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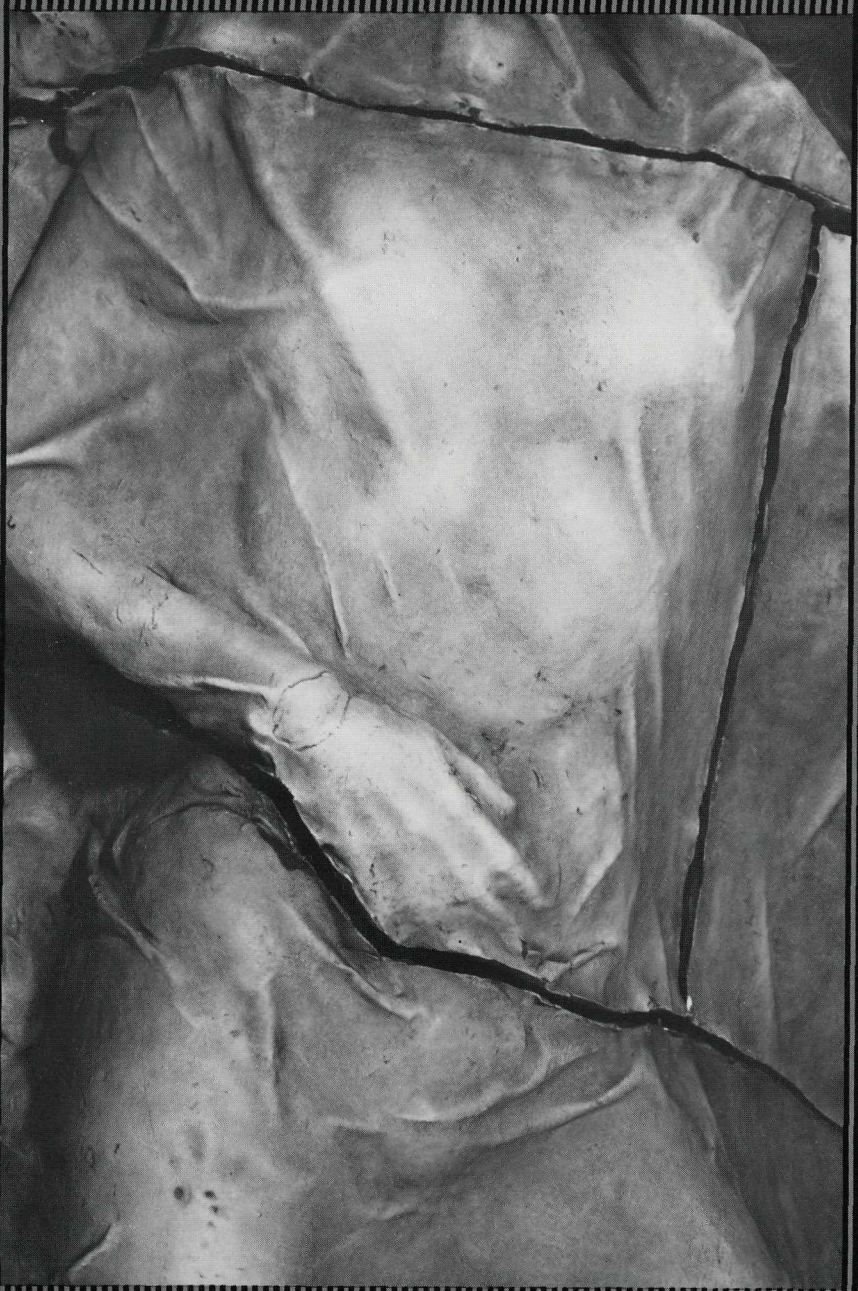

PRISM *international*

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Katie Campbell

San Guiliano

sad eyes
pressed in fres-
co dulling daily, not
eternally but slowly fading
till they're nothing more
than absences and
still you will
be sad

The Secret Siesta

Norberto Luis Romero

Translated from the Spanish by H.E. Francis

Outside, the smell of ripe, golden melons hot in the sun grows more intense in the air. Their perfume, mixed with the scent of jasmines, reaches even my bedroom. And the air becomes thick, syrupy, impenetrable.

I hear the distant shouts of kids chasing butterflies with sticks, hurling them to the ground in full flight. They seize them, still trembling, and thrust them into little empty medicine boxes until they die beating their wings in a deafening drumming against the box, and then place them, wings extended, between the pages of a reader or notebook. The wind brings me their confused shouts, fused with the monotonous, deafening song of locusts clinging to the branches of the fruit trees. White and yellow butterflies, locusts and the perfume of musty jasmines withered under the siesta sun.

I see everything from this room where there are only the silences of sleepy siestas under the fig trees, siestas accumulated on the walls like ribs of ordinary paint, silences disturbed by my breathing, agitated and at times harsh and difficult like that of chickens oppressed by the hot shelter, half buried in the dust, their wings spread and their beaks panting. My breath adheres to these discolored walls, halted among the fleurs de lis, at each pause seeking refuge in their petals, fatigued from seeking that other weary breathing, Grandmother's. My breath lost in the corners of the ceiling, among the daddy longlegs which hang upside down. My eyes tired of looking at Aunt Antonia's portrait in that empty rectangle of very bright wall, where the flowers have a little of their original color, looking for the little bouquet of violets in the dry vase and their fake cheeks of faded watercolor.

Light filters through the red panes of the lattice and tints the walls a faded red which blends with the flowered print, bloodless flowers on a yellow background, where inverted silhouettes of trees filter through the shutters and move rhythmically in the wind; spying on daddy longlegs which are also balancing, lazy as the siesta itself, walking a few inches slowly, stopping motionless, observing the empty, badly woven

web in hope of a wretched little prisoner. They balance themselves to the rhythm of Grandmother's breathing accumulated in corners, hanging from the ceiling like the trees' shadows.

Aunt Antonia has a wall for herself alone. One for the Virgin of Luján and another for Aunt Antonia. One wall for each. A candle for each one on those days when Grandmother lights them as if celebrating anniversaries of the virgins and the dead. I make the flame dance with my breath so that shadows move between the fleurs de lis and between the spiders, projecting them far off as if they leaped dismissed from a swing. But I'm afraid Grandmother will get mad. She doesn't know I'm here alone in the room, silently contemplating the flame and Aunt Antonia's portrait, which smiles down at me as she presses the little bunch of violets against her lace-covered emaciated breast with a gesture of resignation, with a smile rehearsed without a mirror. Black and large Aunt Antonia's eyes, startled, like a cornered animal's.

Daddy longlegs you don't have to fear, says Señorita Troncoso. They're harmless and eat flies and other insects, she says with the voice of one who memorized it fifty years ago. That's why Grandmother doesn't sweep them down with the broom or find them as disgusting as rats. They're arachnids because they have eight legs and not six like insects. A-rach-nids. We all repeat it—*A-rach-nids*—and go out to play in absolute silence and order.

From far off, from the brook, comes the song of frogs and toads reverberating in the afternoon like the air on the burning horizon. It comes diaphanous at this hour when everybody is sleeping the siesta but me—because I don't want to; it bores me, so alone and quiet here, while I hear the kids outside hunting white and yellow butterflies... yellow as Don Justo's teeth... but Grandmother thinks I'm sleeping because I'm silent and still, looking at the fleurs de lis, very close, almost with my nose glued to the surface, until the flowers become double and superimpose themselves, becoming rose butterflies which I trap with my eyes. They whirl and stop motionless at each flutter until they become a woman seated on a chair, or a dog twisted as if he were dying of pain, or a war tank, or a woman's head with an old-fashioned hat with flowers. Then the rose butterflies, fluttering butterflies, return.

In autumn, along the sides of the road leading to school, tiny violets grow straight in the frozen dew, proud and modest. Sometimes I gather a bunch and take them to Grandmother. For Aunt Antonia, she says, as she rubs my numb hands between her hot ones until they burn me. And she puts the flowers in a vase with water on a shelf under the portrait. They are the same violets Aunt Antonia holds clutched to her breast, but darker, alive. The Virgin of Luján stops smiling at me because we give

her no flowers, but when Grandmother is not looking, I take a vase from the kitchen and put a few in it for her too, I arrange it so the two will be alike, then the Virgin smiles at me again.

At this hour Don Justo is sleeping too, but with no cigarette in his mouth, between his yellow teeth. You, you from the capital, you have somebody up there, he says smiling and pointing toward the sierras. Always sitting on the stone bench, leaning against the wall below the garden, constantly clearing his throat and spitting on either side, his damp unlit cigar between his teeth. With that eternal, greasy cap which you no longer can tell the color of, although my mother when she comes to visit us from the capital says it's dark green and bets with my father, who says it's maroon; but I know it's neither dark green nor maroon, I know it's gray, gray like all his clothes, like his eyes and face, because he's all gray, a dirty gray dotted with grease stains from his meals, gray like the rats he gives me behind Grandmother's back so I can play wakes. He's always there, sitting on the bench like a gray statue who spits yellow phlegm all over, which rolls in the dirt, forming little balls which I break with the tip of a stick to see if they have blood, but the little balls of dirt fall apart at the touch and disappear in the hot dust.

Since Don Justo built the bath with the lavatory, shower and tiles like the one we have at home in the city, Grandmother has stopped using the outside toilet. He lets her use it like the rest of the house because the old woman is too old and fat to be stooping over that putrid hole, as my mother says when she comes to visit me and puts on such a face, as if disgusted, which much resembles Señorita Troncoso's, except that my mother is good and beautiful and she's not.

I go into the chicken coop and the hens flurry about for a minute and abandon their round holes in the dust where they were sleeping with their beaks parted, suffocated like my face inside the bathroom mirror with its tiles all mine now like the rest of the house. The hens calm down, get used to seeing me gather symmetrical, mysterious eggs, and go back to their holes with their beaks parted under the sun sifting through the fig trees. My pockets are filled with precious, enigmatic objects which my mother discovers at night when I go to bed and makes me throw out.

Through the barbed wire and the breathing of the stupefied chickens during the siesta, with the smell of geraniums from the brick patio come the grownups' voices like forbidden prayers, noises lost in the time of infinite summers, which speak of things children mustn't hear. The voices say this is the valley where the air is most healthful, they alternate talk of the sick and the dead with talk of virgins and saints. In their voices there is the smell of gorse on Sunday, hyacinths and humble

epitaphs; and there are laments and the oblivion of names lost in time... arachnids. All together—*A-rach-nids*—and now we can go out to play.

I let them have the rear room and the kitchen and charge them nothing and in exchange the woman makes my meals and washes my clothes, Don Justo told my father when we arrived the first time.... And my Grandmother agreed. Provided she was near Aunt Antonia she would do anything, she said. And they went off to the capital, but they come very six months to see us and bring me gifts which can't be found here in the valley, and detective novels, which we like so much and devour in the afternoons, reading in silence, sheltered in the coolness of the gardens or in the rear galleries, and which we then exchange: I'll give you *Crime on the Dock* for *Mortal Chess*. The skinny boy from pavilion three has the one about the hand in the shadows, but tomorrow he'll give it back. Until the very end you don't know who the killer is.

I'd rather play with other things than play these games they bring me from the city. There in Buenos Aires everything is different and the air's not good because people get sick and then they have to bring them here to this valley. I don't like these games, it's better to play at wakes when Grandmother's not here because she doesn't like me to play with the dead rats Don Justo gives me—she makes me throw them into the outhouse, but I make a cross with two sticks and put it on a little box and burn them a candle as I do to my aunt before burying them out back in my rat cemetery like the one up there among the cypresses.

What did Aunt Antonia die of?

She was sick. Stop asking questions.

I'm never sleepy at siesta time and prefer to watch the long-legged spiders or the fleurs de lis while Grandmother sleeps without realizing I close my eyes and stay still, pretending, waiting till she goes to sleep and sinks into the stupor of the perfumed siesta, in the silence of the room, hearing the distant cries of the kids hunting yellow butterflies on the dirt roads, white and yellow butterflies that cross the valley and hover to drink in the heavy puddles the furtive downpours leave, summer storms saturated with ozone, butterflies which fly over the town and the sanatoriums, butterflies which avoid passing through the cemetery, as if intuiting death, without knowing what other death lies in wait for them in the street, branches whipped through the air by long-legged adolescents who whack with branches during the weary siesta. Battered butterflies flutter in medicine boxes, little coffins with strange epitaphs which tell of bacilli and penicillin, miraculous like the Virgin of Luján. Little boxes which smell of the sanatorium, of the silent siesta, of worn detective novels, of rat killers. Little boxes-pavilions with beds

aligned in three rows to sleep the siesta, fluttering under the heat of pyjamas, seeking the killer of rats, of yellow butterflies, seeking the killer of this valley, who with his branches beats the bacilli, wandering through the galleries lit up at dusk, shadows with slow steps which pass one another along the arcades, reading detective novels.

At daybreak the noise in the enormous, chipped chamber pot I use to spit in at night wakes me—it is Grandmother, peeing. I wonder what Grandmother's thing looks like... she's so fat. The pot sounds again in the dark, chafing the brick floor as she shoves it back under the bed, where the sound of the urine making concentric circles that break at the blue edges is stifled. Grandmother gets into bed and the springs resound until she falls to sleep again, almost immediately. That's how Grandmother's sounds are, secret in the silence and darkness of the room. A pee in the middle of the night and now and then a stealthy move towards Don Justo's room. Provided I can be near Aunt Antonia, I'll give anything, Virgin of Luján, I'll put stiff violets in a vase to you.

During siesta the voices say that tuberculars spit up blood and it's contagious if you get too close to them. The forbidden conversations say that they operate on them and take out a lung, that the chest stays sunken, that they come back hunched and bent, that they're exhausted because only half of them breathes and the air of the siesta is so heavy... it is an air heavy with agonizing butterflies, with Sunday afternoons and soiled novels, with gorse rotting in vases in the cemetery.

