

ASSASSIN 6-1979

FREE

*El campo americano es como un agua clara, limpia y fresca, recién destilada después de un largo viaje a través de cañerías, tubos y toda clase de vasijas de plástico, y que ya se ha olvidado de las raíces de los árboles, del barro, de las noches de lluvia, del viento, de los ladridos de los perros, de los lagos y de las nubes, y que tú te tomas sin sentir el olor de los bosques y sin comprender por qué el deseo de beber se ha ido mientras la sed te asedia.*

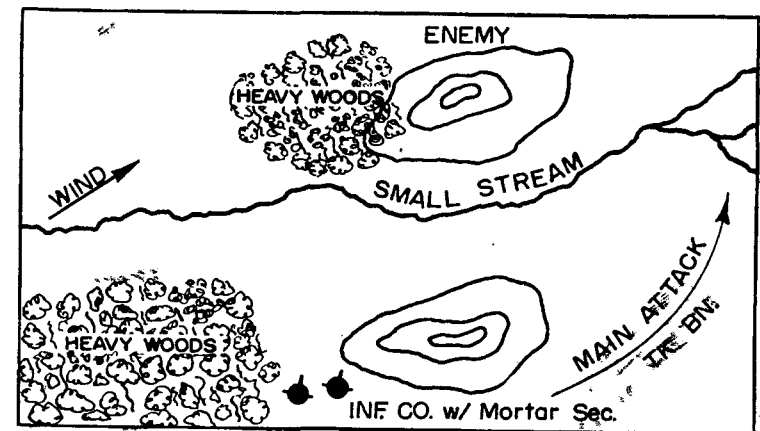
The american country is like very clear water, just purified after a long journey through pipes, tubes, and all sort of plastic vessels, which has already forgotten the roots of the trees, the mud, the rainy nights, the wind, the barking of dogs, the lakes, and the clouds, water that you drink without feeling the smell of the woods, wondering why the desire to drink is gone while you are still so thirsty.

—Pilar Titus

ASSASSIN/6

THE TRANSLATION ISSUE.

# ASSASSIN



## ASSASSIN/6 summer 1979

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### GERMANY

Heinrich Heine ( <i>Ted Berrigan &amp; Gordon Brotherston</i> )	3
Rainer Maria Rilke ( <i>Jeff Wright; Ted Berrigan</i> )	4
Paul Celan ( <i>Will Bennett</i> )	7
Friedrich Hölderlin ( <i>Frank O'Hara</i> )	9

### JAPAN

Kakinomoto no Hitomaro ( <i>Hiroaki Sato</i> )	10
Yamanoue no Okura ( <i>Hiroaki Sato</i> )	11

### RUMANIA

Ion Alexandru ( <i>Andrei Codrescu</i> )	13
Gellu Naum ( <i>Valery Oisteneau</i> )	17

### FRANCE

Paul Morand ( <i>Ron Padgett</i> )	18
Francis Picabia ( <i>Tinker Greene</i> )	19
Phillipe Soupault ( <i>Tinker Greene</i> )	21
Max Jacob ( <i>Ted Berrigan</i> )	22
Charles Baudelaire ( <i>Annabel Levitt</i> )	23
Phillipe Jaccottet ( <i>Susan Plunkett</i> )	24
André Breton & Benjamin Perét ( <i>Tony Fusco</i> )	25
Blaise Cendrars ( <i>Annabel Levitt</i> )	27
Stephane Mallarme ( <i>Roger Kamenetz</i> )	28
Gérard de Nerval ( <i>Bill Davis</i> )	30
Paul Valery ( <i>Charley Shively</i> )	31
Joyce Mansour ( <i>Susan Plunkett</i> )	32
Louise Labé ( <i>George-Thérèse Dickenson</i> )	33
Saint-Pol-Roux ( <i>A. Mangravite</i> )	37
Rene Char ( <i>Frank O'Hara; Tony Fusco</i> )	41
Pierre Reverdy ( <i>Tinker Greene &amp; Susan Plunkett</i> )	44

### CHILE

Pablo Neruda ( <i>Janine Pommy Vega; Dan Propper; Evelyn Villalba &amp; Jeff Wright</i> )	66
Jorge Teillier ( <i>Pilar Titus</i> )	70
Pilar Titus ( <i>Pilar Titus</i> )	back cover

