Jensen type with ornaments from medieval architecture. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 196 pp.

Heinrich Heine. *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Bilingual edition. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. Foreword by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 208 pp. Illustrations by Jim Cheff.

Brett Rutherford. *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition, second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 164 pp.

Paul Nash et al, eds. *Meta-Land: Poets of the Palisades II*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 250 pp.

2017, Pittsburgh, PA.

Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 4: Poems from Manuscripts*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 152 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol.

Charles Hamilton Sorley. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Second edition, revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelmann. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 166 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Tenth Anniversary Expanded Edition. Paperback, 6 x 9, 114 pp.

Pieter Vanderbeck. *Coffee Break: A Radio Drama in Twelve Episodes*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 144 pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Jacqueline deWeever. *Rice-Wine Ghosts*.
Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 76 pp. Set in
oversize Jensen type.

Brett Rutherford. *City Limits*. PDF ebook.
Facsimile of a pre-Poet's Press book by
Rutherford.

Brett Rutherford. *Songs of the I and Thou*. PDF
ebook. Facsimile of a pre-Poet's Press book
by Rutherford.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart*. PDF
ebook. Facsimile of the 1973 Poet's Press
edition.

2018, Pittsburgh, PA.

Brett Rutherford. *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.
Second edition, revised. Paperback, 6 x 9
inches, 262 pages. (Poems from the 1987
Prometheus on Fifth Avenue were combined
with some poems from *The Gods As They
Are, On Their Planets* for this new book.)

Brett Rutherford. *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.
Second edition, revised. PDF ebook, 262
pages.

Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their
Planets*. Second edition, revised. (Some
poems that appeared in the original edition
of this book have been revised and moved to
the companion volume, *Prometheus on Fifth
Avenue*.) Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 217 pages.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*,
Volume 1. Corrected and revised. Edited
and annotated by Brett Rutherford. PDF
ebook edition, 246 pp.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, ed. *Tales of Wonder*,
Volume 2. PDF ebook edition, 294 pp.
Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford.

Jack Veasey. *Sonneria: Collected Sonnets & Other
Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 214 pp.

Jack Veasey. *Sonneria: Collected Sonnets & Other
Poems*. PDF ebook edition, 214 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Trilobite Love Song: New Poems
and Revisions 2013-2014*. PDF ebook
edition, 56 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Crackers At Midnight: New
Poems and Revisions 2015-2017*. Paperback, 6
x 9 inches, 126 pp.

Charles Hamilton Sorley. *Death and the Downs:
The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*.
Second edition, revised. Edited and
annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an
annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman.
PDF ebook, 166 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Anniversarius: The Book of
Autumn*. Deluxe color edition, from third
edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6
x 9 inches, 160 pp.

Pieter Vanderbeck. *Coffee Break: A Radio Drama
in Twelve Episodes*. PDF ebook edition, 144
pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck.

Annette Hayn. *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems
of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second
printing. PDF ebook edition, 64 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *An Expectation of Presences:
New Poems and Revisions*. PDF ebook edition,
364 pp.

Shirley Powell. *Other Rooms*. Second edition.
PDF ebook edition, 112 pp.

Don Washburn. *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed
Hawk: An Essay on Love*. (A sonnet cycle).
PDF ebook edition, 80 pp.

Don Washburn. *The Boy From Under the Trees*.
PDF ebook edition, 106 pp. Illustrations by
George Jarck.

Barbara A. Holland. *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th
Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised).
Single-volume edition with notes by Brett
Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 106 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Night Gaunts: An
Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings
of H P Lovecraft*. Second printing of 2nd

- edition, revised 2005, with Poetica Lovecraftiana. PDF ebook edition, 94 pp.
- Boria Sax. *The Raven and the Sun: Poems and Stories*. PDF ebook edition, 82 pp. Cover art and illustrations by Tom Fitzpatrick.
- Jacqueline deWeever. *Trailing the Sun's Sweat*. PDF ebook edition, 80 pp.
- Vincent Spina. *Dialogue*. PDF ebook edition, 88 pp. Cover includes art by Pieter Vanderbeck.
- Boria Sax. *Animals in the Third Reich*. (History and cultural study.) Poet's Press Yogh & Thorn imprint. PDF ebook edition, 234 pp., illustrated.
- Donald Lev. *There Is Still Time*. PDF ebook edition, facsimile of print book.
- Jack Veasey. *The Dance That Begins and Begins: Selected Poems 1973-2013*. PDF ebook edition, 226 pp.
- Joel Allegretti. *The Plague Psalms*. PDF ebook edition, 78 pp. Full-color version, third edition. This full-color edition restores the color graphics that were used in the first edition, which had been printed using color inkjet and dye-sub printing.
- Brett Rutherford and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and Liberation*. Second edition, expanded. PDF ebook edition, 132 pp. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck.
- Moira Bailis. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1*. PDF ebook edition, 272 pp.
- Moira Bailis. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 2*. PDF ebook edition, 328 pp.
- Jack Veasey. *Shapely: Selected Formal Poems*. PDF ebook edition, 132 pp.
- Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. Second printing. PDF ebook edition, 330 pp.
- Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 2: Fiction and Prose Poems*. Second printing. PDF ebook edition.
- Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines*. PDF ebook edition.
- Emilie Glen. *The Writings of Emilie Glen 4: Poems from Manuscripts*. PDF ebook edition.
- Meta-Land: Poets of the Palisades II*. PDF ebook edition.
- Heinrich Heine. *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Bilingual edition. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. Foreword by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 208 pp. Illustrations by Jim Cheff.
- Brett Rutherford. *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Tenth Anniversary Expanded Edition. PDF ebook edition, 114 pp.

2019, Pittsburgh, PA.

- Thomas D. Jones. *Voices from the Void*. Second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 124 pp.
- Thomas D. Jones. *Voices from the Void*. Second printing. PDF ebook, 124 pp.
- Arthur Erbe. *Continuum*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 140 pp.
- Susanna Rich. *Beware the House*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 146 pp.
- David Messineo. *Twenty Minutes of Calm: Poems of Nature, Scene & Season*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 42 pp. Designed in the style of an Elbert Hubbard Roycroft book.
- Brett Rutherford. *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 130 pp.
- Burt Rashbaum. *Of the Carousel*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 72 pp.

- Barbara A. Holland. *Out of Avernus: The Exiled Sorceress and the Fallen Priestess*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from The Barbara A. Holland papers.
- Barbara A. Holland. *Medusa: The Lost First Chapbook*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Set in oversize Adobe Jensen type. Edited by Brett Rutherford from the Barbara A. Holland papers.
- Barbara A. Holland. *The Secret Agent and Other Poems from Notebooks & Chapbooks*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 156 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from the Barbara A. Holland papers.
- Sarah Helen Whitman. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence (Literary Essays and Selected Poems.)* Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an essay, "Sarah Helen Whitman as Poet and Critic." Illustrated. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pp.
- Sarah Helen Whitman. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence (Literary Essays and Selected Poems.)* Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an essay, "Sarah Helen Whitman as Poet and Critic." Illustrated. PDF ebook, 300 pp.
- Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Sixth edition, expanded and revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 414 pp.
- Mikhail Artsybashev and Leonid Andreyev. *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 266 pp.
- Emilie Glen. *Moon Laundry: Rediscovered Poems and Fiction*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 60 pp.
- Emilie Glen. *Moon Laundry: Rediscovered Poems and Fiction*. PDF ebook edition, 60 pp.
- Barbara A. Holland. *The Shipping on the Styx*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 108 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from The Barbara A. Holland papers. (Also includes a c. 1951 poem collection, Songs of Light and Darkness.
- Jody Azzouni. *Hereafter Landscapes*. Second edition. Paperback, oblong book, 56 pp.
- Jody Azzouni. *The Lust for Blueprints*. Second edition. PDF ebook edition.
- Thomas D. Jones. *Genealogy X*. Second edition. PDF ebook.
- Barbara A. Holland. *Autumn Numbers*. Second edition. PDF ebook.
- Richard Lyman (pseud. Richard Bush-Brown). *In the Silence of Scorpions*. Second edition. PDF ebook.
- Shirley Powell. *Alternate Lives*. Second edition. PDF ebook.
- Brett Rutherford, ed. *Providence Lovecraft Friends 2000-2003*. Second edition. PDF ebook of the local Providence Cthulhu Prayer Society newsletters.
- Brett Rutherford. *Crackers At Midnight: New Poems and Revisions 2015-2017*. PDF ebook edition, 126 pp.
- Brett Rutherford. *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second edition, revised. (Some poems that appeared in the original edition of this book have been revised and moved to the companion volume, *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.) PDF ebook edition, 217 pages.
- Brett Rutherford, ed. *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol 1*. PDF ebook edition, 314 pp. Poet's Press Yogh & Thorn imprint.
- Brett Rutherford, ed. *Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol. 2*. PDF ebook edition, 332 pp.

2020, Pittsburgh, PA.

Brett Rutherford, Phillis Wheatley, and Samuel Croxall. *The Story of Niobe*, adapted from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Paperback. 26 illustrations, most in full color. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp.

Brett Rutherford, Phillis Wheatley, and Samuel Croxall. *The Story of Niobe*, adapted from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Paperback. 26 illustrations, most in full color. PDF ebook edition. 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp.

On the Verge: Poets of the Palisades III. Anthology. 35 illustrations. Paperback. 6 x 9 inches, 282 pp.

On the Verge: Poets of the Palisades III. Anthology. 35 illustrations. PDF ebook. 6 x 9 inches, 282 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Fatal Birds of the Soul: A Poem Cycle*. With eight illustrations in full color. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 60 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Selected Poems*, Volume 1. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 230 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Selected Poems*, Volume 1. PDF ebook, 6 x 9 inches, 230 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Selected Poems*, Volume 2. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 138 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *Selected Poems*, Volume 1. PDF ebook, 6 x 9 inches, 138 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *After Hours in Bohemia: Lost Poems from Notebooks, Manuscripts & Magazines*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 350 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *After Hours in Bohemia: Lost Poems from Notebooks, Manuscripts & Magazines*. PDF ebook, 6 x 9 inches, 350 pp.

Barbara A. Holland. *The Barbara Holland Reader*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 198 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 320 pp.

Jacqueline de Weever. *Seed Mistress*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 100 pp.

The New York Poets' Cooperative. *Group 74: Poems from the Last Bohemia*. PDF ebook, 6 x 9 inches, 112 pp.

Mikhail Artsybashev and Leonid Andreyev. *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. PDF Ebook, 266 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *The Island of the Dead: Two Poems on Hart Island*. PDF ebook, 28 pp.