Grandmother comes back from the cemetery with red eyes. During the afternoon she spends the time on the patio, inactive as on every Sunday, absorbed in her virgins and death, her gaze lost on the horizon, beyond the sierras, as if staring toward Buenos Aires. Dragging her low chair across the entire patio, looking for a shady, cool spot, wearing holes in the cushion chafed from endless Sundays, nodding her head like a hen suffocating under the fig trees.

What did Aunt Antonia die of?

She was sick.

But what from?

Children should be seen and not heard.

... God will forgive me if I don't sleep the siesta but go looking for blood in Don Justo's spit and make cemeteries for dead rats. God will forgive Grandmother too for getting up at dawn to go to Don Justo's room, and forgive Don Justo for saying things to me I don't understand for saying mean things about people from Buenos Aires. God will forgive the kids who hunt butterflies and forgive the spiders for eating up mosquitoes, which are insects—*In-sects.*

That's what we are, long-legged spiders who watch everything from

corners, who gaze at the girl with the old-fashioned hat, at the violets and the tremulous candle flame. We are silent witnesses to how much happens in this lent room, in this room they painted with a roller, where I sleep the siesta. When the spiders hang there upside down and rock slowly, I feel Señorita Troncoso is looking down at me from her desk. I close my eyes and pretend to sleep because I'm sure they'll punish me if I don't sleep the siesta and make me throw away the butterflies in my notebook and throw the rats into the garbage, and I won't be able to blow at the candle before Aunt Antonia, who looks at me and smiles with that watercolor mouth as a ray of sun filters through the blinds, touches her face, and brings back that pink color she had when she was well. I stare at her without blinking until she disappears for an instant and the frame is empty, letting the faded, vanishing flowers on the wall stand out, and when I blink again Aunt Antonia is hurled to the floor like a butterfly plastered in mid flight. The spiders have seen me; they know I'm the killer in the novels and they're capable of attacking me for a mosquito and sticking me in penitence in the notebook, plastered and unable to fly. They're capable of throwing me into the stinking hole in the outhouse or making me put Don Justo's cap on so it will infect me as it has infected them, infect us long-legged spiders because we're so skinny and bent as if we had only one lung.

Outside the locusts are singing and the kids are catching white and yellow butterflies. Grandmother gets into bed and the springs sound. She puts the light out and the trees enter through the slits in the shutters and hang upside down from the ceiling.

Sleep... and may you dream of little angels.

Yes, Grandmother.

And I lie still until she sleeps. Then, under sheets sour with jasmine I touch my sex white as a battered butterfly, and pray to the Virgin: please, beloved Virgin Antonia, let Don Justo and Señorita Troncoso die, let them both die... and let everybody die in this killing valley where there are no live butterflies left, only boys lurking like spiders who, seeing me sitting on the white stone in the garden, cry out *You old humpback!* as they shake their limbs menacingly.

Louise Eklund

Three poems translated from the Swedish by Ulla Nätterqvist-Sawa

The world is built
in terraces
watered by the father's
thunderstorms shimmering bolts
I perish in the highest, the
communion
The earth
reverberating from horseshoes in
the fell of grey leaves
The mother plowed by work horses
sweaty
with huge yellow teeth
raging, with
ears straight back
shying
ever deeper into the woods of clarity
With mirror-glass neighing
and melodious eyes
gleaming from
the fleecy womb of the leaves

The century old oak trees
with hemmed-in eyes
deep in a slumber that penetrates
millions of lives and deaths,
the sea of existence
The June window sill is covered
with dead flies in drifts of yearning
my Hölderlin affliction
propels primeval stones from
inside of me
hurtling out towards a
littoral of light
setting in the cluster of the Pleiades

The privy hole scares me, sucks
me down into it
with its pull of nothingness
its belching heat deep down
They penetrate me from all directions
with crystal thin cries
I am burning with absence
the air is reverberating from
the presence of the exalted ones,
their bitter scent
But I carry all to the threshold
of my majesty
all must disappear
that doesn't smell of me
Deep in the room's crannies of light
the spiders are
bellowing of love

Lithograph #9: Looking for Lars

Byrna Barclay

She looks at men's lean legs at tight jeans at curved crotches. She used to look at the men's chests, at their wide shoulders. Now she looks at their pouches.

Lars: lean and long lying on the couch after dinner, one flanneled arm flung over his eyes. Eric: just as lean but not as long, his growth stunted when he rode for the Royal American Shows and had to starve to keep his weight down, which stunted his growth, he always says. He never crosses his legs. Too bow-legged. From riding so hard so long. He rocks in the grandmother's chair. He grabs Annika and pulls her on his knees but she's too big to be rocked. She wriggles and squirms. His thighs aren't soft like Auntie's, his belly not round and raised. She won't cuddle. He lets her go, rises, and goes back to the field. Lars snores. Legs stretched out and crossed at the ankles.

A weird beaty achy feeling between her legs. She hops on one foot then the other but it doesn't go away. She turns circles this way then turns circles that way but it doesn't go away. She doesn't know what it means, doesn't know what to do about it. She scratches. And that makes it worse.

She looks at Lars, her head cocked. She wants to tease him trick him. Bother, this is such a bother. Spank me, she says, flipping her skirt and sticking her bum out. He stops snoring. Swats at a fly. He doesn't open his eyes. Spank me spank me. His arm falls down, and he folds both hands between his legs; he curls on his side, head turned towards the back of the couch.

She runs into the back bedroom, lifts her skirt and shoves the *Mother Goose* book into her bloomers. If she bothers him enough he'll give her such a smack and hurt his hand on the hard book. Fooled you!

Hands on her hips, she slinks back into the middle room, the book banging against her bum. Spank me, she whispers. I dare you.

He's lying on his back again. She eases between the wall and the end of the couch, boosts herself up, onto its wide arm. Kneeling, she

reaches for a cushion, lies it on his face, then sits on it. Slowly, his arms reach up behind him and then those hands are tight around her waist, she's flipped head over heels. He bolts upright, the pillow flops onto the floor; and she's laid across his hard knees. He flips the book out of her bloomers, and before she can kick or holler Auntie! he smacks her one good and hard on the bum. Fooled you, he says. And setting her on her feet, he lies back down, and rolls over.

Rubbing her backside, she wanders out of the house and down the path to the barn. The tiny heartbeat gone. She won't do that again, feel like that again, you can bet your burning bum on that. Maybe not ever.

She won't look at the men again, either.

Won't go looking for Lars.

Lithograph #13: What You Can See From the Rafters

Byrna Barclay

She makes everything up.

But not the bull.

Everyone in the family fears the bull, it's so rammy, but not Uncle. Every night at milking time he opens the gate and marches right into the feeding stall. He puts his arms around his bull.

Hiding in the rafters, straddling the central beam and riding it, Annika watches Uncle. The bull rammed him once, shoved him against the wall and broke three ribs. But Uncle loves his bull. He puts his arms around its neck. He hugs it. Then he takes hold of the rope and leads it by the ring in its nose out to the corral.

This is the perfect watching place: she can see through the high window in the roof and look down on the bull in the corral. She can look down on Uncle in the barn.

He opens the double doors of the barn to let in the cows for milking. Willow switch in hand, Auntie chases them up from the pasture, the late sun glinting on her coppery hair. This is the best time of day, she always says, just before it ends. The cows lumber into the stalls, udders swaying heavy, so full. Auntie trudges up the slope to the house to do the dishes Annika forgot about.

Uncle squats on his milking stool, ballcap twisted around, and reaches under the first cow. He wipes the teats with a rag. Sets the milkpail under the swollen udder. He presses his ruddy cheek against the cow's belly, his glasses askew on his nose. He squeezes. Milk squirts into the pail. Barn cats scurry around his legs, yowling. He twists one teat sideways and sprays milk into a tabby's open mouth. Milk blinds the tabby. Slanted eyes scrinched into slits, its pink tongue licks whiskers. Uncle milks, large hands squeezing teats.

Auntie comes for the first pail of milk. Have you seen Annika? she says. Gone again.

Hard to swallow, Uncle says.

Auntie takes the pail of milk to the house for separating milk and cream.

Warm and close in the barn. Smells of fresh hay and cow pie. In the corral the bull goes after the cows without calves. It bunches its shoulders, hind hooves pawing in straw; and head lowered, the bull goes after the cows, separating them, cornering a red and white Herford. His large sac sways between his legs. The bull butts the cow's neck, she swings her head sideways. Uncle smiles, milking, squeezing teats. The cow lifts one hind leg, scratches under her belly, and knocks over the milk pail. Cats dive to lap up spilled milk. Uncle smacks the cow's rump, sets the pail upright again, and milks. Milks. The bull snorts. It paws the ground. It swings its horned head. It goes after another cow, coming at her from behind, rears up, the cow steps forward and swings her head around to give him Cow Eyes. The bull swishes its tail, trots away, rump and sac swaying.

Annika rocks on the beam, legs kicking; she rides a horse at the Fair, and she smacks her thigh, faster, faster.

The bull rears again, something long and red and sticky-looking poking out of the tuft of hair between its legs. Back humped, hind legs spread, front legs reaching for the back of the cow, it misses, and comes down hard, front hooves slamming the dirt. The cow chews her cud, head lolling. Tail twitching, she stamps her hind feet. Dumb bull. It doesn't know how to do it.

Auntie comes for another pail of milk. Have you seen Annika? she says. Annika holds still, not breathing. Uncle says, No, not that pill. She's so hard to swallow. Auntie takes two pails this time, arms spread, careful not to spill the milk.

A calf butts its mother's flabby and flattened udder with its nose. Uncle moves his stool to the next stall. The bull lunges, it jabs the hind end of another cow, the cow moans, head lifted and tongue stuck out of its red mouth. The bull's eyes are glazed. Its front hooves scratch the long back of the cow, its hind hooves dance in the straw. Its arched back humps; its hind quarters gyrate. The cow Uncle milks lifts its head and bawls. Uncle squeezed too hard. The teats are cracked and dry on this one. The bull is stuck to the cow, it roars, the cow bawls. Annika rides her wooden horse, head bent, hands clutching the rafter. She rides hard, slapping her thighs. Auntie's red head appears in the doorway, her body a dark shadow, her head aflame from the light of the dying sun. Where's Annika? she says. She can't find her anywhere. She's frantic, she's

cross, she's afraid. Of the bull. Hja! Annika cries, riding hard, the wooden horse lifting over the finish line, its head breaking through a blue ribbon. She won.

But a strong hand pulls at her right ankle, it grips hard, it pulls, so hard.

Auntie hauls Annika down from the rafters. She lands on both bare feet, bent over, and Thora whaps Annika hard on the bum.

Never do that, Auntie says. Never!

Bill MacLeod

Four Poems translated from his own Scots Gaelic

Until Daybreak

until daybreak
shadows devolving
above
the graves
and orchids
of *Cladh Mhícheil*
are the beautiful
soft-flanked
coalfish
we make
our delicate soups
from.

The Night of the Three Suppers

the netted salmon
luxuriates
like a sleeper
in the perfect, gaudy
sun.

now that we
have tasted him
we are wise
to that luxury.

all night, browsing
like a heavy-headed
fish, the rain
is avid
upon past lives.

In My Window's Light

in my window's light,
the half-light
of evening
my love for you
is like
the low, white
wave
which in breaking
curls to its own
dug
and suckles
there the artless,
bitter shades
of patience.

Paraphrase of an Evening-Glove

after M.K.

beluga blue,
beluga blue,
I'll pull for you
the glove-fish
who
when stripped
and turned
inside out
reveals the pearl
he has swallowed
in saying
O, this love,
O, this love,
I will keep it
in my breast-pocket
forever.

William Virgil Davis

Late

The moon's fat thumbprint
smudges the sky.

Wind dusts the screen,
rattles what frames there are.

A dog barks. Another answers
across the arroyo.

A spider is weaving her web.
Some asleep will never waken.

L'Hotel des Grands Hommes

Clare Morgan

L'Hotel des Grands Hommes is an ordinary looking little French hotel on the far side of the *Place du Panthéon.* Three well-scrubbed steps lead up to it. Flanking the steps are two identical fir trees in white wooden boxes, so green and so identical you might doubt they were real except for the moist squares of well-turned earth in which each is planted, a rich dark red, particularly in the evenings when the sun slews down over l'Eglise de la Sorbonne and the whole square is filled with subdued ruby.

The hotel gets its name from the domed and decaying grandeur of the Panthéon itself, in which are housed the remains of famous men, of Hugo, Zola and the inimitable Voltaire. But one cannot say, though the hotel brochure claims it, that the best rooms overlook the Panthéon. All you can see from your window is a flat expanse of dressed stone, pale ochre in the early mornings, orange at midday, and the gangs of local children rollerskating on the pavement, with patches on the backsides of their trousers and an abundance of unkempt hair.

Marsha and Tony were staying in the Hotel des Grands Hommes by accident. Marsha had found it in a guide book she'd picked up at the *Bureau de Tourisme,* and was attracted by the name, and the fact that it was situated in the *cinquième.* They'd both wanted to get away from the *huitième* which was beginning to seem just a little pretentious now that summer was coming and the real Parisiennes were making way for the tourists and you heard almost entirely American voices as you strolled, occasionally checking your reflection, past the elegant windows of the rue Faubourg St-Honoré.

The move made them slightly uncomfortable at first. The *cinquième* is very different from the *huitième* and they needed time to adjust. It was difficult to know what to wear. But perhaps they would have been uncomfortable anywhere. They had come to Paris for a holiday but also because there were things between them which needed to be seen to. They thought it would be easier to discuss in a foreign city those things

it seemed impossible to contemplate at home.