## NETHERLANDS

Harry Hoogstraten (*Harry Hoogstraten*) 72  
Lucebert (*Peter Nijmeijer*) 73

## HAITI

Jean-Max Calvin (*Barbara Holland*) 74  
Jacqueline Beauge (*Barbara Holland*) 75

## PERU

César Vallejo (*Janine Pommy Vega; Gerard Malanga*) 76

## PERSIA

Rumi (*John Eskow*) 82

## VISUALS:

Douglas Bessette  
Jonathan Newman (verse from *OJOS NUMEROSOS* by Mark Mendell)  
Richard Kostalanetz

Heinrich Heine

## DER ASRA

Every day back & forth  
The exquisite daughter of the Sultan walked  
At evening by the fountain,  
Where the white water splashes.

Every day the young slave  
Stood at evening by the fountain,  
Where the white water splashes;  
Every day he grew pale, and paler.

Then, one evening, the Princess, turning  
Came up to him with these words:  
Thy name will I know! thy  
Country! thy Kin!

And the slave spoke: I am called  
Mohamet. I am from Yemen.  
And my people are the Asra  
who die, when they love.

*translated by Ted Berrigan & Gordon Brotherston*

Rainer Maria Rilke

### WHAT WILL YOU DO, GOD, WHEN I SPLIT?

The empty bottles will still be here  
when I your Coke, am all drunk up.  
I'll be gone but what will you do?  
Thirst stays on with the empties.

The motels are full, all over  
the world TVs click shut when you  
come on, what will you do when I  
quit making guest appearances?

Your Cadillac will get a flat.  
The rider & the driver argue  
over the radio for the last time  
before it splutters into silent  
garble & the abandoned vehicle  
glows fiery in the sinking West.

Where's the spare, God? I'm scared.

*translated by Jeff Wright*

### LAMENT

Oh, how everything  
seems long ago  
and far

I believe that star  
which lights my way  
has been dead this thousand years

I believe  
in the car that passed  
something fearful was said

In the window overhead  
the hour strikes . . .  
but which hour . . .

I would like to step  
out of my heart  
into the dark night

I would like to pray

Surely a single star  
still lives  
I believe I could find  
a star  
if I could follow its beams of light  
which would bless this darkness  
tonight . . .

## AUTUMN'S DAY

Lord, it is time. Summer was very great.  
Now cast your shadow upon sundials.  
Let winds remind meadows it is late.

Mellow now the last fruits on the vine.  
Allow them only two more southern days.  
Hasten them to fullness, and press  
The last heavy sweetness through the wine.

Who has no home can not build now.  
Who dwells alone must now remain alone;  
Will waken, read, write long letters, and  
Will wander restlessly when leaves are blowing.

*translated by Ted Berrigan*

Paul Celan

## ONE DAY & THE NEXT

You, like the wind in the mountains. The quiet  
like a bird before us, another  
clear presence.

I won, I lost, we believed  
in the austere wonders the branch  
quickly drew upon the heavens, carrying us & growing  
through heaving white to the path of the moon, a tomorrow  
left into yesterday, we brought  
the atomized candelabra, I placed  
everything in the hand of no one.

## INTO DISTANCE

Quiet once again ballooning into a home—  
come in, and live here.

Hours, measured and lovely as oaths:  
a sanctuary to be had.

The air left behind, richer than ever: for you to breathe,  
to breathe and be you.

*translated by Will Bennett*

Friedrich Hölderlin

## TEARS

Heavenly love! tender love! if I ever  
forget you, forget, O you fateful spirits,  
you burning ones who are full of ashes and  
wasted and already left to your own wildness,