Shirley Powell. *Alternate Lives*. PDF ebook. Second revised edition, reset in Palatino type.

Brett Rutherford. *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. PDF Ebook edition, 130 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Sixth edition, expanded and revised. PDF Ebook edition, 416 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. PDF ebook edition. Published December 2020.

2021, Pittsburgh, PA.

Jonathan Aryeh Wayne. *Disgrace with a Capitol D*. Ebook. Essay on the January 6th insurrection.

Ernst Raupach, Ludwig Tieck, Erckmann-Chatrion. *Wake Not the Dead! Continental Tales of Terror*. Adapted and expanded by Brett Rutherford. Illustrated. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pp.

Brett Rutherford, ed. *Tales of Terror — The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Supplement 1*. Illustrated. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 282 pp.

Boria Sax. *Stealing Fire — Memoir of a Boyhood in the Shadow of Atomic Espionage*. Illustrated. Second, revised edition. Published November 2021. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 158 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. November 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches, 320 pp.

Brett Rutherford. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence*. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Ernst Raupach, Ludwig Tieck, Erckmann-Chatrion. Brett Rutherford, ed. *Wake Not the Dead: Continental Tales of Terror*. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Edgar Allan Poe, Sarah Helen Whitman, Brett Rutherford. *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Mikhail Artsybashev and Leonid Andreyev. *Two Russian Exiles*. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Charles Hamilton Sorley. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Heinrich Heine. *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. December 2021. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *An Expectation of Presences*. December 2021. 364 pages. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *Crackers At Midnight: New Poems and Revisions 2015-2017*. December 2021. 126 pp. Hardcover edition with new cover design, 6 x 9 inches.

Brett Rutherford. *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. December 2021. 132 pp. Hardcover edition with new cover design, 6 x 9 inches.

2022, Pittsburgh, PA.

Brett Rutherford. *Fatal Birds of the Soul: A Poem Cycle*. With eight illustrations in full color. 60 pages. PDF Ebook.

Michael Katz. *The Crossing*. Second edition. 72 pages, paperback.

Callimachus. *Callimachus in Alexandria: A Poem Cycle*. A poem cycle by Brett Rutherford, adapted and expanded from poems by Callimachus. 82 pages, paperback.

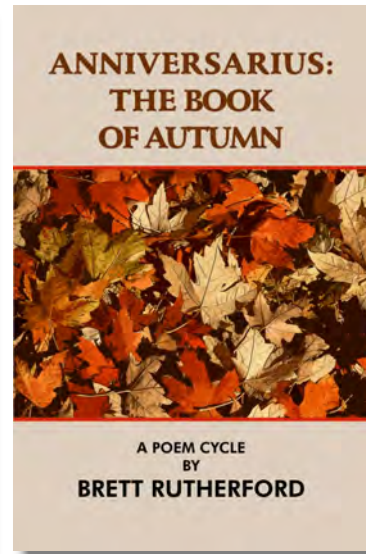
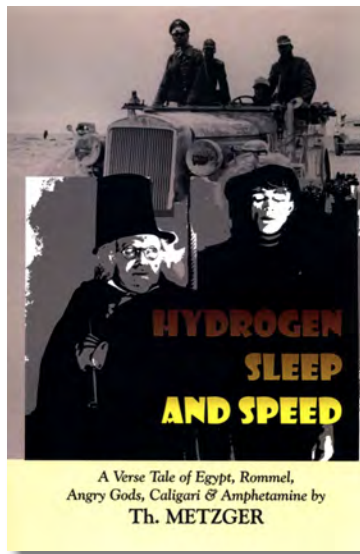
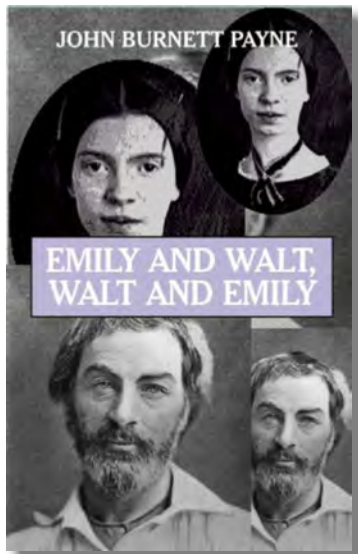
Li Yu. *Emperor Li Yu, A Life in Poems*. Poem cycle by Brett Rutherford, adapted and expanded from poems by Li Yu. 174 pages, hardcover. Illustrated with 24 paintings from the Tang and Song Dynasties.

Opus 300: The Poet's Press Anthology 1971-2021. 408 pp. 8-1/1 x 11 inches. PDF ebook and paperback.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS BY THE POET'S PRESS AND ITS IMPRINTS, 1971-2022.

A

- Allegretti, Joel. *Father Silicon*. 72 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2006.
- . *Father Silicon*. 72 pp. Second printing. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2008.
- . *Father Silicon*. 72 pp., 7 x 10 inches. Third printing. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.
- . *The Plague Psalms*. Paperback, 5-1.2 x 8-1/2 inches. 78 pp. Handbound with some pages in full-color. Some copies were printed with color cover; others were bound in hand-made paper covers from Indian paper in black "The Dominican edition" and ivory "The Human Skin edition". Weehawken, NJ: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 2000.
- . *The Plague Psalms*. Hardcover, 5-1.2 x 8-1/2 inches. 78 pp. Weehawken, NJ: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 2000.
- . *The Plague Psalms*. Paperback, 7 x 10 inches. 78 pp. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. Second edition, 2005; third printing 2008.
- . *The Plague Psalms*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches. 78 pp. Full-color version, third edition. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.
- . *The Plague Psalms*. PDF ebook edition, 78 pp. Full-color version, third edition. [This full-color edition restores the color graphics that were used in the first edition, which had been printed using color inkjet and dye-sub printing.] Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- Andreyev, Leonid and Mikhail Artsybashev. *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 266 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 266 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2021.
- An Anniversary Collection 1984-1988*. Edited by The Pawtucket (RI) Arts Council. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 86 pp. Jointly published by The Poet's Press and Pawtucket Arts Council. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1988.
- Artsybashev, Mikhail and Leonid Andreyev. *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 266 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Two Russian Exiles: Selected Fiction*. Edited/adapted and introduced by Brett Rutherford. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches, 266 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books (The Poet's Press). 2021.



As If The World Had Not Known Sorrow: 1984-85 Contest Issue. Edited by Stone Ridge (NY) Poetry Society. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 44 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1985.

Azzouni, Jody. *Hereafter Landscapes.* [Cover art and illustrations from the paintings of John Martin (1789-1843).] Oblong book, paperback. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.

———. *Hereafter Landscapes.* Second edition. Paperback, oblong book, 56 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

———. *The Lust for Blueprints.* First printing. [Laser and dye-sub printed on acid-free paper.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1999.

———. *The Lust for Blueprints.* Second edition. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

———. *The Lust for Blueprints.* Second printing. [Offset printed with laser print color pages bound in.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2001.

B

Bailis, Moira. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1.* Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 272 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

———. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1.* Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 272 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

———. *The Antidote to Prejudice: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 1.* PDF ebook edition, 272 pp. Pittsburgh PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis, Volume 2.* Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 328 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

———. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis*, Volume 2. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 328 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

———. *It Has To Do With Seeing: The Collected Poems of Moira Bailis*, Volume 2. PDF ebook edition, 328 pp. Pittsburgh PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

Bey, Hakim. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. 48 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Two printings.] Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 1985.

———. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Second printing. 48 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 1986.

———. *Chaos: The Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism*. Third printing. 48 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 1986.

Beyond the Rift: Poets of the Palisades. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise Laneve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. 168 pp., hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.

Beyond the Rift: Poets of the Palisades. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise Laneve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. 168 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.

Burt, Lucille. *Neither Created Nor Destroyed*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 14. 48 pp. [Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2012.

C

Callimachus. *Callimachus at Alexandria*. Translated and adapted by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2022.

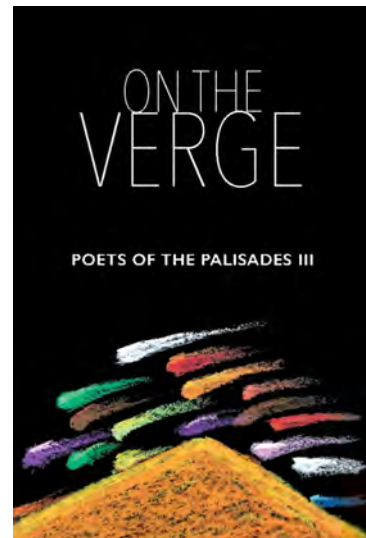
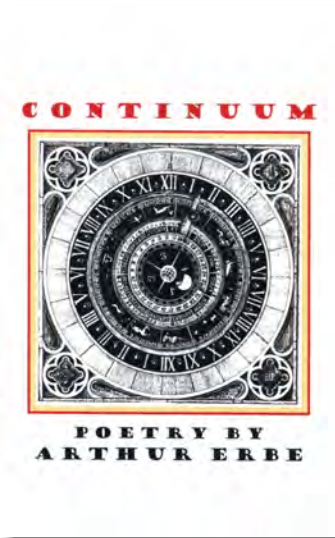
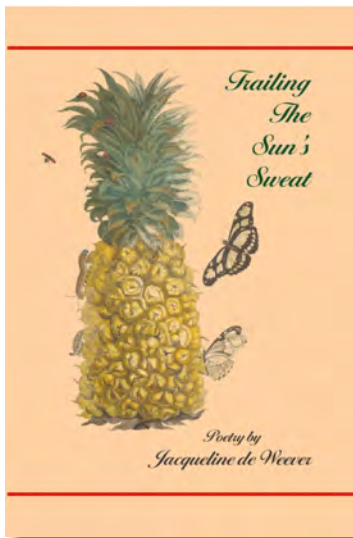
Carothers, Robert. *Freedom and Other Times*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Chandler, Tom. *One Tree Forest*. 56 pp. [Offset printed.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1992.

———. *The Sound the Moon Makes As It Watches*. Illustrations by Talin Megherian. 68 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1988.

Clarke, J. J. *The Crow of the Moon*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 32 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.

D



DaFazio, Marjorie. *A Quiet Noise*. 32 pp. New York :The Poet's Press. 1972.

Davidson, Richard. *Ribbon of Smoke and Stars*. 20 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1980.

———. *Song of Walt Whitman*. (Verse play.) PDF ebook, a facsimile of the 1975 Poet's Press edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2015.