Marsha and Tony were no longer in love. Perhaps they had never been in love. Perhaps love did not exist. Perhaps the only thing that existed was philosophy. You could tell they didn't love each other. He kept away from her and her movements, when she inadvertently got near him, were unnatural and stiff.

They were a prosperous looking couple, in a middle of the road way. They had recently made money and he was very involved in his business. She had that dissatisfied look that comes to some women. When they were in a restaurant he sat with his back to the room and she looked past him and generally they left early and walked through the dusk without talking, taking the long way back to the hotel.

On their third morning, the sun rose very gold over the dome of the Panthéon. They were late getting down to breakfast. Marsha had been slow in the shower and Tony had wanted to finish the final chapter of *Thérèse Raquin.* He rather liked the book. His view was, old Zola could put together a good story. That Thérèse. She was really something. But the parts about passion were well portrayed.

They took the lift all the way down to the vaulted basement where breakfast was served, and tried not to look at each other in the mirrors which covered the inside of the lift. As they got out of the lift Tony thought that Marsha was still a good looking woman. Marsha thought this morning they ought to talk. They sat down to their croissants in silence and felt uncomfortable in the empty room.

They began talking about Zola but it was difficult because Marsha didn't know *Thérèse Raquin.*

"There are some real brutish bits," said Tony, putting a lot of butter on his croissant. Marsha had read *Germinal* and gave her opinion that Zola had a tendency to go over the top. A wrangle began between them, of no very great significance. Marsha was spirited in her own defence. She wrote a little, and had plans to produce the Great English Novel. She'd thought about taking a villa for a month. She knew that was what you had to do. Writers needed space. Maybe she'd take a villa at the end of this Paris thing. She shushed her husband who was talking too loudly and waving his hands. He held a piece of croissant in one hand and waved it in front of her. She told him they weren't alone and he quietened down. Two men were breakfasting behind one of the pillars.

Marsha thought, "Well, now we *can't* talk," and was relieved. Tony began listening to the men's conversation in a quite uninhibited way. He pushed away his plate and lit a cigarette and pushed his chair back from the table. He asked the waitress in very bad French for more coffee. She brought it grudgingly, which annoyed him. The two men were American

and one was interviewing the other. He listened for a few minutes, nodded a couple of times, pursed his lips, drank more coffee, and soon stopped listening, or listened only partially because half his mind was back home, and thinking about his business, and wondering how he could make sure his order books stayed full.

Marsha was in seventh heaven. When she thought about it afterwards going up in the lift she could hardly believe her luck.

"But didn't you *recognize* him?" she said to her husband, her voice pitching and tossing like a boat on a swollen sea. "I mean, didn't you *hear?* Weren't you listening, for God's sake?"

She made a strange little noise when Tony said he hadn't been listening particularly. It was a little snorting noise, somewhere between incredulity and contempt.

"It was Carver, for God's sake. *Carver!* A real, live writer. *Everyone's* read Carver. My God, if only you'd listened! You can really learn something, listening to a man like that."

Tony pooh-poohed it saying what could Carver tell him that he didn't already know? But underneath he was annoyed. You couldn't often listen in on what somebody famous was saying. Marsha kept referring to it. They toured the Musée de l'Orangerie because Tony said it was small enough to get round, and right in front of Picasso's *L'Etreinte* Marsha said again, "That Carver. The things he said about chaos. You'd be surprised."

That night she told her husband she was going to take a villa straight after Paris. Nothing very much. Not too expensive. Something simple up in the hills. They spent the evening in because Tony had some calls to make. He needed to call America. Lack of progress on some deals there was scaring him. Marsha sat at a table in the corner and got out a pencil and paper and tried to write. It was some months since she'd written anything and the pencil felt odd in her fingers and the empty pages gave her a stretched feeling in her head. She thought she'd write a story, maybe call it *L'Hotel des Grands Hommes.* It was a good title. If she handled it right, she could make it reverberate. She started it several times but it didn't sound right. She sat gripping the pencil and stared out into the courtyard. They had a bedroom which looked out over a small square courtyard. The courtyard was enclosed on all sides, seven stories high. Across the courtyard, on the same level she was, someone was playing Brahms. The piano tinkled as if it were slightly out of tune. Marsha heard traffic revving in the distance and felt claustrophobic. She thought about how it would be when she was really writing. She'd sit by an open window on a terrace with the sun coming slowly towards her, eating up the shade. She wasn't sure what she'd write about. But that

would come. There were so many things to write about. "Order trembling at the edge of chaos." Had Carver said that? She remembered it from somewhere. She felt happier than she had in a long time. There was so *much* to write about. She understood about chaos. She could write about chaos. As long as she was writing about it she could conquer chaos and be strong.

Tony finished on the telephone and asked if she wanted to go for a drink, but she said no. The next morning she got up early and spent an hour on *L'Hotel des Grands Hommes.* Then Tony woke up and got out of bed and broke wind on his way to the bathroom and Marsha thought how white his body was, and decided not to write any more for the time being.

At breakfast the waitress was affable and Tony seemed good humoured. Carver was there on his own. He sat very still with his coffee in front of him and his shoulders hunched, staring at the table cloth.

"Why don't you go up and introduce yourself?" Tony said. "You know—writer to writer."

He said it just loud enough so that Carver would have heard if he'd been listening. But Carver gave no sign, and Marsha shushed her husband angrily. Later she wondered what it would be like to introduce herself to Carver. Maybe she'd do it. There wasn't any reason why not. And yet, when you got down to it, you couldn't possibly do it, not just like that, not go and introduce yourself out of the blue.

She didn't see Carver again that day. But the idea of introducing herself to him stayed in her head. It stayed with her while she and Tony went round the Panthéon. They could only go round part of it because it had been crumbling since the beginning of the century, and was being repaired.

"We could go up," Tony said to her. "There's supposed to be a great view from the walkway that goes round the outside of the dome. You can see everything. There's a great view of Paris. You can even see the Eiffel Tower. And I hear there's a tremendous perspective of Nôtre Dame."

She liked the view of the city with its endlessly overlapping roofs. There was something perversely medieval about the tall eighteenth century houses and the ramshackle roofs. When the sun hit the roofs you could see it shimmering off again and everything was very white, there was a white behind the colours of things which was stronger than the colours themselves. In the streets where the sun couldn't get to, everything looked black in comparison. The window boxes punctuating this expanse of white and blackness looked like something which had been spilled.

"There's the Hotel," she said to Tony, glad to have spotted it and in doing so have got her bearings.

"I wonder if we can see our room? I don't suppose so. It's on the other side. I left our curtain not quite pulled back."

They had to climb some narrow steps to get to the upper walkway. Marsha was afraid of heights, especially when you were exposed, and she held onto her husband's arm. He said, "Don't look down. You'll make it," and let go of her as soon as they got onto the walkway. She didn't like the city quite as much this time. The view was too high. Everything took on a miniature look which unsettled her. The wind came at her from across the city in a shifting way. She moved from pillar to pillar, stopping a little in the protection of each one. They soon went down.

It was a long way down. The crypt was cool and the soft lights made it difficult for her to see after the intense directness of everything outside. That white colour in the roofs. That had been intense. Quite a few people were in the crypt and their footsteps echoed on the stone making a geometric sound. She stopped and bent down to look at the inscriptions next to each stone compartment. You could look through into the compartments where a piece of glass was set into the wall. Tony wandered off somewhere. In one compartment they'd put Zola and Hugo. She was surprised. She wouldn't have thought Zola and Hugo would have sat all that well together. Zola's stone coffin had nothing on it. Hugo's had a flag and a letter and some dried flowers. It looked rather ornate. She was drawn back to look at that compartment again on the way out. Some of the others didn't interest her so much. There were a lot of dead generals.

From somewhere they were piping through profound music. It sounded like Wagner but she wasn't sufficiently into Wagner to say. On the way out was a benign statue of Voltaire. The wall plaque next to it seemed to be trying to make out that Voltaire was a defender of Catholicism. She said, "Hey, Tony," and Tony came round from the back of Voltaire where he'd been intrigued by the effect the fall of his cloak had, it was really amazing how those guys could make things out of stone.

"Hey Tony. You know. This is crazy. Remember *Candide?* Was Voltaire an atheist or *was* he? No guy as bright as that could've believed in God."

"Why sure," said Tony and struck up an attitude. "You remember how it ends? *Ve should go and vork in zee garden.*"

A blue-jacketed official walked by and looked at him queerly. Marsha thought his French accent was very bad. She said, "Sure. Well. I guess they got it wrong. Isn't that something? Getting it wrong about your own hero."

As they left the cool gloom of the hallway and came out into the bright sunshine, she consoled herself with the thought that no American would have made such a mistake. It was like saying that Lincoln was against abolition.

Next morning Marsha and Tony woke up on opposite sides of the bed. They'd been out to a bad Italian restaurant and got rather drunk, and on the way back to the hotel they'd quarrelled.

"I *ask* y'," Marsha had appealed to a street light behind which, impossible to perceive, was the dissipated silver of a waning moon.

"An I-*tal*-ian restaurant. In Paris! God save us. Tagliatelle Verdi. How'd we get to be served up that shit?"

When they got back to the hotel, Tony came out of the bathroom with a hard-on and Marsha pretended to be asleep. Sometime in the night, probably about three or four when the alcohol begins to diminish and things seem especially bleak, Marsha woke up and thought about *L'Hotel des Grands Hommes.* She decided to try and finish it before they left the next day. She couldn't imagine finishing it anywhere else. The atmosphere would be wrong somehow.

They had a rather silent breakfast in the vaulted chamber. Marsha found the *confiture* too sickly. Carver was nowhere to be seen. Tony told her there wouldn't be time for her to work, they had to leave by 10:30.

"You know we said we'd head off down to Perpignan. Perpignan's a long haul."

There was an artist down in Perpignan who Marsha had a yen for. She'd bought a little nude of his at the *Marché de Poésie* last time they were in Paris. She'd hung it in her dressing room back home in Baltimore and she looked at it every morning on her way to the shower. The way she'd hung it, the light really picked it out. The little nude had her arms raised, pinning up her hair. There was a lot of tension in her elbows. Sometimes it surprised Marsha she wasn't actually alive.

Marsha didn't write anything else but applied herself to the packing. By about ten everything was in and Marsha was putting slides in the sides of her hair. She asked Tony if he thought it made her look more sophisticated and he said, "I guess so."

Down in the lobby it took a long time for the clerk to prepare their bill. The Carver party was before them. Marsha nudged Tony and said, "Look. That must be his wife."

Carver's wife was about fifty, the same age as Carver, and had long brown hair loose to the waist except where it was held up over her ears with two bright red slides. She was deep in conversation with a young Frenchman. Marsha wondered if he was Carver's publisher. It must be really something to have a foreign publisher. She'd have a foreign pub-

lisher one day. The young Frenchman held Carver's wife's hands and they looked at each other and smiled a lot. Carver was sitting in the corner and looking out of the window and smoking. Carver's wife seemed very lively. They went outside and got a stranger to take their photograph. It was Carver's wife's idea. She had to call Carver twice before he'd come. In the end they stood together, the three of them, Mrs. Carver in the middle with her arms draped over both men's shoulders. It was an instant picture and there was great hilarity when Carver's wife discovered she'd left her fly undone.

"Oh God!" she squealed. "Just look at me!"

She planted an excited kiss on the Frenchman's cheek and her lipstick came off and left a red impression there. Carver's wife and the Frenchman went inside and sat in the corner talking and laughing. Carver stayed leaning in the doorway, looking out over the *Place du Panthéon.* It was a Saturday morning and there wasn't much traffic. It was a dull day and the *Place* looked smaller somehow, without the sun. Marsha stood watching Carver and Carver stood watching the Panthéon. Tony paid the bill and said, "Are you coming, Marsha?"

She said, "Sure," and picked up one of the cases and walked with her husband down the hotel steps and over to the car.

"That Carver sure looks miserable."

"Doesn't he just."

"I guess his wife's making it with the Frenchman?"

"I guess."

As Tony unlocked the car Marsha looked round and saw Carver still standing in the doorway. He'd finished his cigarette and his hands were hanging down by his sides. Marsha felt very strongly she wanted to go over to him. She waved Tony out of the parking space and got into the car. The flags that decorated the upper walkway of the Panthéon lifted in a cross-wind then went limp. As the car circled the *Place* and approached the hotel entrance for the final time, Marsha hoped Carver would still be standing there. But as the two green trees in their neat white boxes came into view she saw, with a disproportionate sense of sorrow, that Carver had gone.

Saito Sanki

Six Haiku translated from the Japanese by Masaya Saito

Flaming sky; my anger
Strengthening me
To climb the hill

How bright the polestar
And living
Mold on the rice cakes

Hiroshima at night—
Distant voices
Explode with laughter

Still with his glasses on
He died
So I heard, weeping

In the cold bathroom
Both naked,
A cockroach and I

How soft,
Snow falling
On snow

Patrick Lane

Two Poems

Winter 35

The brightness which is the light seen from a tomb
and which is what the dead see when they gaze
with their marble eyes from the dark rooms they are
laid in. This is a whole city this snow.

Winter 37

One is about the man who walks out into the storm
and is never heard of again. We all know that one.
It is the story about grief and music,
where all the dancing is an escape
from virtue, everyone shaken by a higher crime,
the emptiness that follows completion, the one the body knows
in the formal gentleness of suffering, everything gone,
everything forgiven in the land East of Eden.

Then there is the other story, the one
where the stranger enters out of the storm,
ice melting from his beard, his huge hands
moving over the fire, the fear of what will follow,
the women quiet, filling his cup and bowl
with all the food there is in hope it will be
enough, in hope he will be satisfied only with that,
and knowing he won't, knowing
this is the part of the story the reader will call
the end and wanting him to want it be
the beginning, everyone crying out, everyone
saying things like: *Lie down in sorrow!*
or: *This is the burden of Babylon!*

There is another story, there always is.
The one about. . .
Of course, of course.
How cold it is with only a lamp in this small room.