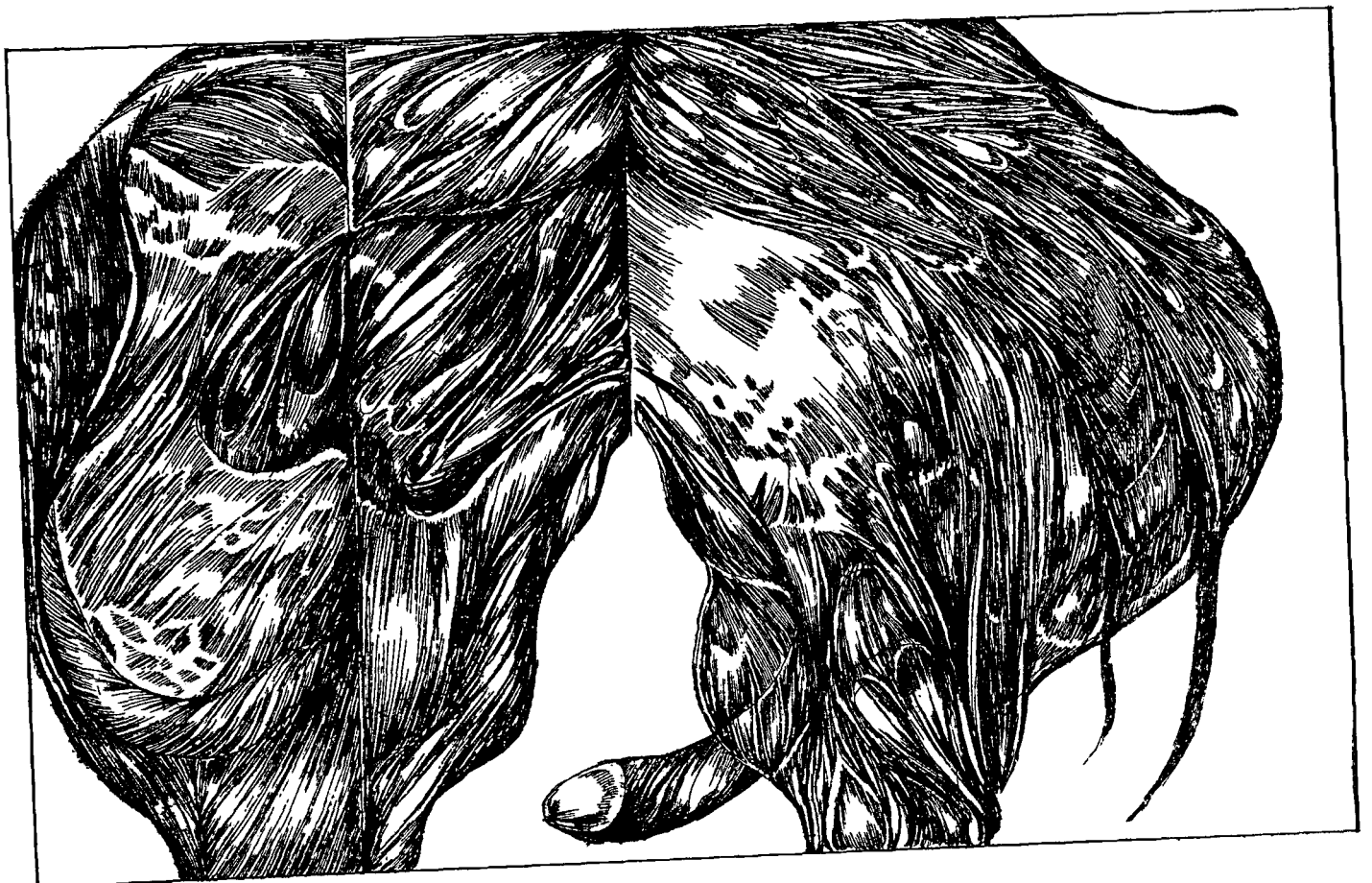
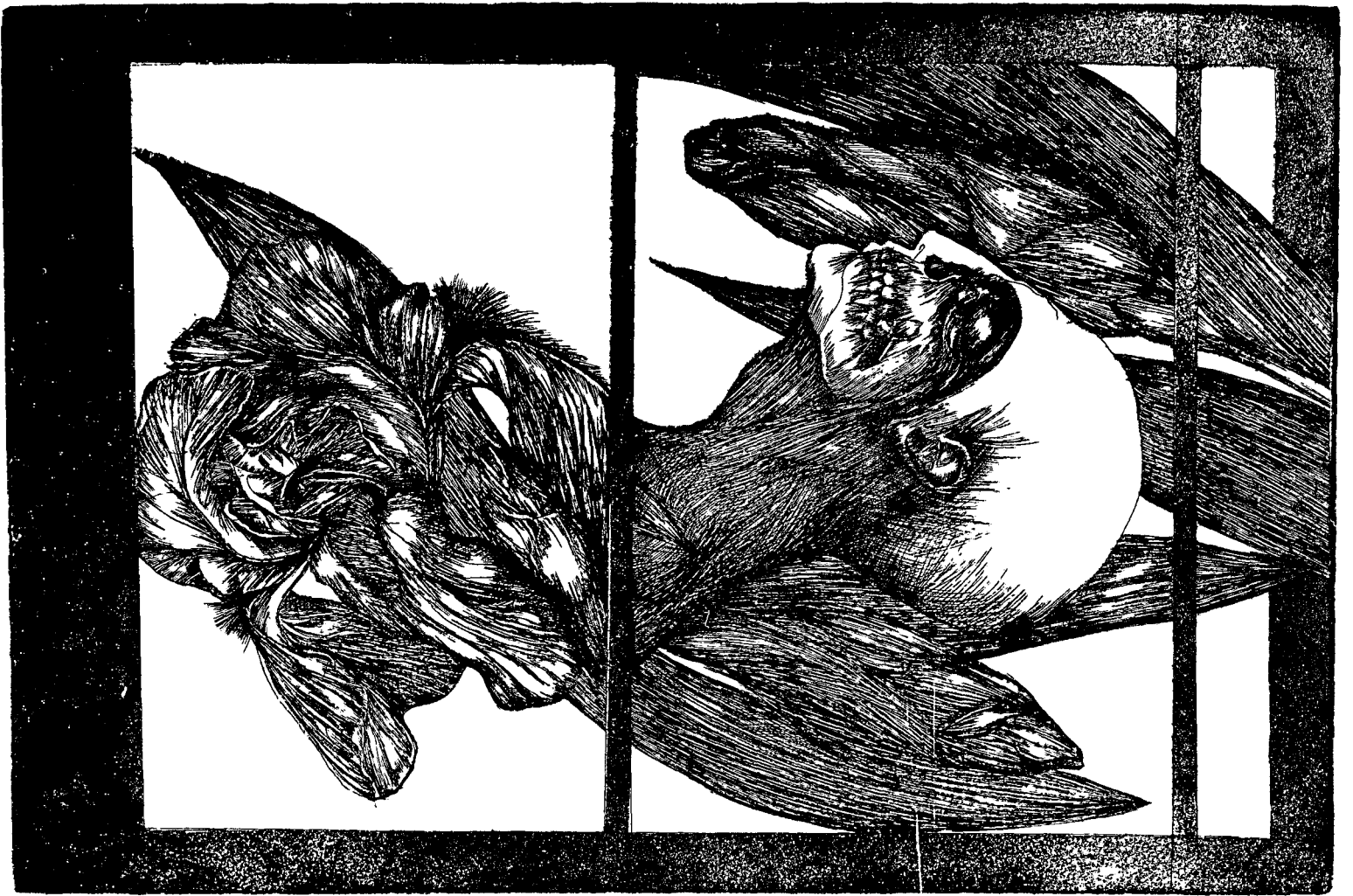
you beloved islands, eyes of the miraculous world!  
you who are now my sole preoccupation,  
you shores where the blasphemous  
repent and so does love, now heavenly!