———. *Song of Walt Whitman*. 40 pp. Offset printed. With an introduction by Donald Lev. [A verse play. Given a staged reading that year at Westbeth, directed by Brett Rutherford with a cast of Equity Actors and poets. This book had several printings.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1975.

Debut. Literary Journal of Edinboro State College. Printed for the college. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

deWeever, Jacqueline. *Rice-Wine Ghosts*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 76 pp. Set in oversize Jensen type. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017

deWeever, Jacqueline. *Seed Mistress*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020

———. *Trailing the Sun's Sweat*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2015.

———. *Trailing the Sun's Sweat*. PDF ebook edition, 80 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

Dobkins-Dikinis, Claudia. *First Poems*. A PDF facsimile of a chapbook from 1974. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2015.

———. *First Poems*. Offset printed. 24 pp. New York: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 1974.

Dragonette, Ree, and Denis Sivack. *Apogee*. [Printed by The Poet's Press for the authors under the Calliope Publications imprint.] 32 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Drucker, Joseph. *Blood and Other Poems*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1971.

E

Eklund, George. *The Infant Dawn*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Ellis, Pomona. *The Promise of Another Tomorrow*. 88 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

Erbe, Arthur. *Continuum*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 140 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

F

Fitzroy, A.T. (pseud. Rose Allatini). *Despised and Rejected*. (Novel.) Paperback, 300 pp. Annotated edition by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2010.

Fitzroy, A.T. (pseud. Rose Allatini). *Despised and Rejected*. (Novel.) Hardcover, 300 pp. Annotated edition by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2010.

Flynn, George. *The High Ground*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972

———. *Zingers*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1978.

G

Gerig, Bruce. *Miss Clam and Miss Claw*. [Drawings and verse.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1972

——— (as Jack Knife). *The Perfect Man*. Offset printed at The Poet's Press. New York: The Poet's Press. 1974.

Giles, Dolores. *Arguello East and the Bluebird of Happiness*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

———. *Stepchildren of Arguello East*. 32 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Glasgow, Boruk. *A Mobile Alchemy*. 64 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1978.

———. *Adventures of Little Self*. Offset printed. 96 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1976.

———. *Rare Book Renegade*. 64 pp. Offset printed. New York: The Poet's Press. 1977.

———. *Solid State*. 64 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1975.

———. *Tale of a Sufi Surfer*. 68 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1975.

Glen, Emilie. *77 Barrow Street*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 36 pp. Title-page watercolor by Jane Madson-McCabe. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.



- . *Dark of Earth*. 16 pp. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1983.
- . *Glenda and Her Guitar, Emilie and Her Piano*. [Laser print on acid-free paper, hand-bound.] 48 pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1991
- . *A Hero Somewhat*. 24 pp. New York: B Rutherford Books/The Poet's Press. 1979.
- . *Late to the Kitchen*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1976.
- . *Moon Laundry: Rediscovered Poems and Fiction*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 60 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Moon Laundry: Rediscovered Poems and Fiction*. PDF ebook edition, 60 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Rails Away*. [Limited edition, numbered and signed. Laser print on acid-free paper, hand-bound. Oversized type and wood engravings of railroad scenes of New York State.] Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1983.
- . *Roast Swan*. 50 pp, [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.
- . *Roast Swan*. B. Rutherford: Books imprint. 78 pp, [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Weehawken, NJ :B. Rutherford Books/The Poet's Press. 1984.
- . *Twat Shot*. Chapbook. 12 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.
- . *Up to Us Chickens*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.
- . *Up to Us Chickens*. 2nd edition. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1998.
- . *Up To Us Chickens*. Third printing. Offset printed with blue frontispiece. Stapled, 24 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1980.

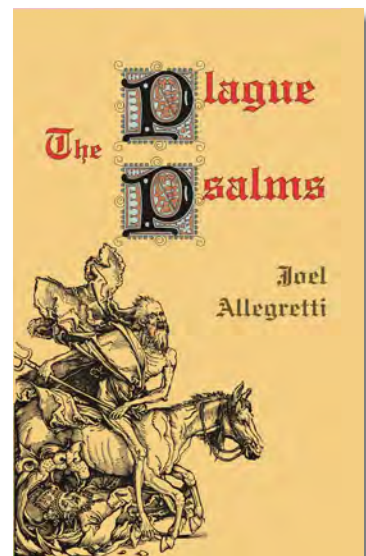
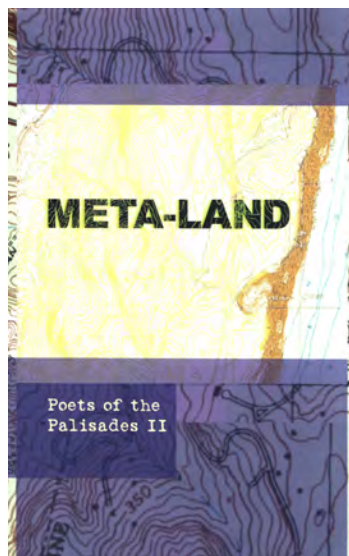
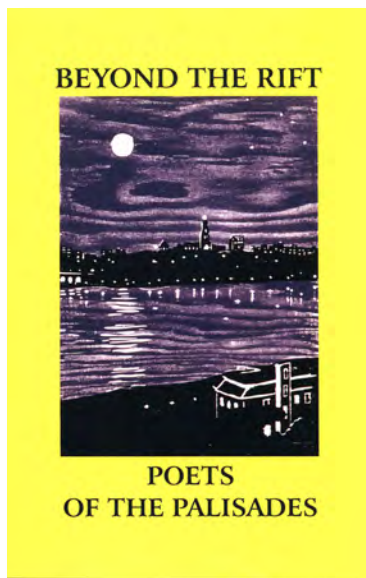
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. [First version, with oversize type.] 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. Second edition. 330 pp., paperback. [Reset in smaller type than the first printing.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2012.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1: Poems from Chapbooks*. Second printing. PDF ebook edition, 330 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 2: Fiction and Prose Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 198 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 2: Fiction and Prose Poems*. Second printing. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 222 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 3: Poems from Magazines*. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 4: Poems from Manuscripts*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 152 pp. Introduction by Brett Rutherford. Cover art includes a wood engraving by John De Pol. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017
- . *The Writings of Emilie Glen 4: Poems from Manuscripts*. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- Greco, Emilie. *Things to Do When Dead*. Offset printed. 48 pp. With a foreword by Barbara A. Holland. New York: The Poet's Press. 1976.
- Group 74: Poems of the Lash Bohemia*. Edited by Edward Butscher, Roberta Gould, and Donald Lev. PDF Ebook. With a foreword by Robert Kramer. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.

H

- Hayn, Annette. *Calendar House*. Illustrations by Deborah Leslie Hayn. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1990.
- . *Chamber Music: New and Selected Poems*. Second edition, expanded. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.
- . *Chamber Music: New and Selected Poems*. Second edition, expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.
- . *Chamber Music*. Hardcover edition. 2001.

- . *The Crossing*. With illustrations by Deborah Leslie Hayn. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.
- . *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. First edition was ink jet printed on acid-free paper and hand bound. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1994.
- . *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second edition. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 64 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2006.
- . *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second edition. PDF ebook, 64 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2006.
- . *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 64 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.
- . *Enemy on the Way to School: Poems of a German Jewish Childhood*. Second printing. PDF ebook edition, 64 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Journeys Around One Point*. 64 pp. New York: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 1980.
- . *One Armed Flyer*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1976.
- Heine, Heinrich. *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Bilingual edition. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. Foreword by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 208 pp. Illustrations by Jim Cheff. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2016.
- . *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Bilingual edition. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. Foreword by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 208 pp. Illustrations by Jim Cheff. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Germany: A Winter's Tale*. Bilingual edition. Translated by Jacob Rabinowitz. Foreword by Brett Rutherford. Hardcover edition, 208 pp. Illustrations by Jim Cheff. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2021.
- Holland, Barbara A. *After Hours in Bohemia: Lost Poems from Notebooks, Manuscripts and Magazines*. Includes critical articles and reviews about the poet, poems completed and reconstructed from notebooks. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020. PDF ebook.
- Holland, Barbara A. *After Hours in Bohemia: Lost Poems from Notebooks, Manuscripts and Magazines*. Includes critical articles and reviews about the poet, poems completed and reconstructed from notebooks. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 350 pp.
- . *Autumn Numbers*. New York: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 1978.
- . *Autumn Numbers*. Second edition. PDF ebook. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Autumn Wizard*. [This chapbook was a sampler of the poems to be included in the two-volume set, *Crises of Rejuvenation*, and was presented as a surprise birthday present to the poet during a reading at The Poet's Press loft.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

- . *Autumn Wizard*. [This chapbook was a sampler of the poems to be included in the two-volume set, *Crises of Rejuvenation*. New cover by Scott Randall Kerr, hand-colored with water color on each copy. New title-page. Offset printed.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1974.
- . *The Barbara Holland Reader*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 198 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *The Beckoning Eye: Poems from Magazines*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 212 pp.
- . *Burrs*. [Book completely reset and redesigned with Gothic ornaments.] 44 pp. New York: B. Rutherford Books (The Poet's Press). 1980.
- . *Burrs*. 44 pp. New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1977.
- . *Collected Poems*, Volume 1. New York: B. Rutherford Books (The Poet's Press). 1980.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*, Volume 1. [Poet's Press Grim Reaper imprint.] 48 pp. Offset printed. Hand-bound (stapled) with a wraparound dust jacket glued to a blank cover. New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1974.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*, Volume 1. 48 pp. Second printing. Offset printed. Hand-bound (stapled) with a wraparound dust jacket glued to a blank cover. New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1976.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation* Volume 2. Offset printed. New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1974.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation* Volume 2. Second printing. New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1977.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised). [Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford, based on interviews with the poet.] 106 pp., 7 x 10 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2006.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised). Second printing. [Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford.] Paperback, 7 x 10 inches, 106 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*. 30th Anniversary Edition (3rd edition, revised). Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 106 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Crises of Rejuvenation*. Single-volume edition with notes by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1986.
- . *In the Shadows*. Frontispiece drawing by Jane Madson-McCabe. [Laser print on acid-free paper, hand-bound.] 30 pp. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.
- . *Medusa: The Lost First Chapbook*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Set in oversize Adobe Jensen type. Edited by Brett Rutherford from the Barbara A. Holland papers. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.



———. *On This High Hill*. (reprint facsimile). Offset printed on brown kraft “butcher paper.” New York: The Poet’s Press. 1974.

———. *Out of Avernus: The Exiled Sorceress and the Fallen Priestess*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from The Barbara A. Holland papers. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2019.