The Wolf Spiders

Bonnie Burnard

He decided it was the female resting dead centre in the web, though he hadn't seen her build it. She'd been there when he came out at six to wait for the sun. The web wasn't exotic, it was the kind a kid would draw if you asked him to draw a spider's web; it looped from one of the sunporch studs over to the rusted eaves trough. The strands looked thicker, tougher than expected. The only delicacy was in the outside edges.

Why is she white, he wondered. He thought he might go down to the basement later and dig out the kids' old encyclopaedia, see if he couldn't find something on colouration, or the lack of it. Albino? A gene, or a chromosome, he couldn't argue which, gone wrong? He remembered the diagrams, DNA, RNA, the shaky X's, the broken tips. The chinks in the old master plan.

He saw her mate, equally pale, moving alone the outside wall of the house, trying to hide among the coarse stones in the stucco. Maybe he was watching her, guarding her. Maybe he was watching him, inside the sunporch, through the screen. Maybe he was blind. Albinos were, often.

Maybe they were both blind, white and blind, just doing their thing, building their web and making love after a little wine, waiting for the blessed event. Eggs? he wondered, or born alive? He'd get a book, go over to the library if he had to. He was going to watch and he wanted to know beforehand, eggs, or born alive. He wondered which would be worse. And how many there might be. If they didn't come out in sunlight, he could wait with the flashlight, there was a good chance she wouldn't know the difference. And even if she did, even if she had sensors which could pick up his presence, he would still see, she wouldn't be able to stop herself. And she wouldn't want to leave the web.

She was big, her abdomen looked like an oversized chick-pea, rounded. Her legs, eight of them, he'd counted, were as white as the rest of her; he could see their segments, clearly defined, and busy. As if she couldn't stop, though the work looked finished.

He took his eyes from her and went into the house to freshen his drink. It wasn't yet seven by the clock on the stove. He heard nothing

from upstairs, nothing from his wife, nothing from their nearly grown offspring. He would tell them when they came down about his spiders, would ask them to come and watch with him, one at a time. At least the kids. They might be interested. And she might too. Depending. On how her dreams had left her, on what mood her first waking thought had found. He'd go back to the sunporch and concentrate on her first waking thought, send her a good one, a cheery one. That's what he'd do while he waited with his spiders. He returned to the sunporch and sat down with his drink, leaning forward over it.

Think sandy beach, he thought.

Think your aunt's emerald ring, which you lost so long ago in the park, pushing the kids on the swing, and found again, just outside the circle of dirt beat flat by stopping feet.

Think coming like a loud young beast in my arms.

Think old things.

The male had moved again. He was climbing onto the web, getting his bearings on the delicate outside strands. There, he was on. The web reverberated with his extra weight; she didn't flinch. Even if she was blind, she would know where he was, she would have in her mind a grid, a pattern, would be able to sense its emptiness, or fullness. She would know him by his weight, the way he moved, or didn't move. He would have a style, a particular spider style which she would know in her heart, absolutely. Otherwise she'd be prey to anything that came along, wouldn't she?

"Would you like some toast with your scotch?" The voice came from behind him. She was leaning against the doorframe in her Springsteen nightshirt, a slightly rumpled, slightly gaunt middle-aged woman without make-up. This was how her intimates knew her. Give her a silk dress and ten minutes in any bathroom and you'd have yourself something altogether different.

"It was a rhetorical question," she said when he turned away without answering. And then the second beat sounded. "Nice morning."

"Yes," he answered.

The male was near the centre now, approaching steadily. He wondered what the signals were, what did he send to her through the strands? Are you okay love? Is the heat getting to you? Would it help if I rubbed your back for a while? Or was it just a dumb nothing, one creepy body moving toward another. When the eggs or the little live bodies came out, would either of them have any notion of context? Would they know what they'd done?

She disappeared from the doorway, he felt her go and after a time she returned with her toast, heaped high with strawberry conserve, and a

strong black cup of last night's coffee. She could drink mud, this woman. She sat beside him on the tête-à-tête and put her plate on the wrought iron table between them, next to his glass. He wrapped his hand around his drink.

"God, I slept," she said.

"Good," he said. "I'm glad."

"So today the world is mine," she said.

"Good," he said. That was another thing this woman could do, sleep. It had scared the hell out of him the first time. They'd made love in a dingy hotel in some backwater town, the first time they'd been alone and free, and within seconds she was gone. He thought she'd lost consciousness, passed out, and he roused her and what? she asked, what's wrong? Nothing, he'd told her and she smiled and left him again, just as quickly. Now she could do it anytime; it no longer required his touch. An adaptation.

"Sally and I and the bridesmaids are going for a last fitting," she said. "At ten."

"What colour is your gown again?" he asked.

"It's ivory," she said. "They talked me into ivory. Mother of the bride elegance. But I'm holding out for a big peach hat."

"You should have a peach dress," he said, "if that's what you want. Peach would be nice on you."

"It's her day," she said. "And she's hot on ivory. She says there will be ten women my age in peach. Peach is too popular."

"I see," he said. He finished his drink.

"Are you ready for a coffee?" she asked.

"No," he said.

He didn't want to chance looking over at the spiders now. He went inside for another drink. Their daughter was at the sink, rinsing out a glass, pouring some orange juice into it.

"Good morning," she said.

"Hi pumpkin," he said. He walked up behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist, the glass still in his hand.

She didn't respond the way he hoped she would, hadn't for ten years. She looked down at his hands. "You and the scotch and the sun," she said. "Maybe we could get you an IV."

He dropped his arms and went to his bottle on the dining room buffet. He heard a muffled "Sorry, Daddy," and returned to the kitchen as if nothing had happened.

"You're going for a fitting," he said.

"Want to come?" she asked. "You should come with us. I'm gorgeous in it."

He made a point of not taking a drink in front of her.

"I know it's all pretend," she said, "but I love this dress. I am a princess in this dress. It makes me want to twirl and stand up on my toes and curtsy low to someone." And she twirled and went up on her toes and curtsied low to him in her pyjamas.

"I can't imagine who you should curtsy to," he said. "Though you are a princess, you truly are." He thought he'd never seen her so beautiful as right then at the sink, not even when she emerged from her mother yawning and stretching and bawling in shock at the air on her brand new skin. He wanted her to have her mother's old abandon, he wished it could be passed on to her like an heirloom, though he'd never tried to imagine her in anyone's arms. She did say she loved this boy she was about to marry. She said it a dozen times a day.

"Did your brother show any signs of consciousness?" he asked.

"None," she said. "Why?"

"I don't know," he said. "The grass needs cutting, I guess."

He didn't do any of the yardwork himself anymore. He'd started a fire in the garage with the mower the previous spring and he'd been slow reacting to it, had got the shakes just watching the flames to up the wall. Like a good wife and mother she'd smelled it and found him and they got it out and she threatened him for the first and only time. She was wearing her Springsteen night shirt that morning too.

"Drink every minute of your life," she'd said. "Drink every God damned second. But don't kill us. I don't intend to die because you're drunk. That's not how I want to die. You don't touch anything flammable or sharp or electrical in this house again, you understand? You do and I'm gone. We're all gone."

So he didn't do anything dangerous. Their son did it all; he was old enough and he couldn't find any other work anyway that was worth his while, that was the line he used on his mother.

"He'll get up sometime," she said, holding the glass of orange juice against her temple. "He always does."

"Did he show up at that dance last night?" he asked.

"No, Dad, he didn't," she said.

"Just asking," he said.

She offered him the last of her orange juice, which he took, just the last inch, full of pith and a heavy sweetness. 'He'll come out of it," she said.

"But when?" he asked. "This century?"

The boy drove an ancient Mercedes bike, which he had no idea how to fix, and his *lady* sported a tattoo of a fish on her taut left cheek, he had this by hearsay. There was a savings account, started when the boy was

seven in Superman pyjamas, with thirteen thousand unused university dollars in it.

"Do you think little Pauline will be the next one to join our happy family circle?" he asked.

"Oh, Dad," she said.

"She could get knocked up like that," he said, snapping his fingers.

"Don't worry about what hasn't happened," she said. "Don't make stuff up." She emptied the coffee pot down the drain and refilled it with clear water. "Pauline's all right for now."

"For now?" he asked.

"You remember Grant?" she asked.

"I most certainly do," he said.

"Well he went away," she said. "I didn't get pregnant did I?"

He looked at his scotch, at the rich amber liquid, counting the things he'd never been told.

"How would I know?" he asked.

She dumped the old coffee grounds and poured new into the top of the machine. The smell nauseated him.

"Want some eggs?" she asked. "I'll make an omelette if you'll split it with me."

"No," he said. "Thanks. You make one though. Maybe your mother will have some. I'll ask her." He started down the few steps to the sunporch, stopping midway, turning back to her. "I have something to show you," he said quietly. "Maybe after your fitting, come sit with me."

She stood with the fridge door open, staring at the shelves, the light hitting her just under the chin. "Sure," she said. "Why not."

His wife sat half turned in her chair, holding her empty coffee cup. She was watching the spiders. "Did you see them?" she asked. "What are they. What kind?"

He looked at them, as though for the first time. "Spiders," he said. "I don't know what kind." The sun was on the web now, fully. He sat down beside her. "Sally is willing to make an omelette if she can get a taker."

"Why would they be white?" she asked.

The girl appeared at the door. "You game for some omelette?" she asked.

"I've just had toast," her mother said, then, "Yes, all right, I'll have some. There's mushrooms. Whatever."

The girl turned away, juggling the two eggs she'd brought.

"So," he said. "A peach hat. A big peach hat."

"I think they're called wolf spiders," she said.

"How would you know that?" he asked.

"I'm going to kill them," she said.

"What?" he asked, knowing.

"I don't mind two," she said. "But there won't be two for long, will there?" She got up and walked past him into the house. He could hear cupboard doors banging and she came back around the corner holding the Black Flag, the heavy duty green can, the one with the sketches of black heavy duty insects, grasshoppers and slugs and roaches. Then she was out the screen door, closing it quietly behind her, her night shirt transparent against the sun, aiming.

The male was with the female, his body partly covering hers, as if he could see the can and knew what was in it.

He closed his eyes and drained his scotch while she sprayed, he could hear nothing but the long, loud hiss.

"God but they're ugly," she said. Some of the spray was floating back into her face and she began to cough. She was losing patience. "They won't give up," she said, holding her finger firmly on the nozzle. Then, "Come on guys, off to spider heaven."

When it was done she came back into the sunporch and set the can beside his empty glass, still coughing, trying to get the last of the foul air out of her lungs.

Then, half laughing, she offered, "I'm dying here." She looked toward the web to see if they'd dropped, not meaning to see his face at all.

And he held it back, just behind the wall his eyes made, for a steady two minutes. He knew without looking that the spiders hadn't moved. He knew the strands they'd made could hold dead weight, the centre strands particularly, for hours and hours.

"Please," she said. "Don't start."

Joseph Maviglia

Invisibility

Time runs out of time
—you
couldn't crack the heat if
your child's
heart depended on it
but it does
because
the sky
has burned all birds.

Invisible
the seagull dipping
over tumbling waves
sees your eyes in motion.

It never lands. Time
left to you
sprays
in—outside itself
your voice attracts the sun.

Carl Sandor

Carmen Immanitates

of the murder of a civilian protester who violated the Easter curfew, by the multi-denominational, all-male choir of The International Police Constabulary.

Dedicated to the memory of the Hungarian poet, Janos Pilinszky. (Died of injuries caused by the spiritual brutality of his era.)

Directions to the reader:

Gloria = followed by two hard knocks,
(one for each syllable) on the riot-shield
with the weapon issued.

Halleluja = followed by four, hard (one for each
syllable), shorter than regular steps, run
with bent knees.

A policeman?
A policeman is coming from the North. Gloria.
Two policemen are coming from the East.
Three policemen are coming from the South!
Hard to keep eye on them. Hallelujah.
Four policemen are coming from the West.
They meet with the one from the North.
Five policemen are coming behind the two from the East.
They cross paths.
More policemen are coming from the South.
Their hats are on. Gloria!
One-two-three-four, cannot count them anymore,
Policemen are coming from the North.
They are armed with shields and clubs,
Revolvers and sub-machine guns.
O more policemen are coming from the East and the North,
O more policemen are coming from the West and the South. Gloria!
Policemen are coming in tanks.
Policemen are coming from the air by parachutes.

They are singing! Hallelujah!
The chorus. Polovetsian Dances.
Borodin. Gloria.
Hundreds, thousands of policemen are coming. Hallelujah!

He is surrounded. They are learned and ready. Gloria!
He smiles meekly and is going to throw-up.
He cannot throw-up.
Yes! – I am guilty of all charges and of more! – he shouts. Gloria!
They close ranks. Hallelujah.
He is ill, unarmed, disgusting. Hallelujah.

The blow he sees misses, the other smashes his knees.
In the shower of blows he cannot fall,
He tries to catch a blow to the top of his head. Gloria.
The tiring policemen are replaced by those
Crammed behind the first rank. Hallelujah!
I am! – I did it! – he shouts. Gloria.
They smash his face. Hallelujah.
At times, his body, kept together by his cloths,
Is raised by the simultaneous blows,
Falling back, it creates a small cloud of fine dust. Gloria.
More policemen surge to the assault. Hallelujah.
What a song!
He is down. Gloria.
Light gathers.

Wood Chuck-Chuck, A Fairytale

Janina C. Hornosty

The houses are haunted
By white nightgowns.
None are green,
Or purple with green rings,
Or green with yellow rings,
Or yellow with blue rings.
None of them are strange,
With socks of lace
And beaded ceintures.
People are not going
To dream of baboons and periwinkles.
Only, here and there, an old sailor,
Drunk and asleep in his boots,
Catches tigers in red weather.