for all too gratefully the holy ones have  
served there in days of beauty and  
the furious heroes; and many trees,  
and the cities themselves still stand,

are visible, like a pensive man; yet are  
the heroes dead, the islands of love are  
almost in ruins. Thus must love  
be everywhere distorted and abused.

You weakening tears, do not drown out the light  
of my eyes quite yet; just one memory!  
so I may nobly die, you thieves!  
you deceivers! let one memory live after me.

*translated by Frank O'Hara*





Kakinomoto no Hitomaro

### IN UTTER GRIEF AFTER HIS WIFE'S DEATH

Because the road to heaven-flying Karu  
was near my love's village  
I wanted to look at it closely, as at roots.  
But for visiting constantly there were too many eyes,  
if I went too often, people were sure to know.  
So I thought we'd meet later as rooty vines do  
and trusting her as one trusts a great ship  
I merely longed for her, hidden  
like an abyss fenced in with gleaming rocks.  
But just as the coursing sun goes into darkness,  
just as the shining moon hides behind clouds,  
so my wife, as yielding as kelp in the offing,  
passed away like a yellow leaf,  
so said the messenger bearing the catalpa branch.  
I heard this as a sound like that of a catalpa bow,  
I didn't know what to say, what to do.  
But I couldn't leave it just as a sound.  
Wondering if I could console  
my longing even one thousandth  
I stood and listened at the fair at Karu  
where my lover used to look for me.  
But, though on Mount Unebi of the robe-tucking sash  
birds sang, I did not hear her voice,  
though on the spear-adorned road people walked by  
not one looked like her.  
I did not know what to do but call out my wife's name  
and wave my sleeve.