———. *The Secret Agent and Other Poems from Notebooks & Chapbooks*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 156 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from the Barbara A. Holland papers. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2019. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 156 pp.

———. *Selected Poems, Volume 1*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 230 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2020.

———. *Selected Poems, Volume 1*. PDF Ebook, 6 x 9 inches. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2020.

———. *Selected Poems, Volume 2*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 138 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2020.

———. *Selected Poems, Volume 2*. PDF Ebook, 6 x 9 inches. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2020.

———. *The Shipping on the Styx*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 108 pp. Edited by Brett Rutherford from The Barbara A. Holland papers. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet’s Press. 2019.

J

- Jones, Thomas D. *Genealogy X*. 60 pp. [Ink jet printed on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Two printings.] Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 2000.
- . *Genealogy X*. PDF ebook and HTML. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 2000. Issued on CD-ROM.
- . *Genealogy X*. Second edition. PDF ebook. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Voices from the Void*. 124 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2008.
- . *Voices from the Void*. Second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 124 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Voices from the Void*. Second printing. PDF ebook, 124 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

K

- Katz, Michael. *The Crossing*. Offset printed. 1980.
- Katz, Michael. *The Crossing*. Second edition, paperback, 2022.
- Kelley, Kathleen M. *The Waiting Room*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 12. [Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.
- Korsun, Risa. *Crossroads of Time*. Offset printed chapbook, 32 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1975.

L

- Lafleche, Ellen. *Workers' Rites*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 13. 48 pp. Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- Lev, Donald. *There Is Still Time*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 34 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1985.
- . *There Is Still Time*. New edition. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1998.
- . *There Is Still Time*. PDF ebook edition, facsimile of print book. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- Lewis, Matthew Gregory. *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Corrected and revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 246 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2018.

- . *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Corrected and revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2010.
- . *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 1. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2010.
- . *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 2. 294 pp. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2012.
- . *Tales of Wonder*, Volume 2. PDF ebook edition, 294 pp. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2018.
- Li Yu. *Emperor Li Yu, A Life in Poems*. Translated and adapted by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2022. Hardcover and PDF ebook.
- Lyman, Richard (pseud. Richard Bush-Brown). *In the Silence of Scorpions*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1971.
- . *In the Silence of Scorpions*. Second edition. PDF ebook. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

M

- May Eve: A Festival of Supernatural Poetry*. Edited by Brett Rutherford. 64 pp. [This landmark collection marked what might be called "The New York Gothic School," presenting the supernatural poems of four New York poets: Claudia Dobkins, Barbara A. Holland, Shirley Powell, and Brett Rutherford. Illustrated by Scott Randall Kerr, then a high-school student in Teaneck, NJ. The book was premiered at a gala reading in Ree Dragonette's loft in Westbeth.] New York: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 1975.
- Melhem, D. H. *Notes on 94th Street*. 66 pp. Two printings. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.
- Messineo, David. *Twenty Minutes of Calm: Poems of Nature, Scene & Season*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 42 pp. [Designed in the style of an Elbert Hubbard Roycroft book.] Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- Meta-Land: Poets of the Palisades II*. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise La Neve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 250 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.
- Meta-Land: Poets of the Palisades II*. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise La Neve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- Metzger, Th. *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed: A Verse Tale of Egypt, Rommel, Angry Gods, Caligari & Amphetamines*. 134 pp. With digital montage art by Brett Rutherford. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.

Metzger, Th. *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed: A Verse Tale of Egypt, Rommel, Angry Gods, Caligari & Amphetamines*. 134 pp. With digital montage art by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

Miller, Edmund. *Fucking Animals*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

Milstein, Stuart. *A Dream in Eden*. New York: The Poet's Press. 1976.

Morrison, Morris R. *Prologue and Performances*. [The first book published under The Poet's Press imprint.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1971.

Murphy, Stanley. *Short Poems for a Long Journey*. [Jointly published by The Poets Press and Gyro Publications. Printed offset at The Poet's Press. Covers hand-colored with pastel marbling (no two alike).] New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Murray, Catherine. *Lights in the Water*. Introduction by Mary Ferrari. [Laser and ink jet print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Boston: The Poet's Press. 1993.

N

Newman, Louis. *Burn, Yellow Candle, Burn*. Offset printed. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

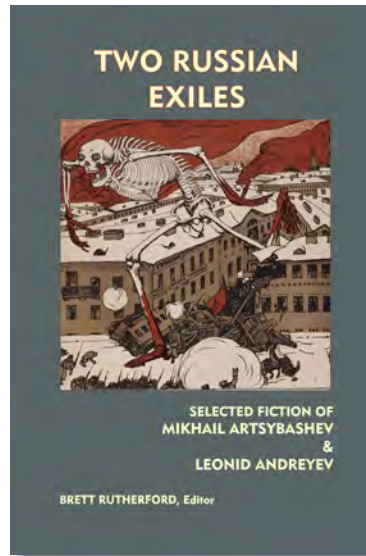
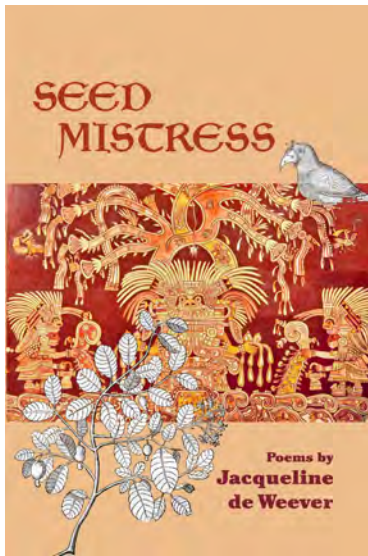
———. *Tear Down the Walls*. Offset printed. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

O

O'Connell, David. *A Better Way to Fall*. Philbrick Poetry Prize Chapbook 15. Paperback, 36 pp., 6 x 9 inches. [Co-published with The Providence Athenaeum.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

On the Verge: Poets of the Palisades III. Anthology with 80 poets and artists. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise LaNeve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 282 pages. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.

On the Verge: Poets of the Palisades III. Anthology with 80 poets and artists. Edited by Paul Nash, Denise LaNeve, David Messineo, Susanna Rich, and John J. Trause. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.



P

Poet's Press Catalog and Anthology. 72 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound (stapled). A sampler of 1987-88 Poet's Press and Grim Reaper books.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.

Poets Fortnightly (NY). Edited by Barbara A. Holland and Brett Rutherford. [This was New York City's first Poetry Calendar, listing poetry events in all New York boroughs. Also included some poems and book reviews. Subscribers sent stamps for the number of issues they wished to receive. Printed offset and mailed from The Poet's Press loft.] Issued 1973-74. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

Poets Fortnightly (RI), a free poetry sampler. At least six issues published and distributed in Providence, RI. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1991.

Powell, Shirley. *Alternate Lives*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1990.

———. *Alternate Lives*. Second edition. PDF ebook. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

———. *Alternate Lives*. Second edition, revised. PDF ebook. Reset in Palatino type; minor revisions. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.

———. *Other Rooms*. [Laser printed on acid free paper and hand bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1997.

———. *Other Rooms*. Second edition. 112 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.

———. *Other Rooms*. Second edition. PDF ebook edition, 112 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Rooms*. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound. 56 pp. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.

———. *Rooms*. Second printing. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1986.

———. *Villages and Towns*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 56 pp. Boston: The Poet's Press. 1993.

Prometheus. Pilot issue of a journal, dated Summer 1971. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Only about 50 copies bound and issued. Title-page and some ad type set by hand in Goudy types and proofed on a 9x12" Kelsey letterpress. Some unsold copies of the book *City Limits* are bound in as a center section. New York: The Poet's Press. 1971.

Providence Lovecraft Friends 2000-2003. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Second edition. PDF ebook of the local Providence Cthulhu Prayer Society newsletters. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

R

Rabinowitz, Jacob. *King Solomon's Book of Love Songs*. Paperback, 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 inches. Providence, RI, PA: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press, with Verlag Golem. c. 1990.

Rashbaum, Burt. *Of the Carousel*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 72 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

Rathenow, Lutz *Kontakte (Contacts): Poems and Writings of Lutz Rathenow*. Translated by Boria Sax. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. A few hardcover copies were also hand-bound. Facing-pages German and English. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1985.

———. *Kontakte (Contacts): Poems and Writings of Lutz Rathenow*. Translated by Boria Sax. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Second printing. Facing-pages German and English. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2003. Edited by Rose Pearson, Victoria Hollmann, and David Howard. Hardcover edition. 224 pp. [Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2003.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2003. Edited by Rose Pearson, Victoria Hollmann, and David Howard. Paperback edition, reprint of 2003 hardcover. 224 pp. [Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.

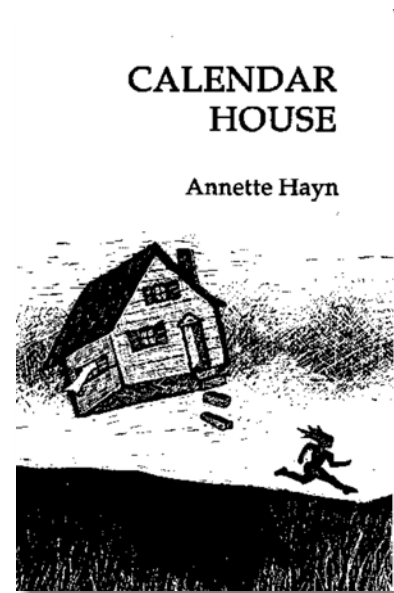
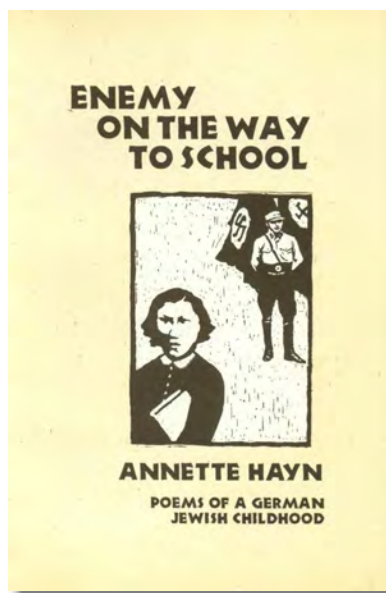
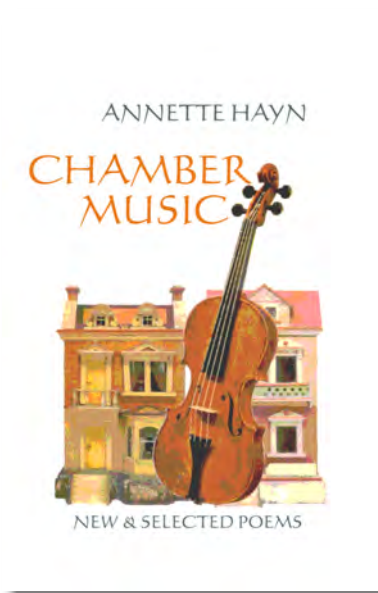
Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2007. Edited by Rose Pearson. Hardcover edition. 224 pp. [Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2007. Edited by Rose Pearson. Paperback edition. 224 pp. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.

Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2008. Edited by Rose Pearson. 260 pp. 6x9 inches. Hardcover and paperback editions. [Drama, fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Published jointly with The Writers' Circle.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2008.

- Rhode Island Writers Circle Anthology 2010.* (Drama, nonfiction, fiction and poetry.) Edited by Rose Pearson. 184 pp., paperback. 6x9 inches. [Published with The Rhode Island Writers' Circle.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.
- Rich, Susanna. *Beware the House.* Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 146 pp. Pittsburgh PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- Rutherford, Brett. *An Expectation of Presences: New Poems and Revisions.* 364 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2012.
- . *An Expectation of Presences: New Poems and Revisions.* PDF ebook edition, 364 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *An Expectation of Presences: New Poems and Revisions.* Hardcover edition, 364 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems.* First edition. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 40 pp. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.
- . *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems.* Second edition, expanded. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 26 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1986.
- . *Anniversarium: The Autumn Poems.* Third edition, expanded and revised. [Offset printed. Also a bibliography of Poet's Press books.] 98 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1996.
- . *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn.* Third edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn.* Deluxe color edition, from third edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 160 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.
- . *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn.* Deluxe color edition, from third edition, revised and expanded. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 160 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn.* Deluxe color edition, from third edition, revised and expanded. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *At Lovecraft's Grave.* Illustrated by Richard Sardinha. [Hand-bound edition, oblong.] 64 pp. Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1988.
- . *Chiggers: Poems and Writings in Progress.* [This limited-edition chapbook was created as part of Brett Rutherford's graduate work at University of Rhode Island.] Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2006.
- . *City Limits.* PDF ebook. Facsimile of a pre-Poet's Press book by Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017.
- . *Crackers At Midnight: New Poems and Revisions 2015-2017.* Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 126 pp. Pittsburgh PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Crackers At Midnight: New Poems and Revisions 2015-2017.* PDF ebook edition, 126 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.

- . *Crackers At Midnight: New Poems and Revisions 2015-2017*. Hardcover edition, 126 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors*. 32 pp, oblong format, with color digital art. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 2008.
- . *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors*. Second printing. Paperback, 32 pp., oblong format, with color digital art. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 2013.
- . *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors*. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books (The Poet's Press). 2019.
- . *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 130 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. PDF ebook, 6 x 9 inches, 130 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *The Doll Without A Face: New Poems & Revisions 2018-2019*. Hardcover edition, 6 x 9 inches, 130 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *Fatal Birds of the Soul. A Poem Cycle*. With eight illustrations in color. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *Fête: A Poem of Dark Affection*. 16 pp. Fifty copies hand-bound in blank red suede-finish covers. Illustrated by Scott Randall Kerr. New York: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 1975.
- . *Five Plays & A Monologue*. 118 pp. Print-on-demand edition; very few copies circulated. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2008.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. 208 pp. 7 x 10 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2005.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. 208 pp. PDF ebook edition. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2005.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second edition, revised. (Some poems that appeared in the original edition of this book have been revised and moved to the companion volume, *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.) PDF ebook edition, 217 pages. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second printing, with corrections. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Third printing. Paperback, 7 x 10 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second edition, revised. (Some poems that appeared in the original edition of this book have been revised and moved to the companion volume, *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.) Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 217 pages. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.



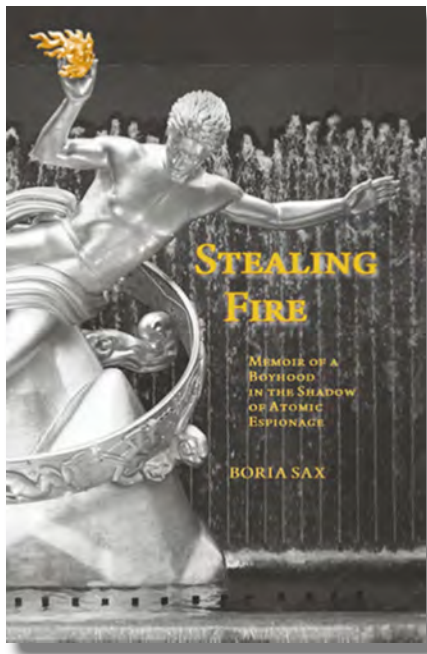
- . *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*. Second edition, revised. (Some poems that appeared in the original edition of this book have been revised and moved to the companion volume, *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*.) PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *In Chill November: New Poems 1989*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Limited edition of 200 numbered copies.] 32 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1990.
- . *The Inhuman Wave. New Poems and Revisions 2019-2020*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020. Paperback.
- . *The Inhuman Wave. New Poems and Revisions 2019-2020*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2022. Hardcover.
- . *The Island of the Dead*. Two poems on Hart Island. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. PDF ebook. 2020.
- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound, with custom typefaces designed for this book. 82 pp. 8-1/2 x 11 inches. This book was debuted at The Providence Athenaeum library, with actors portraying Poe and Mrs. Whitman in a one-act play written by Norman George.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.
- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Hardcover edition, 160 pp. [Introductory essay expanded and revised for this edition.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2003.
- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition, second printing. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 164 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.

- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 164 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Last Flowers: The Romance and Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and Sarah Helen Whitman*. Fourth edition. Hardcover edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand bound. Additional text in this volume includes, "At Lovecraft's Grave," an elegy written for the 50th anniversary of Lovecraft's death, and several other HPL-related poems. 250 copies were printed, with a handful in hardcover.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1988.
- . *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. 2nd edition, revised 2005, with "Poetica Lovecraftiana." Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2005.
- . *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. 2nd edition, revised, with Poetica Lovecraftiana. [Laser printed on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 72 pp. Boston: The Poet's Press. 1993.
- . *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. Second printing of 2nd edition, revised 2005, with Poetica Lovecraftiana. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 94 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2008.
- . *Night Gaunts: An Entertainment Based on the Life and Writings of H P Lovecraft*. Second printing of 2nd edition, revised 2005, with Poetica Lovecraftiana. PDF ebook edition, 94 pp. Pittsburgh PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Poems from Providence*. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. [Offset printed in an edition of 1,000 copies.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1991.
- . *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp. PDF ebook edition. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Poems from Providence*. 20th anniversary edition, revised and expanded. 256 pp., hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *Prometheus Chained*. PDF ebook edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.
- . *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 56 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.
- . *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*. Second edition, revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 262 pages. (Poems from the 1987 *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue* were combined with some poems from *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets* for this new book.) Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.



- . *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*. Second edition, revised. PDF ebook, 262 pages. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart*. With photographs by David Murphy. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart*. With photographs by David Murphy. [PDF ebook from original 1973 printing. Also published as an Issu "flipbook."] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart*. PDF ebook. Facsimile of the 1973 edition. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. Second edition, revised and expanded. 320 pp. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. Second edition, revised and expanded. 320 pp. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.
- . *The Pumpkined Heart: Poems of Pennsylvania*. Second edition, revised and expanded. PDF ebook edition, published December 2020. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *Songs of the I and Thou*. PDF ebook. Facsimile of a pre-Poet's Press book by Brett Rutherford. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017.
- . *The Story of Niobe*. With 23 illustrations. Adaptations from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Brett Rutherford, Phillis Wheatley, and Samuel Croxall. Plus two essays by Brett Rutherford on Phillis Wheatley and the Niobe connection to Paul Revere. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 80 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Oblong format. Illustrated with black-and-white photos and digital art. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.

- . *Things Seen in Graveyards: Images*. Oblong format. [Full-color photo book as a companion volume to the poetry.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2007.
- . *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Tenth Anniversary Expanded Edition. Paperback, 6 x 9, 114 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017.
- . *Things Seen in Graveyards*. Tenth Anniversary Expanded Edition. PDF ebook edition, 114 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Thunderpuss: In Memoriam*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. 50 copies privately circulated to the poet's friends.] 14 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.
- . *Trilobite Love Song: New Poems and Revisions 2013-2014*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 56 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2014.
- . *Trilobite Love Song: New Poems and Revisions 2013-2014*. PDF ebook edition, 56 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and Liberation*. 84 pp. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck. A few copies were also bound hardcover.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1992.
- . and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and Liberation*. Second edition, expanded. Paperback, 132 pp., 8-1/2 x 11 inches. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2011.
- . and Pieter Vanderbeck. *Twilight of the Dictators: Poems of Tyranny and Liberation*. Second edition, expanded. PDF ebook edition, 132 pp. Illustrated by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *Wake Not the Dead! Continental Tales of Terror*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, illustrated. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pages. 2021. Adapted and expanded by Brett Rutherford from tales by Ernst Raupach, Ludwig Tieck, and Erckmann-Chatrian. Set in Kennerly Oldstyle type.
- . *Wake Not the Dead! Continental Tales of Terror*. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, illustrated. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pages. 2021. Adapted and expanded by Brett Rutherford from tales by Ernst Raupach, Ludwig Tieck, and Erckmann-Chatrian. Set in Kennerly Oldstyle type.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. First edition. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] 84 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1985.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Second edition, expanded and revised. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1998.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Third edition, expanded and revised. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 2005.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Third edition, expanded and revised. PDF ebook edition. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 2006.



- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Fourth edition, expanded and revised. 272 pages. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2008.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Fifth edition, expanded and revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 360 pp. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2012.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Fifth edition, expanded and revised. PDF ebook edition. Providence, RI: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. c. 2013.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Sixth edition, expanded and revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 414 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2019.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Sixth edition, expanded and revised. PDF ebook edition, 414 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2020.
- . *Whippoorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Sixth edition, expanded and revised. Hardcover, 414 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Grim Reaper Books/ The Poet's Press. 2022.

S

- Sax, Boria. *Animals in the Third Reich*. [History and cultural study.] Second edition, expanded and revised. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 234 pp., illustrated. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2013.
- . *Animals in the Third Reich*. [History and cultural study.] PDF ebook edition, 234 pp., illustrated. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2018.
- . *I Am That Snowflake*. [Laser print on acid-free paper and hand-bound.] Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1988.