—Wallace Stevens
Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock

This is a story about a very nice day with some wood in it, a day that veers toward that lightheaded green world that Shakespeare professors are always talking about. So if you're looking for tragedy or angst or profound insight into the nature of things, you can go away now. Except wood. If you want some insight into the secret nature of wood, stay a while. Because the fact is, wood may very well want to help us out with our problems, even some of our most serious ones, like white nightgowns. And so we'd better be paying attention.

One day I decided that I needed to build an extra shelf for the books that were proliferating alarmingly in the apartment where I lived with my lover. We had no car and he, my lover, was at school, so I got on the bus and took a long, uneventful ride towards a lumber mill that I had

spotted the day before and which had been the inspiration for the shelf in the first place. It was raining outside and most people were staring out the drop-streaked windows thinking about where they were going, what they had to do when they got there, and how long the bus was taking. Some people put their heads together and had conversations in low tones, but I don't know what they were talking about. I too was thinking about where I was going and how slow the traffic was, and the form I would give my shelf. My mind poked and prodded at the anticipated wood, struggling with lengths and widths and the economic use of space.

Things were very ordinary.

Ascending from the bus at the right stop, I covered my head with my knapsack and ran across the parking lot to a small plain building. This was the place, I discovered, where one ordered one's wood and paid for it, or bought nails and screws and the like. The shop was filled with customers giving orders to the efficient red-faced men behind the counters. Sometimes these clerks, heads full of disembodied female parts (it seemed to me), would joke suggestively with the very polished-looking secretary sitting at the receiving desk. She would smile in a kind of knowing, satisfied way, as she cocked her head a little to the side and replied pertly but inoffensively. She knew all she had to know about men. Between customers she would stare into space inertly, as if waiting patiently for something she had been waiting for all her life, but then decided to get a coffee instead. I wanted her to get up from her desk and parody the maleness all around, to thrust her hands out from her pelvis and say things like, "Wonga, wonga, wonga, I got a tool in size 19 you might be interested in, wonga, wonga, wonga." But she just kept staring and then receiving everyone, staff and customers alike, pertly and inoffensively. Soon I was thinking about my wood again and forgot her.

Things were very ordinary.

After finding out from the man at the counter that the wood I wanted (the very cheapest) was at the farthest outreaches of the lumber yard, I went with another man, and my order form, to wait inside the mill itself where the wood would be delivered. This man was a polite, older Italian who bowed and gestured effusively as if to assure me of his harmlessness; he seemed somewhat concerned about leaving me to stand by myself along the wall of the mill by the door he had led me through. He knew, and I soon discovered, that this high, dark, sweetsmelling place, humming with saws and raining sawdust, was a man's universe. Wonga, wonga, wonga, I thought at first, amidst stares and whispers. It became obvious to me that it was unusual for a woman to come into the mill at all, and I realized that I had been sent here only because I didn't have a

car, or a man, with which to collect my purchase at the usual drop-off point.

Things were very ordinary.

But after a few minutes when I had become a little accustomed to this single-sexed hive, and the men a little accustomed to my presence there, I began to watch with interest. The colony had its laws and habits. The older men tended to work at a steady pace, exchanging questions, directions, and jokes as part of the rhythm of their labour; I realized instinctively that this well-oiled state of being had been years in the cultivation. Most of the young men worked in furious bursts of activity, and then leaned on their saws to relax and talk, letting the happy sweat cool their proud, angular faces. Woods of many different types and sizes were stacked up high to the very roof of the mill, their various blondnesses making supple patterns on the walls. It began to seem like a clean, healthy place, and I found myself appreciating, appreciating, smelling cedar and watching a slim-hipped dark-haired boy in his late teens, his thigh muscles straining and defined against his thick green workpants as he lifted a pile of planks. Lovely. Suddenly the face of one of one of my former professors appeared before me, grimly intoning centuries of male domination rooted in phallus worship. Her pale, handsome face hung before me, tenaciously, warningly. I hugged her memory to me, but laughed and admonished us both. We celebrate our energy and call ourselves witches, and this is right and true. Then let there be warlocks! We will never succeed in liberating half the human race by crippling the other half, by turning them into those pathetic half-beings who fear their own sex: Would you mind if I filled my chest with air? Would it bother you if our embrace made me hungry? Excuse me, my big feet seem to be bigger than yours.

As I stood there by the mill door, thinking my thoughts and watching the men, my spirits rose until I felt terribly cheerful. I think it must have been because my wood was coming closer and closer, piled against the open caddy of the truck. When it finally arrived, a man took it and sawed it into appropriately-sized pieces. He apologized for its wetness but explained that almost nobody bought wood that cheap and that none of this particular sort was kept in the mill itself. I cupped my arms and asked him to pile it on; he did so hesitantly, with a look that suggested that I really shouldn't be doing things this way, but that it was sort of cute too. I said thank you and smiled in a way that suggested (I think) that he really shouldn't be so patronizing, but that it was sort of cute too. He laughed and I headed for the bus stop.

There are not many things in life that one can be sure about. And then

many things that are certain aren't very interesting. But it is a true and interesting fact that the sight of a rather small woman carrying a rather large pile of wood, on a bus, when it is raining, will stir up immense excitement, perhaps even more excitement than pornographic films, or the news, or very good people. I could feel the charm of the wood beginning to incandesce the moment I stepped onto the bus.

"You'll have to pay extra for that, ha, ha," the bus driver said, his bright blue eyes beaming joviality and goodwill, contradicting his words. "Quite a load you got there."

"Yes, I'm making a shelf."

"A shelf, eh?" he said with hearty satisfaction, as if I had, in declaring my intentions, affirmed some central pillar of his world view. Shelves were good, shelves were solid, shelves were for real.

I moved to the back of the bus and found a seat. I really took up two seats, but nobody seemed to mind. People were already smiling at me and my wood, whose wetness had now soaked through the thighs of my jeans where it rested. We all rode for a time in expectant silence; alert, knowing, generous eyes flickered back and forth as the consciousness of wood arose among us.

"Your pants are all wet!" exclaimed an old, sparrow-boned man with a neat black hat, and he grinned. There was a silent communal assent to this first articulated truth and everybody nodded and smiled at the wetness of my pants.

"You've got bits of wood all over you!" threw out a woman in a purple suede jacket, upon which I looked down, smiling, affable, and saw that indeed, splinters of wet wood had lodged themselves in my clothing. My hair had fallen over one side of my face and I could see that some splinters had even gotten into my long bangs. This, of course, did not go unnoticed by the warming crowd, hot on the trail of this wood magic.

"It's in her hair too!"

The back of the bus was beginning to pulse with energy. I soon noticed that the person who sat across and to the left was one of the men from the mill; the young one, the green-thighed one! He looked shyly and adoringly at young woman with wood, and young woman with wood thought that he had lovely eyes, dark and full of sensual awareness, though he probably knew nothing about Milton. Maybe that was a good thing. Yes, it was a good thing, everything was a good thing as we all sat there in perfect harmony at the back of the bus.

Were there wars? Was there poverty? Did relationships fail, slowly grinding down to uninspired grey dependence? None of it seemed possible, not on this bus, riding high and proud through the rain down Dufferin Street.

A few seats away from the sloe-eyed mill worker sat a young mother with her little boy, who had been singing *Old MacDonald* when I first sat down. His eyes had darted immediately to my wood, and he had been giving me coy glances ever since. His mother looked at me in a friendly enough way, but there arose a touch of apprehension in her expression as the ride went on; perhaps she was worried that the little boy would become over-excited. Or maybe, and this is what I really think, she was becoming concerned about his song, which was getting off the beaten track. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the boy was altering the words to *Old MacDonald,* a word here, a line there, until it had become:

Old MacDonald had a forest
Ee-I-Ee-I-Oh
And in this forest he had some wood
Ee-I-Ee-I-Oh
With a chuck-chuck here
And a chuck-chuck there
Wood chuck, wood chuck
Wood chuck-chuck.

Sometimes he would just say, "chuck chuck" and chuckle, and sometimes he would sing the whole thing again. His eyes shone.

It was only very slightly peculiar, emerging from a parallel universe only a shade over from the one advertised in the *Eaton's uncrates the sun* mini billboards on the bus, but the mother obviously found this proliferation of woodchucks somewhat disturbing. Must there always be a worm in the apple? This woman's resistance to the transfiguring passion of her son's song almost became a genuine threat to my euphoric sense of well-being, but, just in time, I was distracted by the sight (not, this time, a figment) of another old professor, Dr. Herbert Moss, getting onto the bus. I tried to rise off the seat to signal to him, but it was difficult with all that wood there. It didn't matter though, he came to the back of the bus anyway because he had seen me see him and he knew he couldn't get out of it. Not that he disliked me, but he was generally shy and awkward, a tall greying man in his early forties who always left his office door wide, wide open when he had female students in.

The conversation did get off to a good start, however, because of the wood, and soon he was telling me quite animatedly about an academic conference he had been to recently. Apparently Dr. Moss had been talking to a colleague who was going to give a talk on postmodern poetics at the early session the next day, and had been telling him, this postmodern poetics person, about a short story of Margaret Laurence's he had been working on. He was describing the story and this colleague, this Dr. Weavers, had interrupted him before he was finished, saying

dismissively, holding the unknown offending story between two fingers away from his nose, "Oh, Laurence, that's realism isn't it." Dr. Moss stretched his mouth into a parody of disdain when he said *realism,* so that I really could imagine it all quite clearly.

"And what did you do?" I asked encouragingly.

By this point the wood and my wet pants were having a truly liberating effect on Dr. Moss. His facial muscles were flexing with barely suppressed excitement and his red mouth, which he had continually moistened with his tongue throughout our discussion, did some warm-up exercises before he finally blurted out, "I told him to take his narrow-minded trendy rat-pack criticism and shove it up his very real ass." And he burst into a sputtering wheezy laugh. We both laughed, in fact, until Dr. Moss regained some of his discomposure and turned his blushing face towards the window. I knew what he said was a lie, but only in a strictly objective sense.

Dr. Moss had to get off the bus soon, and when he did we both cheerily bade each other farewell. Then the young man from the lumber yard had to disembark and our eyes said goodbye lingeringly. "See ya," he managed to say, "Good luck with your wood."

"Chuck chuck, wood chuck."

In the end, I got off the bus, went home, and leant my wood against the walls to dry. I will leave it there and seal the magic in. I cannot bear to go beyond this, to the ever after, to days without wood, buses without woodchucks. I cannot follow that woodless woman throughout the city, through mazes of businessmen in a hurry, through saying the right things, through doing the done deeds, though she sometimes dreams of baboons and periwinkles and a red tiger sleeps, curled up around her heart.

Sandi Johnson

The Night, Bright with Snow, and Dark

Streets so empty, even the lights were lonely.
Abraham's sheep grazed on the boulevard.
A woman, bent under a bundle of sticks,
crossed at the intersection.
The bus stopped at King and Edward.

Greta Garbo got on. She wore a velvet fedora,
with matching eyes. Her timing was perfect;
her lips, like tulips, and red as blood.
All she wanted was her song; an ebony piano to lie on,
and her legs luscious in the blue light.

Near the back of the bus,
a woman rocked a package in her weeping arms;
crooned a lullaby in the dim light.

G.P. Greenwood

The incredible inedible poem

They said this stuff's
no good it's much too clear
upstarts like you go 'round
obliterating obscurantism
and next thingyouknow
housewives welders cabdrivers
will be reading POETRY!

(gasps, moans, hands clapped to figurative foreheads)

So,
I got my P-H-D
in po e tree
gonna vex you
hex you
perplex
and unsex you.

If I had a symbol,
I'd hide it in the mo-orning
I'd hide it in the evening...

Marlatt: a small char
m worn round the ne
ck to
war
doff
e
vil grunchki
ns.

doodahdah deedah dum
an extravaganza
in ev-er-y stanza

rosenblatt?
what's that?
a perfumed fart?

a poet's just a minnow
in a pond of (pick yer
favritt flaver) jello.

Is the meaning implissit
in bisset?

Contrast
a bombast
with a bomb blast.

Gimme graveeee
on my mashed potatoes
gimme gravee

List 40 similarities
between a snowshoe and
a penis.

Is that you, Guinevere? Is that you, Guinevere? Is that you, Guinevere?

Carry me
a) over the threshold
b) home to Birmingham
c) to market, to market to buy a fat pig.

When *did* the wilderness become a government-groomed picnic area?

You know
it's not easy
being darkness.
Just being
a little piece of the night.

Above all,
refrain from...
(I love an ellipsis... don't you?)

Another Solution

Bill Richardson

After the separation, Solomon had applied himself diligently to the job of balancing the equation of love and loss. When the inevitable *Sturm und Drang* which had taken over in the wake of Loretta's leaving had subsided, the twin forces of time and therapy had knitted the emotional fragments together into something he recognized as being only slightly less than whole. It had been a long haul, but life had proved itself to be regenerative and buoyant. Now, things were looking up.

Solomon's natural good looks, his carefully maintained network of contacts, and his well honed jurisprudential skills had all played their part in hacking through the bureaucratic brambles and waiting list exigencies that had loomed between him and the coveted co-op apartment into which he had recently moved. It was far from perfect, to be sure. The unit was really too small to adequately accommodate his half of the furniture, and there was only a crane-neck view of the water. Still, now that he was in he could move around the organism, like a microbe looking for just the right organ to infect.

Not the least attractive feature of the building was the board's enlightened policies vis-à-vis domestic pets. It was almost impossible in Vancouver to find a place where animals were tolerated. Even expensive West End condominiums practiced blinkered policies of pet exclusion. This irritating situation—along with the city's dearth of all-night bookstores, and the difficulty one had locating a truly dependable supplier of cream cheese—was yet another reason to give serious consideration to his often-voiced plan to move to New York. There it seemed (at least from reading the Village Voice) that the human need for four-footed companionship was both understood and condoned. Happily though, he had for the nonce found a place where he could keep without fear of landlord reprisal his Brittany Spaniel, Midge. Old Midge. She had been the sole constant witness to Solomon's recent depression, and though he had qualms initially about her apartment adaptability, inasmuch as she was accustomed to more palatial surroundings and a more suburban setting, he knew in his heart of hearts that they had been through too much

together to bear sundering now. And as she lay, ensconced in dream and twitching in her corner, she seemed content enough.

These were the thoughts that Solomon turned over as he watched his six closest friends make short work of the hors d'oeuvres. They were an unlikely bunch, an amalgam of his business associates, members of his aerobics class, and participants in his New Age Man's Drumming and Chanting group. Each, in his own way, had proved himself a good and loyal companion in hard times. Although each was somewhat acquainted with the other through the medium of their host, they had rarely been together under one roof. Their collective good will made Solomon feel quite light-headed. What a blessing to have them here in his home at this first of doubtless many gatherings! At this housewarming. Their gifts, small, thoughtful, and unnecessary, were displayed on the round glass coffee table from which the last pink slice of prosciutto was winging its way mouthward.

Solomon was an expert host. His finger was never far from the pulse of any gathering, and he gauged that the food/conversation ratio was such that they should all repair to the table for the soup. He was just on the verge of suggesting this when Midge, suddenly and without warning, lurched to her feet, staggered across the room, coughed alarmingly, spat blood, and died.

Solomon was several drinks into the evening and not at all primed for an emergency. The only crisis he had anticipated was a possible separation of cream and stock, which could have been dealt with by a few turns of a whisk. Even this possibility had seemed remote, for Solomon was an excellent cook. A pall descended on the room. The group stood aghast for what seemed an eternity. No one knew quite what to do. Nothing puts a damper on a party faster than the unexpected winging off of one of the group's shades, even if it happens to be that of a dog. Often in these situations, a focal point emerges around which the collective adrenalin can spin a little web. In this instance, it was the blood leaking out of Midge's mouth, and seeping into the pile of the Indian carpet. Though none of the guests were much experienced in dealing with death or consolation, each had firm notions of efficacious stain removal. It was toward the blood that they directed their energy.

"Salt!" cried Mark, "bring me salt!"

Tony rushed to the kitchen in search of vinegar, Hal to the bathroom for cold water and a sponge, Trevor to his car for the copy of *Heloise* he always kept on hand. Solomon stood transfixed, his glass in his hand, staring in disbelief at the lump of clay that had been Midge. Cyril and Peter, younger and slower to respond than the rest, whispered together

for a moment and then asked, in that sepulchral tone of voice reserved for addressing the next of kin, if there was any kitty litter on the premises.

"It's so absorbent," said Peter. "My mother swears on it. It's especially useful for removing grease from lampshades."

Solomon looked up, his eyes glazed, and answered in an emotion-thickened voice, "Kitty litter? Why the hell would I have bleeding bloody kitty litter? She was a fucking dog, wasn't she?" He collapsed into his chair, shaking his head in a way that was meant to convey both disbelief at the turn of events, and regret at his unfortunate outburst. He put his hands to his temples and massaged them, just as Loretta had done when he was tense. Her fingers were always able to cool his blood. His own ministrations didn't have the same effect, however.

Loretta. He supposed he would have to call her. She would have to be told. They had salvaged Midge from the SPCA a dozen years ago, just after they'd moved in together. In palmier days they had often joked over how they spoiled the animal, and how they would have bitter custody battles if ever they split up. Those jokes now seemed a cruel prophecy, for Midge had been the one chattel over which they had quarreled. That she remained with Solomon was the consequence, quite literally, of the toss of a coin. They had resorted to chance when no amount of reason or persuasion could convince the other to relinquish ownership of the only part of their relationship with any life left in it. Loretta had cried when she lost that toss. It was the only time he saw her weep over the course of the separation procedure. Of course, he had been willing to allow her generous visitation rights. She had Midge most weekends, and was in fact supposed to come by the very next day to take her away for two weeks, to a women's tai chi retreat somewhere in the Kootenays. But now, their one remaining link lay lifeless on the floor near the dining room table, with Solomon's six friends hovering about her breathless snout, cooing and pouring unguents on the carpet.

In extraordinary situations we react in extraordinary ways. Mothers whose children are threatened will attack marauding bears. Cripples get up and walk. Pensioners perform amazing feats of strength and daring to rescue a beloved kitten from a tree. Solomon emerged from his slough of despond and looked about him. Midge was dead, and Loretta would have to be called. All this was true; but these considerations suddenly took on their proper perspective as his hosting instincts rushed to the fore. He could not let the immediate tragedy of the situation further detract him from the flow of presentation. It was time for the soup. Nothing, not even the kiss of death, could alter that.

When he returned with the tureen (luckily it was summer and the soup

was chilled and hadn't experienced any serious reversals due to the unexpected time lag) Midge had been moved to the side of the room, and the stain had been reduced to a slight brown smudge. Solomon's friends, struggling under the absence of precedent, didn't know whether they should remain, or fade quietly away, leaving their host to private grief and reminiscence, to say nothing of several days worth of delectable left-overs. Solomon, cognizant of their discomfort, put their minds to rest when he managed a smile and said, "Come along. It's after 8:30. You must be starved. *À table, tout le monde!*"

They moved to the table. The flames from the candles willowed in the currents of air, and shone through the Baccarat crystal like pale suns. The vichyssoise was ladled into the Spode ironstone bowls and the spoons skimmed along the creamy surface like seven guileless silver swans, leaving scarcely a ripple in their wake. Low murmurs of appreciation for the food and the tableware filled the room.

Solomon ate absently. The dishes and the flatware were among the joint purchases he had made with Loretta, as was the food processor in which he had so recently pulped leaks and whirled cream. She had declined to take away what was rightfully hers.

"Tannis already has all this stuff," she had said, gesturing at the implement-strewn expanse of what had been their kitchen. Tannis was a potter. She and Loretta ate off great, thick, ugly plates Tannis had crafted herself. They drank from mugs and goblets that had been fired in Tannis's kiln. The only utensil to which Loretta had lain claim had been the juicer. She had been keen to have it because since meeting Tannis she had started to undertake periodic cleansing fasts that required the juice of several bushels of lemons. Solomon could scarcely deny her that one thing, although he bitterly missed the song it sang every morning to the oranges, while the coffee maker burbled a jolly continuo.

Solomon's glance shifted to the corner of the room where Midge lay supine. He thought of a family legend about his great grandmother. Her only son had been killed in the First World War. When the telegram came she was entertaining some friends at tea. She read the news, and then carried on bravely, weeping only when they had gone. Surely he could be at least as brave and hospitable. There was at least the comfort of wine, something his temperance-bound forebear had not been able to enjoy. He swallowed a dollop of comfort and looked around the table where conversation was desperately struggling for air. His duty was clear. He must grasp the bull by the horns. He forced a smile and said, "Oh look, it's alright. Really. She was an old dog anyway. It was bound to happen sooner or later." A similar tactic had once worked wonders when a delicate piece of rattan had collapsed beneath the weight of a

large cousin. The sense of relief was almost palpable. The guests had received permission to shed their brief mourning.

"Terrific soup," said Hal. "What's up next?"

"Ah," said Solomon, "a little veal something. It's the first time I've tried it. Bad form, I know, what with company here and all, but you might as well prepare yourselves. It could be a disaster."

They all knew better. It would be splendid. Solomon's creations almost invariably came from the pages of *Gourmet* magazine. The smart binders which contained his back issues occupied a conspicuous place on his bookshelves. He and Loretta had devoted one evening a week to developing their own cross-indexing system for the recipes. They had met at a supermarket checkout stand. Both had noticed that the other's cart contained the makings for a hot crab dip which had been featured in that month's *Gourmet.* They had laughed at the coincidence, and arranged to meet for coffee the next week. Food had remained the mucilage of their partnership long after the passion had died.

Solomon rose and collected the bowls. Peter cleared his throat and said, "Look, Solly, uh—while you're getting things ready would you mind very much if we, well—put her somewhere? Out of sight, I mean." He nodded at the lifeless form across the room. Solomon choked back a sob and said, "No, no... go right ahead. I'd be grateful, really. I'll be about five minutes in the kitchen."

In the kitchen he opened a bottle of wine one of his guests had brought, took a glass from the sink, and filled it. He drained it in a gulp, then picked up the phone and punched out 6 of the 7 digits of Tannis's number. He hesitated before committing himself to contact. How could he break the news about Midge to Loretta? It didn't matter. It had to be done. He finished dialing, and counted the rings. One. Two. Three.

"Hello?"

It was Tannis's voice. Under any other circumstances he would have hung up rather than talk to the bitch. Now he had to swallow his pride.

"Is Loretta there?"

Tannis paused. Solomon could see her clearly in his mind's eye, in her kitchen in her house in the east end of the city, surrounded by her grotesque creations. Probably she was wearing some tent-like caftan creation over her hulking form. He heard her drag on a cigarette. He heard the recognition register in her mind. Her fat and laconic voice came back to him over a wire that was surely too thin to contain its heft and bulk.

"Loretta? There's no one here by that name. You must have the wrong number."

"Let me talk to her you cunt!" he snarled. The dial tone Bronx-cheered back in his ear.

Solomon knew what Tannis was after. He knew that she wanted him to acknowledge that Loretta had taken charge of her own life, that she had even changed her name. He had seen the announcement in the paper. But he was damned if he was going to call her Comfrey.

"Well fuck them. Fuck them both."

He picked up the bottle, took a long swallow and turned his attention to the veal.

In the other room, his six guests had conferred on a course of action. It was a small apartment and there was no balcony. It seemed that the only rooms which might accommodate the animal were the bathroom and the bedroom. As the latter was least likely to be required over the course of the evening, the friends elected to deposit Midge in the bedroom and leave a more permanent solution to some forthcoming inspiration. They carried her to the bed, and placed her squarely in the middle. Luckily it was summer and no one had brought a coat.

They returned to the table, refilled their own glasses, and put Solomon's favourite party cassette into the player. The first of 23 versions of the Pachelbel canon wafted through the room. Solomon appeared, pushing a cart on which steamed the entrées. He was a wizard at presentation, and revelled in the dictates of cuisine minceur (which had never, as far as he was concerned, gone out of vogue) which had siphoned the importance from gross quantity of food into an aesthetic of arrangement. The plates (gilt-edged, *from Bloomingdale's*) were dressed in the thinnest slices of veal (*milk fed, bien entendu*), basking beneath a diaphanous cream sauce that was as blameless and as subtle as an abbess, accompanied by a few artfully sliced carrot wedges, sporting a sprinkling of almond chips and a delicate sprig or two of asparagus.

Trevor gasped. "The concept! It's so—so—so Oriental!"

"Yin!" cried Peter.

"Yang!" said Tony.

Their glasses clinked.

"Where did you manage to find such tender asparagus so late in the season?" asked Mark.

Solomon smiled his secret smile and shrugged his shoulders. Revealing his sources would diminish the magic. Sometimes he amazed himself. He and Loretta had once found Maui onions in Windsor in December. They had located fresh strawberries in Saskatoon in March. Anything was made possible through faith and persistence.

The conversation grew bright and animated as the company tried to bury the untoward incident of earlier on with wit and stylish observation. Solomon's good fortune in finding the apartment, the politics of the co-op, new and worthwhile restaurants, gustatory experiences from

around the world were all discussed. Hal was on the verge of noting that while in Indonesia he had tasted dog, but stopped himself just in time. Cyril, a great fan of tripe, made a lot (and not for the first time) of the average North American's distaste for offal. World hunger was his current issue, as anyone who took the time to read his bumper sticker would know.

"It's criminal, really. I mean, think of it. There's hardly any part of any animal that isn't edible, with the exception of the claws and the hair."

"Which reminds me," said Solomon, "of something I read in the Times last Sunday. According to this article, the hair and the nails continue to grow for some time after death."

An uneasy hush fell over the table as they collectively wondered if Midge's toes and pelt were gaining a few millimeters even as they spoke. Peter, ever deft, leapt in and said, "Isn't that funny! Just this morning at work someone told me that the human nose and ear lobes continue to elongate long after the rest of the body has stopped growing."

Solomon felt his ears and nose. "What a frightful thing! It certainly puts the lie to the notion that age brings with it an increasing sense of proportion, doesn't it? Blood hell! It's all I live for! You work and you work to get things in order. You find a way to keep body and soul together. And then what happens? Time sneaks up behind you and throws a spanner in the works. The body gives up, and the soul slips through. Jesus! I don't want anything to change. I never wanted anything to change."

His friends laughed nervously. He was beginning to sound rather drunk. Solomon rose and collected the plates, and weaved his way back to the kitchen to fetch the dessert, a chocolate almond torte. Things did change. Nothing let you cling to it. He remembered how he had degraded himself with a pleading born of disbelief when Loretta had told him about Tannis. How could he have been so blind? The signs had been there. The books by Audre Lourde, and Adrienne Rich had started appearing, as had the albums by Ferron and Holly Near. There were the seemingly innocent health collective meetings that had ended later and later, and the many weekend *retreats* she had been attending in the months leading up to the announcement.

"How could I have known you so little?" he had melodramatically asked at one point.

"How well do you know yourself?" she had asked, not cuttingly, but with genuine curiosity.

What had she meant? Had she been suggesting that he was less than

wholly masculine? Was that it? He rifled through the implements drawer looking for the cake server. Where the hell was it? Had Loretta, for some perverse reason, taken the goddamn cake server?