———. *The Raven and the Sun: Poems and Stories*. 82 pp. 6 x 9 inches. Cover art and illustrations by Tom Fitzpatrick. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2010.

———. *The Raven and the Sun: Poems and Stories*. PDF ebook edition, 82 pp. Cover art and illustrations by Tom Fitzpatrick. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Stealing Fire: Memoir of a Boyhood in the Shadow of Atomic Espionage*. Paperback, 158 pp. Secnd, revised edition. (Previous edition by Decalogue Books 2014). November 2021. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2021.

Sivack, Denis and Ree Dragonette. *Apogee*. [Printed by The Poet's Press for the authors under the Calliope Publications imprint.] 32 pp. New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Sorley, Charles Hamilton. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 166 pp. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2010).

———. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Second edition, revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 166 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2017.

———. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Second edition, revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman. PDF ebook, 166 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Death and the Downs: The Poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley*. Second edition, revised. Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an annotated bibliography by Larry Uffelman. Hardcover edition, 166 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2018.

Spina, Vincent. *Dialogue*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 88 pp. Cover includes art by Pieter Vanderbeck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2015.

———. *Dialogue*. PDF ebook edition, 88 pp. Cover includes art by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

T

Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol 1. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 314 pp. Providence, RI: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2015.

Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol 1. Edited by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 314 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2019.

Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol. 2. Edited by Brett Rutherford. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 332 pp. Pittsburgh PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2016.

Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Vol. 2. Edited by Brett Rutherford. PDF ebook edition, 332 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2019.

Tales of Terror: The Supernatural Poem Since 1800, Supplement 1. Edited by Brett Rutherford. PDF Paperback, 300 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/ The Poet's Press. 2021. Includes a

cumulative bibliography and index for *Tales of Wonder* (Vols 1 & 2) and *Tales of Terror* (Vols 1 & 2 and Supplement).

The Tenth Muse Anthology. 1973. 64 pp. Edited by Stuart Milstein. Printed offset at The Poet's Press for The Tenth Muse. New York: The Poet's Press. 1973.

V

Vanderbeck, Pieter. *Coffee Break: A Radio Drama in Twelve Episodes*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 144 pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2017.

———. *Coffee Break: A Radio Drama in Twelve Episodes*. PDF ebook edition, 144 pp. Illustrations by Pieter Vanderbeck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

Veasey, Jack. *The Dance That Begins and Begins: Selected Poems 1973-2013*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 226 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2015.

———. *The Dance That Begins and Begins: Selected Poems 1973-2013*. PDF ebook edition, 226 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Handful of Hair*. Offset printed. 32 pp. New York: Grim Reaper Books/The Poet's Press. 1975.

———. *Shapely: Selected Formal Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 132 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2013.

———. *Shapely: Selected Formal Poems*. PDF ebook edition, 132 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Sonneteria: Collected Sonnets & Other Poems*. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 214 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Sonneteria: Collected Sonnets & Other Poems*. PDF ebook edition, 214 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

W

Washburn, Don. *The Boy From Under the Trees*. 106 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Illustrations by George Jarck. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2012.

———. *The Boy From Under the Trees*. PDF ebook edition, 106 pp. Illustrations by George Jarck. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk: An Essay on Love*. [A sonnet cycle.] 80 pp., paperback, 6 x 9 inches. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 2009.

———. *In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk: An Essay on Love*. (A sonnet cycle). PDF ebook edition, 80 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2018.

———. *Prayer Beads: A Poem Cycle*. Set in 14-point Jensen type with ornaments from medieval architecture. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 196 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2016.

Wayne, Jonathan Aryeh. *Disgrace With A Capitol D*. PDF ebook. 7 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: The Poet's Press. 2021.

Whitman, Sarah Helen. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence*. [Literary Essays and Selected Poems.] Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an essay, "Sarah Helen Whitman as Poet and Critic." Illustrated. Paperback, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2019.

———. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence*. [Literary Essays and Selected Poems.] Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an essay, "Sarah Helen Whitman as Poet and Critic." Illustrated. Hardcover, 6 x 9 inches, 300 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2021.

———. *Break Every Bond: Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence*. [Literary Essays and Selected Poems.] Edited and annotated by Brett Rutherford, with an essay, "Sarah Helen Whitman as Poet and Critic." Illustrated. PDF ebook, 300 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Yogh & Thorn Books/The Poet's Press. 2019.

Womansong: An Anthology of Women's Poetry. Edited by Shirley Powell. Weehawken, NJ: The Poet's Press. 1984.

Wrenches. Edited by Robert A Carothers. [Collection of student writing from Edinboro State College, PA. Printed for the college.] New York: The Poet's Press. 1972.

Z

Zeltzer, Joel. *Shadows in Light: Poems for Federico Garcia Lorca*. [Laser print on acid-free paper with illustration by Goya.] 20 pp. Providence, RI: The Poet's Press. 1987.

AUTHORS PUBLISHED BY THE POET'S PRESS AND ITS IMPRINTS, 1971-2022.

A

Acker, Paul. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Aguasvivas, Patricia. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Akhmatova, Anna. *The Doll Without A Face; Trilobite Love Song*.
 Alexander, Dorothy. *Beyond the Rift*.
 Allegretti, Joel. *Beyond the Rift; Father Silicon; Meta-Land; On the Verge; The Plague Psalms; Tales of Terror 2*.
 Allingham, William. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Alpert, Jennie K. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Anderheggen, Carol. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Anderson, Dawne. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 3*.
 Andreyev, Leonid. *Two Russian Exiles*.
 Artsybashev, Mikhail. *Two Russian Exiles*.
 Ashley, Renée. *On the Verge*.
 Azzouni, Jody. *Hereafter Landscapes; The Lust for Blueprints*.

B

Badagliacca, Raphael. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land*.
 Baier Stein, Donna. *On the Verge*.
 Bailis, Moira. *The Antidote to Prejudice; It Has To Do With Seeing*.
 Baker, Kim. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Baker, Maureen. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Banchoff, Lynore. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Barber, Phil. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Barlow, Joel. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Barone, Amy. *On the Verge*.
 Barrale, John. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Baudelaire, Charles. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Beddoes, Thomas Lovell. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Belvedere, Caterina. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Benét, Stephen Vincent. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Béquer, Gustavo Adolfo. *The Inhuman Wave; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Bergeron, Susan. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Bernstock, Norma Ketzis. *Meta-Land; On the Verge..*
 Besser, Katherine. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Bey, Hakim. *Chaos; Poets Fortnightly (RI) 4*.

Blair, Robert. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Blais, Gary. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 Blazer, Stuart. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 1*.
 Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Boncek, Barbara. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Bondhus, Michael McKeon. *On the Verge*.
 Boss, Laura. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Brafman, Sylvia. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Bridges, Robert. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Brown, Nancy. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Browning, Robert. *Tales of Terror 1; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Bunbury, Henry. *Tales of Wonder 1*.
 Burge, Barbara. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Bürger, Gottfried August. *Tales of Wonder 1 and 2; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Burns, Robert. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Burns, Theresa. *On the Verge*.
 Burt, Lucille. *Neither Created Nor Destroyed*.
 Bush, Jacob. *Group 74*.
 Bush, Lawrence. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Butscher, Edward. *Group 74*.
 Byro, Laurie. *On the Verge*.
 Byron, George Gordon. *Tales of Terror 1*.

C

Cabral, Olga. *Group 74*.
 Callimachus. *Callimachus in Alexandria*.
 Campbell, William Wilfred. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Carey, Kevin. *On the Verge*.
 Carnevale, Joanne. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Caro, José Eusebio. *The Inhuman Wave*.
 Carothers, Robert. *Freedom and Other Times; Wrenches* (ed).
 Carpenter, Bill. *RI Writers' Circle 2003, 2007*.
 Carter, Ruth Hughes. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Carrara, Carli. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Cataldo, Robert. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Cavallone, Catherine Cimillo. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.

Cawein, Madison. *Tales of Terror 2; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Chandler, Tom. *One Tree Forest; Poets Fortnightly (RI) 4; Rhode Island Writers' Circle 2010; The Sound the Moon Makes As It Watches*.
 Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Crackers at Midnight*.
 Cherkes, Joseph K. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 5*.
 Chocano, José Santos. *Tales of Terror Suppl 1*.
 Chorazy, John. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Christine, Lisa. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Christina, Martha. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Church, Dave. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 3*.
 Clark, Dorothy S. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Clarke, J. J. *The Crow of the Moon*.
 Coleman, Debra Rogers. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Colman, George, Jr. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Combe, William. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Cortissoz, Ellen M. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Corwin, Brenda. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Costa, K. Elizabeth. *Beyond the Rift*.
 Coulehan, Jack. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2010*.
 Crane, Hart. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Crews, David. *On the Verge*.
 Cryan, Catherine. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.

D

D'Ambrosio, Vinnie-Marie. *Group 74*.
 D'Fabio, Carol. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 D'Ordine, Helen. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.
 DaFazio, Marjorie. *A Quiet Noise*.
 Dahn, Felix. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Darley, George. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Davidson, Richard. *Group 74; Ribbon of Smoke and Stars; Song of Walt Whitman*.
 Davis, Fannie Stearns. *Tales of Terror Suppl. 1*.
 Dawson, Cyndi. *Meta-Land*.
 DeCredico, Jesann Dunn. *Anniversary Collection*.
 De Koninck. *On the Verge*.
 De la Mare, Walter. *Tales of Terror 2; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 de Weever, Jacqueline. *Meta-Land; Rice-Wine Ghosts; Trailing the Sun's Sweat*.
 Derman, Aza. *Beyond the Rift*.
 Desmond, Erica. *On the Verge*.
 Dobkins-Dikinis, Claudia. *First Poems, Tales of Terror 2*.
 Dobson, Austin. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Dolphin, Diane. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.

Doty, Catherine. *On the Verge*.
 Dowd, Juditha. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Dragonette, Ree. *Apogee*.
 Drayton, Michael. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Drinkwater, John. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Drucker, Joseph. *Blood and Other Poems; Group 74*.
 Drummy, Christopher. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 Dryden, John. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Duguid, Sandra. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Dutra, Jesse. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.

E

Ebihara, Jane. *On the Verge*.
 Edelman, Elaine. *Group 74*.
 Edwards, Gigi. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 Eklund, George. *The Infant Dawn*.
 Ellerbe, James. C. *On the Verge*.
 Ellis, Pomona. *The Promise of Another Tomorrow*.
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 6*.
 Evrard, Connie. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Erbe, Arthur. *Continuum*.
 Erckmann-Chatrion. *Wake Not the Dead*.
 Ericson, Allen. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Euripides. *The Doll Without A Face*.
 Evans, R. G. *On the Verge*.

F

Faber, Robert Oh. *Group 74*.
 Fagen, Nellie. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Ferrari, Mary. *Chamber Music (intro); Lights in the Water (intro)*.
 Finn, Catherine. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Fishbein, Mark. *Group 74*.
 Fisher, Mahlon Leonard. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Fitzroy, A.T. (pseud. Rose Allatini). *Despised and Rejected*.
 Flecker, James Elroy. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Fletcher, Ada M. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Flores, Ana. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 Flynn, George. *The High Ground; Zingers*.
 Foos, Ellen. *On the Verge*.
 Freedgood, Laura. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Furlong, Alice. *Tales of Terror 2*.

G

- Gabrie-Garcia, Estrella. *Beyond the Rift*.
Gander, Forrest. *Anniversary Collection*.
Garner, Matrick C. *Anniversary Collection*.
Garrett, Davidson. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Garrison, Theodosia. *Tales of Terror Suppl. 1*.
Gautier, Théophile. *The Inhuman Wave; Tales of Terror 1; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
Gerig, Bruce. *Miss Clam and Miss Claw; The Perfect Man*.
Gerrish, Deborah. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Giguere, Louise. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.
Giles, Dolores. *Arguello East and the Bluebird of Happiness; Group 74; Stepchildren of Arguello East*.
Gillan, Maria Mazziotti. *On the Verge*.
Givant, Jim. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
Glasgow, Boruk. *Adventures of Little Self; A Mobile Alchemy; Rare Book Renegade; Solid State; Tale of a Sufi Surfer*.
Glaze, Andrew. *Group 74*.
Glen, Emilie. *77 Barrow Street.; Dark of Earth; Glenda and Her Guitar, Emilie and Her Piano; A Hero Somewhat; Late to the Kitchen; Moon Laundry; Poets Fortnightly; Roast Swan; The Writings of Emilie Glen 1, 2, 3 and 4; Twat Shot; Up to Us Chickens*.
Glover, Richard. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
Gobeille, Lynn. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *The Doll Without A Face; Tales of Wonder 1; Tales of Terror 1; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
Goldman, Matthew. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
Gombar, Christina. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
Gordon, Elissa. *Meta-Land*.
Gordon, Elizabeth. *Anniversary Collection*.
Gould, Henry. *Anniversary Collection*.
Gould, Roberta. *Group 74*.
Graves, Robert. *Tales of Terror 2*.
Gray, Thomas. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
Greaves, Charles R. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
Greco, Emilie. *Things to Do When Dead*.
Green, Frances H. *Tales of Terror 1*.
Grey, John. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 5*.
Gridley, Inex George. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.

- Griffon, Ransom. *Anniversary Collection*.
Grimes, Susan. *Anniversary Collection*.
Guenther, John. *Group 74*.
Guida, George. *On the Verge*.

H

- Hahn, Hannelore. *Group 74*.
Hale, Stephen S. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
Hall, Barbara. *On the Verge*.
Hall, Jonathan. *Beyond the Rift*.
Halscheid, Therése. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Hammer, Patrick, Jr. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Hanrahan, Gayle. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
Hardy, Thomas. *Tales of Terror 2*.
Harrington, Henry. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
Harvilla, George. *Beyond the Rift*.
Hayn, Annette. *Calendar House; Chamber Music; The Crossing; Enemy on the Way to School; Journeys Around One Point; One Armed Flyer; Poets Fortnightly (RI) 6*.
Heaton, Lois B. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
Heermans, Lilian. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
Heine, Heinrich. *Germany: A Winter's Tale; Tales of Terror 1*.
Herbert, Rembert. *Group 74*.
Herder, Johann Gottfried. *Tales of Wonder 1*.
Hockmuth, Manfred J. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
Higgins, Rachel Shepard. *Anniversary Collection*.
Hobbs, Ronald. *Group 74*, and guest page on Poet's Press website.
Holland, Barbara A. *Autumn Numbers; Autumn Wizard; The Beckoning Eye; Burrs; Collected Poems 1; Crises of Rejuvenation 1 and 2; Group 74; In the Shadows; The Inhuman Wave; On This High Hill; May Eve; Medusa; Out of Avernus; Poets Fortnightly NY (ed); Poets Fortnightly (RI) 6; The Secret Agent; Selected Poems Volume 1; Selected Poems Volume 2; The Shipping on the Styx; Tales of Terror 2; Tales of Terror Supplement 1; Things to Do When Dead (intro)*.
Holmes, Oliver Wendell. *Tales of Terror 1*.
Holt, Dennis. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 3*.
Hoover, Susan. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.

Horowitz, Mikhail. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Howard, David. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008, 2010*.
 Hubbard, Karen. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Hughes, Patricia. *On the Verge*.
 Hugo, Victor. *Anniversaries: The Book of Autumn; Tales of Terror 1; Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Humphrey, Josh. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Hunt, Leigh. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Hynes, R. G. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.

I

Ivanova, Asya. *Meta-Land*.

J

Jaworowski, Peter. *Beyond the Rift*.
 Johnson, Lionel Pigot. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Jones, Thomas D. *Beyond the Rift; Genealogy X; Voices from the Void*.
 Jonson, Ben. *The Doll Without A Face; Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Juszcyk, Paul. *On the Verge*.

K

Kane, George. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Katsarou, Vasiliki. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Katz, Michael. *The Crossing*.
 Keats, John. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Keen, Suzanne. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Kelley, Kathleen M. *The Waiting Room*.
 Kelly, Tina. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Kendall, Henry. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Kenny, Adele. *On the Verge*.
 Keough, Jan. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 King, Mary Ellen. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Kinnell, Galway. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Kipling, Rudyard. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Kirsch, Nancy. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Kleckner, Ingrid Wild. *RI Writers' Circle 2003, 2007*.
 Kline, Christi Shannon. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Kolstein, Janet. *On the Verge*.
 Koplów, Elaine. *On the Verge*.
 Korsun, Risa. *Crossroads of Time*.
 Kramer, Robert. *Group 74*.

Kranz, Gary. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Kregal, Ann. *Group 74*.
 Krips, Lawrence J. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Kuster, Ellen. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.

L

La Neve, Denise. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Laffleche, Ellen. *Workers' Rites*.
 Laliberte, Richard. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Lambe, Robert. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Lampman, Archibald. *Tales of Terror Suppl. 1*.
 Langdon, Robert P. *Meta-Land*.
 Lantz, Thelma. *Anniversary Collection*.
 LaVeglia, Deborah. *Meta-Land*.
 Ledwige, Francis. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Lee, Susanna. *On the Verge*.
 Leonard, Mary. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
 Letcher, Tina. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Lev, Donald. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow; Group 74; There Is Still Time*.
 Levin, B. J. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Levinson, Robert. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Lewis, Joel. *On the Verge*.
 Lewis, Matthew Gregory. *Tales of Wonder 1, 2*.
 Leyden, John. *Tales of Wonder 1*.
 Li Yu. *Emperor Li Yu, A Life in Poems; Trilobite Love Song*.
 Liu, Timothy. *On the Verge*.
 Lisle, Thomas. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 LoLo, LuLu. *Meta-Land*.
 Long, Frank Belknap. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 4; Tales of Terror 1; Tales of Terror Suppl. 1*.
 Loranger, Richard. *Beyond the Rift*.
 Lord, Leila. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Lovecraft, Howard Phillips. *Night Gaunts; Tales of Terror 2*.
 Lowe, John. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Lowell, Amy. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Lucianna, Roy. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Lum, Marguerite. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Lyman, Richard. (pseud. Richard Bush Brown). *In the Silence of Scorpions*.
 Lyon, Brant. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land*.

M

MacArthur, Leith. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007.
Mack, Michael. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
Maguire, Tom. *RI Writers' Circle* 2003.
Makofske, Mary. *On the Verge*.
Mallet, David. *Tales of Wonder* 2.
Mandel, Charlotte. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Mariani, Robert. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
Mariani, Robert. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
Marlow, James E. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
Marquis, Don. *Tales of Terror Supplement* 1.
Marsella, Celeste. *RI Writers' Circle* 2003.
Marszalkowski, Alyson. *RI Writers' Circle* 2003.
Martin, Celest. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
Martin, Patricia. *Poets Fortnightly (RI)* 4.
Matthews, William J. *Group* 74.
McCall, Patrick Joseph. *Tales of Terror* 2.
Melhem, D.H. *Group* 74; *Notes on 94th Street*.
Melville, Herman. *Tales of Terror* 1.
Messineo, David. *The Antidote to Prejudice* (ed);
Beyond the Rift; It Has to Do With Seeing (ed);
Meta-Land; On the Verge; Tales of Terror
Supplement 1; *Twenty Minutes of Calm*.
Metzger, Th. *Hydrogen Sleep and Speed*.
Mickle, William Julius. *Tales of Wonder* 1.
Miller, Edmund. *Fucking Animals*.
Milstein, Stuart. *A Dream in Eden; The Tenth*
Muse Anthology (ed).
Mohr, Marilyn. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Molinari, Jan. *RI Writers' Circle* 2008, 2010.
Monro, Harold. *Tales of Terror* 2.
Moore, Thomas. *Tales of Terror* 1.
Morrisey, Brian. *Poets Fortnightly (RI)* 4
Morrison, Morris R. *Prologue and Performances*.
Mueller, Mary. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007.
Mueller, Mary. *RI Writers' Circle* 2008.
Muir, Robert. *RI Writers' Circle* 2008.
Mullin, Rick. *Meta-Land*.
Murphy, Stanley. *Short Poems for a Long Journey*.
Murray, Catherine. *Lights in the Water*.
Myers, Gene. *Beyond the Rift; On the Verge*.

N

Nash, Paul. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On the*
Verge.
Newman, Louis. *Burn, Yellow Candle, Burn; Tear*
Down the Walls.
Nicola, James B. *On the Verge*.
Noyes, Alfred. *Tales of Terror Supplement* 1.

O

O'Brien, Ashley. *RI Writers' Circle* 2010.
O'Byrne, Cathal. *Tales of Terror* 2.
O'Connell, David. *A Better Way to Fall*.
Orr, Priscilla. *On the Verge*.