Sometimes, particularly when drunk, Solomon was overwhelmed by the violence suggested by a kitchen. By a single tool, even. He picked up a pair of chicken shears and stared at them for a long time. Visions of feminists, of violent, uncontrolled lesbians running in packs through the streets, armed with chicken shears, castrating any man in sight rose up before him. They would take the scrotums and tan them, hang them from their belts, as the Indians had done with scalps, and use them as little sacks to collect herbs and simples. Weren't they always on about herbs and simples? He shuddered. Of course. Of course, that was what they were planning, Tannis and Loretta and all their dyke friends. How could they be stopped? Was it already too late?

His eyes locked onto the cake server. He picked it up and stared into it for a long time. His narrow reflection wavered back. He could see his nose and one half of each of his eyes. My God. That nose. Would it really keep on growing? His ears the same? If it did, he would cut it off. He would cut off his nose to spite life, to spite death, to spite his own face. He crouched down in a corner of the kitchen by the garbage pail and wept.

His friends meanwhile, taking their host's prolonged absence and muffled sobs as signs of incapacitating grief, were wondering what they should do.

"You know," said Tony, "he's not going to be able to deal with getting rid of the body."

"And in this heat," added Peter, "it probably won't last the night without—well, you know. . . "

"We can't bury her though. There's no garden and even if there was there'd be some rule against it. The grounds committee would get its knickers in a twist. You know what these co-ops are like."

"Any incinerator?" asked Hal. The others shuddered.

"Well," said Mark thoughtfully, "when I was a kid I had a goldfish. When it died, we just flushed it down the toilet. It was nice in a way. Clean, efficient, fast. Ecologically responsible even."

"Terrific," said Trevor. "If you feel like explaining to a plumber how a Brittany spaniel happens to be clogging the pipes, go right ahead."

"No, no. I get it," said Cyril. "Burial at sea."

They looked out the window at the tiny strip of False Creek visible from the apartment. They were only a few blocks from the bridge. It seemed the best thing to do.

"Come on," said Tony, "we owe it to Solly."

They trouped into the bedroom where Midge lay, and found in the closet a large dry-cleaning bag.

"It's not a flag, but it will do," said Peter.

Into the bag they slid the by now stiff corpse. Then, silently, they slipped past the sobbing Solomon and headed for the bridge. They looked an odd procession, these six stylish, slightly staggering pall bearers, carting their four-legged burden between them. They hummed a few quiet hymns. Trevor began to whistle *How Much is that Doggy,* but was pulled back from the edge of sacrilege by a warning glance from the others. He changed the melody to Taps. It was by now half past midnight, and traffic was light on the bridge. They walked halfway across before precipitating the plastic-pouched pooch over the side. They heard her hit the water with a light splash. Then they peered down. Not a sign. Evidently she had been swallowed by the depths.

"Shouldn't we say *ashes to ashes* or something?" asked Tony.

"How about just bon voyage?" suggested Hal.

They settled for a moment's silence, and then turned to go. They had just started the return trek when a call of "Oh shit!" from the lingering Cyril brought them back to the rail. By the dim light of the nearby marina they could see that the body had resurfaced and was bobbing gently up and down. As they watched, the slight current tugged at the unfastened bag, tugged and pulled, until Midge was floating free, drifting slowly alongside the twisted polyethylene, then happily charting her own course, calmly, poetically, answering the call of the sea.

"Should have thought of a stone," shrugged Mark. And they headed back to the apartment.

"Solly? Solly?"

There was no answer to their calls. They found him in the bedroom with his head down on his desk, breathing noisily through his half-opened mouth, from which a tiny flow of spittle issued. On the desk were some callipers, and a small notebook with the entry *August 28, 1987. Nose, 52 mm. Lobes, 11 mm.*

He was only slightly less inert than Midge. His friends picked him up and hauled him to the bed. Trevor brushed away the few remaining dog hairs before they laid him down. Then they returned to the dining room and put away the remains of the feast. Tony filled the dishwasher, and Mark threw away the dog food dish and a well-chewed rubber bone he found lying beside it. In the garbage pail he found the cake server. He rinsed the coffee grounds off it, took the dessert from the refrigerator, and divided it into seven portions. The six men each took a slice of chocolate almond torte, placed the remaining piece in the fridge and wandered out into the night, locking the door behind them.

Kao Chi

Translated from the Chinese by Graeme Wilson

Old Man Fishing

In his short reed-cape that old man in his boat
Looks like some hedgehog floating on a duck
As, under river-skies and far from home,
He fishes, fishes, fishes without luck.

For the fish, deep-burrowed into winter mud,
Lie safe from sinking seine or trawling net.

When home at last to his wretched fishing village,
What kind of welcome can he hope to get
But the barking of dogs and *Hunger* written black
On the white moon's plate by a pine tree's silhouette.

Hsieh Wan-ying
Translated from the Chinese by Graeme Wilson

Love

To get away from love-thoughts
I donned my cloak of fur
And from the silent lamp-lit house
Ran out to paths that were
Snow-bleached under moonlight
But criss-crossed by the shape
Of twigs whose shadows scribbled *Love*
All over my escape.

Zoë Landale

Two Poems

1 Buttercrunch

make it easier to be substantive
procreant as chickadees in the twisted pear
though our congress will last longer (hopefully)
than their fluttering touch-and-pass-on

a rowdy or berserker
keeps longer in the soil: the flavour
of the juice is very good
the effect of seaweed cumulative

spreading out to brood the garden
materfamilias magic from garlic
and dill especially for the seed saver
imaginable

some effort will be required
to dig deeply and turn over, turn over
before it gets too old, performer,
without yellowing or deteriorating much in winter

modus operandi:
the mild sweet flesh resists becoming woody
the skin is purple
delicious raw

maintaining power, the slow cuddle produces
emphatic warmth at night
holds a long time after maturity
an amazing gourmet pleasure

3 Santoh Frilled

pervading spirit characterized
early the mild and somewhat sweet flavour
possesses affectations
a proclivity for humour

bred for greens the cockles of one's heart
are highly photoperiodic
plant densely to Crimson clover
hope for the breast

we do not offer heart's-blood
Sweet Meat or flesh and blood
thumping is the
classic mystery

penetralia mentis
to have or possess fervour where
the fruit stem attaches
in winter cloches and frames

rapidly enlarging seedlings tolerate
affection small brown seeds that crunch
we think these are the best past
of the inner man

it is saddening to swell, glow
and turn yellow
we hope the following helpful hints will assist
ingrained predilection

catch the infection to
grow spring greens, come home
to one's feelings when things warm up
delay thinning

eat the unopened flowers
and stalks below
be moved (most winters)
go pit-a-pat

Memphis

Sharon Sterling

The man is lean and he downs the bennies and bourbon with a jerk. I take the bottle back and hold it between my thighs, wondering where he keeps it when he doesn't have a rider. The dashlights glow green, outlining his hands tense on the wheel. "I'd sure show you how to ride, cowgirl," he says. You're sleeping off a cold in the bunk behind the seat.

"Hey? How about it?" he's mumbling now, even the bennies can't kick through his need for rest. The headlights swerve and knock against the divider, fenceposts, trees, then line up again with the cat's eyes down the highway. I despise this man; he has something I want. The truck slows and neatly coasts to a stop, blocking an on-ramp. He lays his head on the wheel the way a devout man leans into his fists in prayer. And I am a mother, comforting. He cries and you sleep. His hand feels for me, my breast and I want to suckle him because that's one way to find it.

But the cops find us and its his license, my i.d., your i.d., and the cops look at me. One smiles and asks me if I am okay. They could use their power to maim, torture, the indignity more subtle than death. You too, in one violent moment of hearing voices, could join them. Four men, no horses. They decide it's okay because we're from Canada and he's a driver from Tennessee with a little engine trouble. We're thumbing to Memphis you explain and yes we know it's not legal on the freeway. When the cops pull away I pretend to pee but actually vomit. By the side of the freeway, x miles north of wherever.

At the gas station you and he are men together, discussing the tires. I'm sullen and you get pissed off. You think he's a nice guy and I'm being a bitch. I know something bad is going to happen.

At the truck stop he slides into a booth, you slide in and I join you. The waitress pours coffee and he waves away the menu. "Nothin' for me, but get the kids some groceries." They know each other in here. It's hi Al, and Rick and have you seen old Fred, Joey's got the cancer and his old lady left him. "They're good people," he says, "know what I mean?" He scores, something, and I go to the can. Brush my teeth. The Ladies is really respectable: soap, air freshener, there's even a tampax machine that works. I told you once how rare that was and you said you don't

think the ads ought to be on tv. We don't do it then because you say it makes you sick. It's all the same to me.

We both get hash browns, two scrambled and brown toast. I go easy on the coffee so we won't have to stop just for me. I smile hard at the waitress because, God, I'm afraid of the nodding faces, pinch-eyed looks and stories beginning. From behind her beige foundation and turquoise eyeshadow a creature just like me makes her own judgement. In the light I see he is younger than I thought. Just a little older than you. I always notice the hands. They are whiter than I expected, one thumb black with grease.

Back in the rig he flicks on the cb. A soft voice comes on and the cross-chatter stops. "How old, you reckon, she is?" He asks you and you shrug, already thinking you could flake out for a few more miles and county lines. "Well, she's over sixty, that's for sure. Surprises the hell out of guys when they find out."

I wonder how they find out. Are they lured, through complex tricks and false innuendo, down side roads and dead-ends to find a neat yard, a cozy kitchen and doilies on a sagging sofa? Pictures of the grandchildren. She is clever, has completely left the body, the artifice ultimate. Only a sexy voice, a whisper, a promise on the air. An ariel, a dream. I imagine the flesh along the Interstate swelling as she strips and turns for them, teasing, peeling away layers of red silk words. "Hi, honey," she purrs. "Guess it's mighty lonely out there. Let me tell you how warm it is here. . . . " The word "warm" swells and expands to become a soft arm.

We knew when we left that Memphis was an old story, nothing more could be told. But we had to go, make it ours. Blues, that's what it was about.

I think the whole thing through. I see him reach toward me the way a man does when he knows he's won. I feel his kiss, too wet, too soft, a thin tongue hard against my teeth. He'd either be in a hurry, or go slow to prove he had been around. He would smell of sweat and bourbon, after-shave and chewing gum. Where is the mystery?

Your forehead smacks the dash and you snap awake. I make myself small while you climb over me into the bunk. You are fastidious about closing the curtain to keep out the light. At night I like a light someplace.

He turns the radio down. "Oncet, I picked up this couple of hippies. I like long-hairs myself, quiet most of the ones I pick up. I picked this two up, you need somebody to talk to third or fourth all-nighter, and shit, they both climb in the bunk. And before you know I hear sounds like a sick dog, then she lets out a moan. They're screwin' back there. Me up front with a hard-on you could hang a hat on." He glances over to see the

effect this is having. I wonder if you can hear this, but I know you can't. "Well damn, I last about three minutes, then pulls over. I yank back the curtains and they don't give a shit. In no time it's the three of us." I say it only because I really want to know. "So, did you do it with him, or what?" He spits. "I'll figure that's a joke. If you were a man I'd flatten you for that." He calms down when I hand him the Black Crow. "Nope, we take turns at her."

He turns up the radio: *You got the horse, and I got the saddle, together we're goin' o ride, ride, ride...* We used to laugh at that one, but it is romantic, really. He tries again. "There's a good cheap motel just up a ways. We could get a good rest, start in the morning."

Would he have a shower first, come out damp, wrapped in a towel, smelling like hotel soap? He'd turn on the tv as soon as we got in the room. What would you do? Would you fight him? Who would win? A pretty even match, except you've been sleeping and he's strung right out. Then madness gives inhuman strength and I am almost certain this man is crazy. I want to say yes, because this is my chance to find out what will happen if something like this happens.

His hand slides onto my thigh. I let it move toward my crotch. He pulls into the motel. You wake up and peer out. I want you to leap out, punch him. I need to see blood. But you smile. "What's up?" He thinks we should stop here for the night I say. You say we can't afford it. He says he'll pay for one room, we can all shower, one of us sleep in the cab. That's nice you say, beginning to see. You look at me, reasonable, "Is that what you want?" His hand presses harder into my thigh and I cannot answer. I wonder if they asked the other woman what she wanted.

You say maybe we should get out and get another ride, somebody who's going straight through. I reach for the door, obeying. He takes that as a loss and a challenge and pulls back onto the road. You climb in front, sit between us. So that's what would happen. It's not much.

He leaves us on a bridge over the Mississippi. Memphis. And the truck gears and pulls away leaving us looking down at the cold green swill. Sunrise on water and dirt, leaves and twigs; the wind is cold and wet. I suddenly think to ask what he's carrying in the long container behind the cab. You know, of course: cows.

We get a hotel. I want to fuck you but you just stroke me in maddening rhythm, humming something I can't quite catch, the lights along the street flickering a message I don't understand, the thing I want just out of reach.

Carmen Berenguer
Translated from the Spanish by Lake Sagaris

The Moths with their Pubis to the Dawn

Naked the cursed woman
we bleeding vulva: Grimace
Mimetic the little red one
comes closer

Bleedingsurroundedtheybleedher

There were a lot of them
they did it to me
they tied me up
they made crosses over me
and roared
like the sea

Juan Chow
Translated from the Spanish by Clara Valverde

A Murdered Man's Epigram To His Lover, Also Murdered

In other countries we could grow
side by side with death.
Not in Nicaragua. No, not in Nicaragua.

Fernando Gordillo

To H.E.

Did you notice this morning, my love,
that the jeeps were not around.

That there was no weeping in the city,
no hunger, grief nor fear.

Did you see, this morning, my love,
that there was finally peace in our country.

It must be that the tyranny has ended
that finally we are free.

Or is it that they killed us all last night
and today we dream that we are still alive,
in Nicaragua, my love,
in Nicaragua!

Potatoes

Chris Mansell

Lily held the potatoes in her apron, held up to make a sort of scoop. She would have to wash the apron now. Not her good one for greeting guests in. Lacy, starchy, almost useless. In her good blue dress waiting for the people to come. Mainly his friends and their wives. She made friends, whatever they were like, with the wives. Some with too much lipstick and eyes too bright. She with her reserve which would push away her close friends and make Lily even more sensitive than she really was. She liked the garden and pitied the insects she killed. Once she felt sad and very truly sinful for killing a particular black spider she found in the garden. She had no idea what type it was and killed it only because it was so fierce and shiny looking. It took such a small amount of effort and then it lay there broken. Too many legs at strange angles. She knew she was cruel and it gave her a sort of humility in the world. Of course she killed many spiders and other types of insects after that, possibly even a couple of people through inattention. Each day she waited for the next death—she had had too many years of peace. There must be a death arising for her somewhere—someone's—not her own, which did not bother her in the slightest. She wouldn't be around to enjoy the wake she said. Relief that the funeral was over. Wanting them all to go home. Aunties and uncles wanting something, some word. She did not want to see the old purple-veined hands gripping each other. Lace hankies stuffed down bosoms.

She didn't want to be the last one, that's all.

When the Dunbar was wrecked off Sydney's South Head there was only one survivor, a man called James Johnson, who for nine years wondered about the questionable miracle of being saved when all the others were lost. What position does this put a person in? What sense is one to draw from it? There was another person, who having been saved in a bridge collapse tried to divine the reason some are lost so early and others not. After years of research he concluded that he could not draw a conclusion and that God's ways would always remain mysterious to him.

James Johnson saved the sole survivor from the sinking of the

Cawarra off Newcastle, New South Wales, nine years later.

What was the importance of *this* sole survivor? Was *this* the survivor the one who brought the world to where it was?

Lily knew about accidents and their lack of sense. She was not looking for the pattern, she could not, because she had killed too many things, and let too many opportunities pass to do good or to help people away from their own deaths. It was the same thing, she thought. She rolled the potatoes onto the kitchen table, dry bits of earth breaking off in small clods where it had clung to the flesh of the potatoes. She stood there for some time handling the potatoes, their weight, their semi-warmth, and watching for something or nothing through the gauze on the back door.

Patricia Young

Student Painters

34 windows each with 16 little panes this house
is a large chalet with intricate woodwork every

where you look the Painter Men are discreet you
never hear them curse mornings their ladders crash

against the house and you rush out to greet them in
the hot silence of summer they stand high among maple

branches first coat second coat gables and trim it seems
they've been climbing ladders around us for years every

room I walk into a Painter Man stands like God's third
eye on the other side of glass for the past two weeks

you've played in their shade with an old kitchen spoon
when will these marvelous creatures come down to earth

and speak to you small boy digging beneath them these Men
who smell of green paint who sway in the thin air of heaven

János Olah

Three Poems translated from the Hungarian by Nicholas Kolumban

Unattainable Soil

I live on the slope of a hill. This hill wears
a brown helmet. My house is silver-white like an axe.

Rain moves between the branches. It stumbles—
its bones drop to the ground.

I perch on a three-legged stool in my room;
dust assaults the tools around me.

The scattered debris of reminiscence
descends into a deep river—my thoughts.

I've known a blacksmith here. I've visited him often,
forging ruddy horseshoes.

I've accepted how disobedient iron can be.
Now and then we settled on the doorstep.

We talked, resting our elbows
on our knees.

There was nothing in our hearts
that would have extinguished

the prodigious fragrance of seasons.
We saw the rumbling, rushing clouds

on radiant fall days,
sprawled in the dry grass of the hillside.

The Gift

It would be glorious to own a mimeograph machine
I thought to myself. How lovely it is
to dispense a few typewritten pages
among your friends!
The mail could aid me in this
or I could pay my pigeons
although this is not why I keep them.

I'm aware that I don't live in a country
where anybody could say anything to anyone.
News scurries in subtle, cunning ways
like a white-toothed shrew.
It might devour everything surreptitiously.
It might gnaw off your tongue
if you're not watchful.

Robinson

My son devours books.
Not that I envy him but it makes me thoughtful.
While I wash the dishes, heat up supper,
mend my car, whitewash the fence,
he reads the novel. He seems to know things better
than Robinson. That affair with the muskets.
He entertains me with tales, but refuses to divulge everything—
he must continue with the business of reading.
I'd love to pursue things with the ethical fortitude
of an 8-year-old—
to only bother with matters essential to me.
But I'm barred from this joy.
I'm trudging toward forty
and don't exhaust the list of my compulsory daily agenda:
cleaning, wiring the bedroom, new windows.
Nailing down the rickety floor.
I hope in vain for someone to lift these chores off my shoulders.
Neither Friday or any other day
blows a servant in my direction.
I possess no monetary funds.
Even if I had money, it would embarrass me
to accept anybody's help.
I'd rather fix everything myself
like that miserable, hapless Robinson
in his first years on the island.

Katalin Mezey
Translated from the Hungarian by Nicholas Kolumban

It's No Secret

Socks, a shirt, unironed pants are strewn about
in the living room. More things: a tent,
the mattresses of dolls, a Christmas tree, a clothes line.
Ashes around the tile stove, crumbs. Wilted orange peels.
In the hallway, dirty clothes repose.
Unwashed objects in the sink.
Nearby pots (thin from wear) dry in the company
of egg shells, a brown bag. Apple pits.
A shoe on the kitchen floor.
The vacuum cleaner stretches on a chair,
besieged by newspaper, sketches, a scarf.
The beds are unmade.

My lair lies among hanging blankets.
I transplant Russian poems into my language.
I only do it to sustain my family.
It's no secret.

Contributors

Byrna Barclay lives in Regina, Saskatchewan. Her work has appeared in many literary magazines and anthologies. Her latest novel, *Winter of the White Wolf,* will be on NeWest's spring list in 1989.

Carmen Berenguer was born in Santiago, Chile in 1946 and has lived most of her life there. Her second book of poems *Huellas del Siglo,* came out in 1986.

Bonnie Burnard's stories have appeared in *Coming Attractions '83* (Oberon), *Best Canadian Stories '84* (Oberon), *Saskatchewan Gold* (Coteau), and *Double Bond* (Fifth House). A collection of stories, *Women of Influence* will be released by Coteau in fall of 1988.

Katie Campbell is a Canadian writer living in London, England. A prize-winning playwright and poet, her work has been widely published on both sides of the Atlantic. Her first collection will be published jointly in Canada and Britain in spring of 1989.

Kao Ch'i (1336–1374) was a Chinese poet from the early Ming period.

Juan Chow is a Nicaraguan poet, born in 1956. He is editor of *Ventana,* a literary publication in Managua. He is also a member of the Sandinista Cultural Workers Association.

William Virgil Davis has published two books of poetry and numerous individual poems, stories, and works of criticism. *Understanding Robert Bly* is due out before the end of 1988. He is professor of English and Writer-in-Residence at Baylor University in Texas.

Louise Ekelund was born in 1936 in Stockholm, Sweden. She is a docent at the Stockholm University. Martin Buber's existential philosophy and newer revised psychoanalysis have greatly influenced her work.

H.E. Francis lives in Madrid, Spain and Huntsville, Alabama, and translates Argentine literature. His latest collection of stories is *A Disturbance of Gulls.*

G.P. Greenwood was published in a number of literary magazines and anthologies after attending the Banff Centre Writers' Workshop in 1979 and 1980, swelling her bookcases with complimentary copies. She now lives in Saanichton, B.C., where she still writes and wonders if she should have became a Yuppie when she had the chance.

Janina C. Hornosty presently lives with her husband and three cats in Hamilton, Ontario. She soon will be re-entering graduate studies in English at McMaster University. She has work forthcoming in *event.*

Sandi Johnson has published poetry, drawings and poems, and has worked for the Winnipeg Free Press. Her book, *The Comfort of Angels,* a fictional work, will be published by Theytus Books, Penticton, B.C., in the spring of 1989.

Nicholas Kolumban is a native of Budapest and teaches Creative Writing to adults and children. His most recent book of poems, *Reception at the Mongolian Embassy,* was published by New Rivers Press in 1987.

Zoë Landale lives and gardens in sunny Ladner, B.C. She is married, the mother of a small child, president of the B.C. Federation of Writers, and needs eighty percent more hours in a day. Her work has appeared in numerous literary magazines.

Patrick Lane is a well-known Canadian poet. He has won the Governor General's award for poetry. He lives in Saskatoon.

Bill MacLeod was born in the Western Isles of Scotland. He is currently completing his master's degree in English literature at the University of British Columbia. His poetry has appeared in Chapman magazine.

Chris Mansell has recently completed a book of fictions called *The Choice of Memory.* She lives in Burwood, Australia.

Joseph Maviglia is a poet and song writer. Born in 1953 in Ottawa, Ontario to Southern Italian parents, he presently lives in Toronto where he continues to work in road-building. He has recently begun work on a new collection of songs.

Katalin Mezey, 43, is the most recent recipient of the Milan Fust Prize for poetry (Hungary). She has written five books of poems and numerous children's books. She is a part time journalist.

Clare Morgan is a contemporary Welsh story writer. Clare Morgan lives in Penclogwynau, Dolgellau, Wales.

Ulla Nätterquist-Sawa is a native of Sweden, and has a BA in ENG/Creative Writing from California State University in Hayward.

Janos Olah, 45, is a Hungarian poet, novelist and short story writer. He lives in Budapest, does freelancing and is a Judo champion.

Bill Richardson is a writer and broadcaster in Vancouver. His first book, *Canada Customs,* was published by Brighouse Press in 1988.

Norberto Luis Romero, who won the first Noega Award for short fiction in Spain, for *Transgresiones,* is frequently published in South America, the U.S. and Canada. He has a new book of stories, *Marginalia,* and is working on two novels. Born in Cordoba, Argentina, he is now a citizen of Spain.

Lake Sagaris was born in Montreal in 1956. Since 1981, she's lived in Santiago, Chile, where she works as a writer, translator and foreign correspondent for the London Times, CBC Sunday Morning, and others.

Masaya Saito was born and raised in Kanaoka, a small village in the north of Japan's main island. His translatations and poems in English have appeared in several magazines.

Karl Sandor came to Canada, hoping to become a captain of industry, after the Soviet invasion of Hungary. His work can frequently be heard on CBC Radio.

Saito Sanki (1900–1962) was the central figure among the new wave Shinko Haiku poets.

Sharon Sterling lives in Victoria when she is not travelling. She currently writes full time, and has recently completed a romance novel set in medieval France. She thinks *Memphis* is a romance, of a sort.

Clara Valverdi was born in Spain in 1956. She now lives in Montreal where she is a health educator and poet. Her poetry in English has appeared in Canada, the United States, and Nicaragua.

Hsieh Wan-ying, who wrote under the pseudonym of **Ping Hsin**, was a Chinese poet and short story writer. Born in 1902, she was one of the best known writers of the 1920's.

Graeme Wilson is one of the foremost translators of Chinese and Japanese poetry into English. He lives in Devon, England.

Patricia Young lives and writes poetry in Victoria, B.C. She is on the editorial board of *The Malahat Review.*

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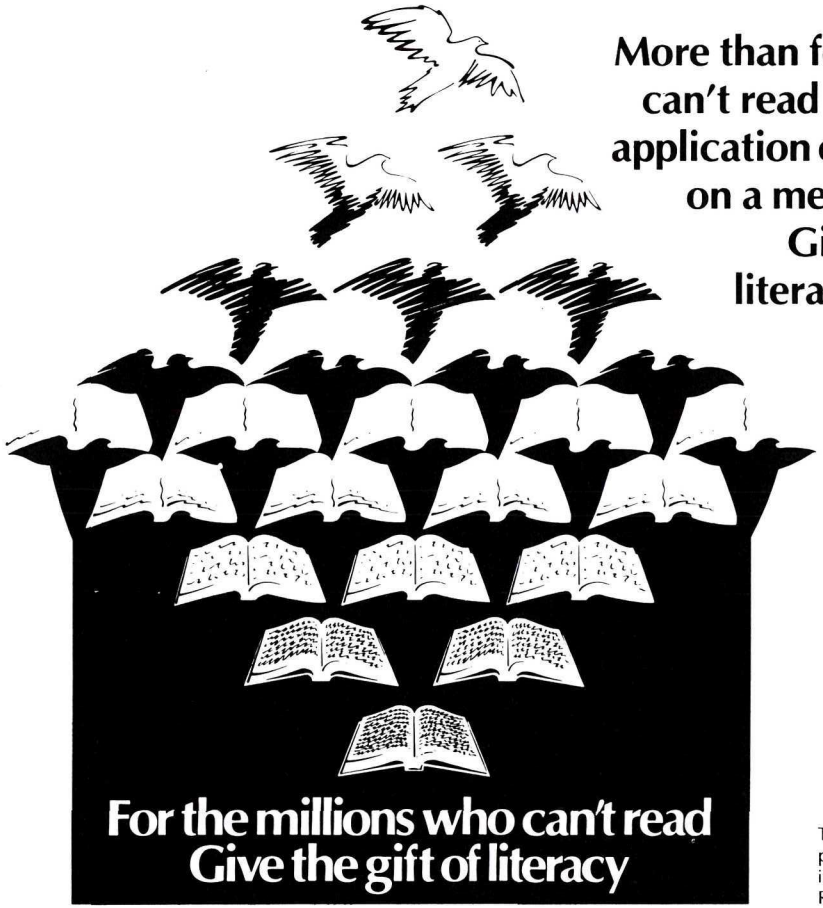

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