P

Pabodie, William J. *Poets Fortnightly (RI)* 2, 3.
Parkinson, Janet. *RI Writers' Circle* 2003.
Parnell, Thomas. *Tales of Wonder* 2.
Patridge, Thomas. *Anniversary Collection*.
Patoine, Noël. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007, 2008.
Paul, Michael. *Anniversary Collection*.
Payne, John Burnett. *Emily and Walt, Walt and*
Emily; Group 74.
Pearson, Rose. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007.
Pearson, Victoria. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007.
Percy, Thomas. *Tales of Wonder* 1 and 2.
Persson, Michael. *RI Writers' Circle* 2008.
Petell, John. *RI Writers' Circle* 2007.
Phillips, Jeffrey. *Poets Fortnightly (RI)* 6.
Pierannunzi, Patricia. *RI Writers' Circle* 2008.
Plante, Tom. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
Plato. *The Doll Without A Face*.
Plunkett, Joseph. *Tales of Terror* 2.
Poe, Edgar Allan. *Break Every Bond; Last*
Flowers; Tales of Terror 1.
Poloskey, Marianne. *Beyond the Rift*.
Post, Suzanne Gili. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land;*
On the Verge.
Poteet, Jennifer. *On the Verge*.
Powell, Shirley. *Alternate Lives; As If They World*
Had Not Known Sorrow; May Eve; Other
Rooms; Poets Fortnightly (RI) 4; *Rooms; Tales of*
Terror 2; *Villages and Towns; Womansong* (ed).
Pushkin, Alexander. *Anniversarius: The Book of*
Autumn; Tales of Terror 1; *Trilobite Love Song*.

Q

Quinn, Daniel P. *Beyond the Rift*.
Quirk, Jamie McNeely. *Beyond the Rift*.

R

- Rabinowitz, Jacob. *Germany: A Winter's Tale* (transl); *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 3*; *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Rashbaum, Burt. *Of the Carousel*.
- Rathenow, Lutz. *Kontakte*.
- Raupach, Ernst. *Wake Not the Dead*.
- Read, Charles. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
- Rich, Morton D. *Meta-Land*; *On the Verge*.
- Rich, Susanna. *Beware the House*; *Beyond the Rift*; *On the Verge*; *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
- Rickerby, Wanda A. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
- Riley, James Whitcomb. *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Rilke, Rainer Maria. *Fatal Birds of the Soul*.
- Rivera, Eddie. *Beyond the Rift*.
- Roderick, John M. *Anniversary Collection*.
- Roger of Wendover. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
- Rogers, Robert Cameron. *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Ronan, Stephen. *Poets Fortnightly (RI) 2*
- Rosenberg, James B. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
- Roseman, Sabina. *Group 74*.
- Rossetti, Christina. *Tales of Terror 1*.
- Rossetti, Dante Gabriel. *Tales of Terror, Supplement 1*.
- Rother, Robert. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
- Rowe, Richard O. L. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
- Rue, Denise. *Beyond the Rift*; *Meta-Land*; *On the Verge*.
- Russell, C.D. *Beyond the Rift*; *Meta-Land*.
- Ruth, Alison. *Meta-Land*; *On the Verge*.
- Rutherford, Brett. *An Expectation of Presences*; *Anniversarius: The Book of Autumn*; *At Lovecraft's Grave*; *Beyond the Rift*; *Callimachus in Alexandria*; *City Limits*; *Crackers at Midnight*; *The Doll Without A Face*; *Dr. Jones and Other Terrors*; *Emperor Li Yu, A Life in Poems*; *Fête*; *Five Plays and a Monologue*; *The Gods As They Are, On Their Planets*; *In Chill November*; *May Eve*; *Meta-Land*; *Night Gaunts*; *On the Verge*; *Poems from Providence*; *Poets Fortnightly*; *Prometheus Chained*; *Prometheus on Fifth Avenue*; *Providence Lovecraft Friends*; *The Pumpkined Heart*; *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008, 2010*; *Songs of the I and Thou*; *Tales of Terror Volume 2*; *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*; *Things Seen in Graveyards*; *Thunderpuss: In Memoriam*; *Trilobite Love Song*; *Twilight of the Dictators*; *Whippoorwill Road*. Also, essays, forewords,

and introductions in *The Beckoning Eye*; *Break Every Bond*; *Crises of Rejuvenation*; *Death and the Downs*; *Despised and Rejected*; *Germany: A Winter's Tale*; *Last Flowers*; *May Eve*; *Medusa*; *Moon Laundry*; *Out of Avernus*; *The Secret Agent*; *The Shipping on the Styx*; *Tales of Terror 1 and 2 and Supplement 1*; *Tales of Wonder 1 and 2*; *Two Russian Exiles*; *Wake Not the Dead!*; *The Writings of Emilie Glen 1,2,3 and 4*.

S

- Sage, Janet. *Group 74*.
- Salacan, John. *Beyond the Rift*.
- Salisbury, Toni. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
- Saller, Nick. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
- Sands, Susan. *Group 74*.
- Sanford, Sally. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
- Sapia, Joseph Andrew. *Beyond the Rift*.
- Sax, Boria. *Animals in the Third Reich*; *I Am That Snowflake*; *Kontakte* (transl); *The Raven and the Sun*; *Stealing Fire*.
- Sasso, Lawrence J. *Anniversary Collection*.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
- Schlapak, Andrew. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
- Schweitzer, Barbara. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.
- Scollard, Clinton. *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Scott, Sir Walter. *Tales of Wonder 1 & 2*; *Tales of Terror 1*.
- Scott, William Bell. *Tales of Terror 1*.
- Shannahan, Kathleen. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
- Shanly, Charles Dawson. *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Sharma, Yuyutsu. *Meta-Land*; *On the Verge*.
- Sheff, Michael. *RI Writers' Circle 2008, 2010*.
- Shelley, Anne. *Anniversary Collection*.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe. *Tales of Terror 1*.
- Shot, Danny. *On the Verge*.
- Silbert, Layle. *Group 74*.
- Silent Lotus. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
- Silva, José Asuncion. *The Inhuman Wave*; *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
- Simpson, Julia Meylor. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.
- Simpson, Ruth. *As If the World Had Not Known Sorrow*.
- Sivack, Denis. *Apogee*; *Group 74*.
- Sloper, Samuel. *Tales of Terror 2*.
- Smith, Clark Ashton. *Tales of Terror 2*.

Smith, June. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Smith, Walter Chalmers. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Smollett, Tobias. *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Solod, Fredi. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Sologub, Fyodor. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Solon the Athenian. *The Doll Without A Face*.
 Sorley, Charles Hamilton. *Death and the Downs*.
 Southey, Robert. *Tales of Wonder 1 and 2; Tales of
 Terror Supplement 1*.
 Spina, Vincent. *Dialogue*.
 Spitteler, Carl. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Squire, John Collings. *Tales of Terror 1* (transl);
Tales of Terror 2.
 Stalzer, David. *As If the World Had Not Known
 Sorrow*.
 Starr, Lisa. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Stedman, Edmund Clarence. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Stewart, Christopher. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Stewart, Diane K. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Stone, Carole. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Strothers, Lee. *Group 74*.
 Sullivan, Heather. *RI Writers' Circle 2008, 2010*.
 Sullivan, Janet. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Summers, S. Thomas. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-
 Land*.
 Surtees, Robert. *The Inhuman Wave; Tales of
 Terror Supplement 1*.
 Swinburne, Algernon. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Szpila, Joseph. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Sydlowski, Rachel. *Anniversary Collection*.

T

Tahir, Sara. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Tantra-zawadi. *Meta-Land*.
 Taylor, Ellen. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Taylor, Marcia. *RI Writers' Circle 2010*.
 Taylor, William (of Norwich). *Tales of Wonder 2*.
 Tennyson, Alfred. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Theognis. *The Doll Without A Face*.
 Thomas, Scott. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Thompson, Edith. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Tieck, Ludwig. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1; Wake
 Not the Dead!*
 Todhunter, John. *Tales of Terror Supplement 1*.
 Toler, Nicki. *RI Writers' Circle 2007*.
 Trause, John J. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On
 the Verge*.
 Tryon, Grace. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2008*.
 Tynan, Katherine. *Tales of Terror 2*.

U

Umbers, Doris. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On
 the Verge*.
 Utterback, Shirley A. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.

V

Vanderbeck, Pieter. *Coffee Break; Poets
 Fortnightly; Tales of Terror 2; Tales of Terror
 Supplement 1; Twilight of the Dictators*.
 Veasey, Jack. *Handful of Hair; The Dance That
 Begins and Begins; May Eve; Shapely;
 Sonnetaria; Tales of Terror 2*.
 Vincenti, David. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Vieira, Patricia. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Vogel, Emily. *On the Verge*.
 Vogt, Gregory A. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Vollmuth, P. K. *Group 74*.

W

Wagner, Richard. *Tales of Terror 2; Tales of Terror
 Supplement 1*.
 Ward, BJ. *On the Verge*.
 Warden, Galen. *Beyond the Rift; Meta-Land; On
 the Verge*.
 Warlick, Wendy. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Washburn, Don. *The Boy From Under the Trees;
 In the Eye of the Red-Tailed Hawk; Prayer
 Beads*.
 Waters, Chris. *RI Writers' Circle 2008*.
 Wayne, Jonathan Aryeh. *Disgrace with
 a Capitol D*.
 Weathers-Parry, Patricia. *RI Writers' Circle 2003*.
 Weil, Joe. *On the Verge*.
 Whipple, Dick. *Group 74*.
 Whitin, Charles P. *RI Writers' Circle 2007, 2010*.
 Whitlow, Carolyn Beard. *Anniversary Collection*.
 Whitman, Sarah Helen. *Break Every Bond:
 Sarah Helen Whitman in Providence; Last
 Flowers; Poets Fortnightly (RI) 4;
 Tales of Terror 1*.
 Whittier, John Greenleaf. *Tales of Terror 1*.
 Wilde, Oscar. *Tales of Terror 2*.
 Williams-Hubbard, Barbara. *Meta-Land; On the
 Verge*.
 Witte, George. *Meta-Land; On the Verge*.
 Wolfram, Eunice. *Group 74*.
 Worrell, Dave. *On the Verge*.

Wright, Robert E. *As If the World Had Not
Known Sorrow.*

Y

Yakovlev, Anton. *Meta-Land; On the Verge.*
Yeats, William Butler. *Tales of Terror 2.*
Yevtushenko, Yevgenii. *The Doll Without A Face.*
Yezzi, David. *On the Verge.*
Young, Michael T. *Meta-Land; On the Verge.*

Z

Zeltzer, Joel. *Shadows in Light.*
Zirilli, Donald. *Beyond the Rift; On the Verge.*
Zulauf, Sander. *On the Verge.*