#### Envoys

Yellow leaves on the autumn mountain are so thick my wife has been lost;  
I look for her, though I don't know the mountain paths

As yellow leaves fall, I see a messenger bearing a catalpa branch—then  
I remember days of our meetings

Yamanoue No Okura

### A DIALOGUE ON POVERTY

On nights when, wind mixing in, the rain falls,  
on nights when, rain mixing in, the snow falls,  
I'm utterly lost, it's so cold  
I take out a piece of black salt and nibble it,  
I sip hot water with sake dregs.  
Coughing, nose snuffling,  
scratching my skimpy beard,  
I boast to myself, "I'm the only one  
who's worthy." But it's so cold  
I pull the hempen quilt over myself,  
put on all the cloth vests  
I have. On such a cold night,  
someone poorer than I am—  
his father and mother must be starved, freezing,  
his wife and children must be feebly weeping.  
At a time like this, what are you doing  
to live through it all?

Heaven and earth are wide, they say,  
but for me they have grown narrow.  
The sun and the moon are bright, they say,  
but for me they do not shine.  
Is this so for everyone, or for me alone?  
I happened to be born a human  
but am no worse than others.  
Yet vests with no cotton,  
mere rags tattered and dangling  
like sea-fleece, are hung on my shoulders.  
In this flattened hut, this leaning hut,  
on the straw spread on the bare ground  
father and mother by my pillow,  
wife and children by my feet  
surround me, whimpering.

From the stove no steam spurts up,  
in the steamer a spider weaves its web,  
and rice-cooking forgotten,  
we moan like thrushes—  
when, as they say, "to cut the ends  
of what's exceptionally short already,"  
with stick in hand the village chief shouts,  
he comes to our sleeping-place and yells at us.  
Is it as helpless as this,  
the way of the world?

Envoy

I find this world sad and wearying, but cannot fly away  
because I am not a bird

*translated by Hiroaki Sato*

Ion Alexandru

ELEGY

Horses become as expensive  
as God.  
Instead of growing up, I decided to disappear.  
I hear horses inside the void I'm in  
running as if the blood of vipers is  
waking in their skin.  
Noise of hot milk mixing with sperm.  
I am listening to myself,  
exiled horse, hors commerce.  
Horses refuse to work. They are beaten. Killed.  
Oh how good their skin on soldiers' boots!  
How good their memory in the dreams of children!  
How good their memory in their own dead memory!  
Tall silence  
over the grass.  
Summer.  
The difference is:  
one writes beautiful poems about living horses,  
one writes ugly poems about dying cows.  
Where horses end  
the void starts growing.  
My house is a noose  
cutting my breath when the horse moon  
wakes up the man inside my body

## NIGHTS

They are weaving night into night in the cells  
of my brain.  
This is done with the false  
understanding that I  
haven't been born yet.  
All I know is that some ghosts on the horizon  
carry something on their backs.  
They carry one mountain toward another,  
panting.  
When they stop by me it is only to burn  
the coffins of children dead on the road.  
They are then struck by lightening  
and disappear in trails  
of purple milk.  
In their absence the cutlery and the pots  
rattle all night  
in the deserted country  
where all the birds have died

## THE BUTTERFLY

Dry giants sit on the hills covered with chestnuts.  
The black butterfly grows  
from our soul.  
I feel him on my neck, his raven wings  
blacken the air over pastures dried by war.  
Under the skirts of the table  
a slab of bacon is getting rancid under  
its ashy rind,  
an onion sprouts in a corner  
near the dry saddle.  
The black butterfly in the air, bloodless  
over our good will . . .  
Every time the wheel of his flight  
touches a familiar place  
his wings become a resonant wood,  
a star falls from the sky jamming the horns  
with its musical skin.  
The hunger of his will, the shame of his weakness  
seek me out  
as does —even more— this yearning to float  
stretched on my back in the fog  
carried by twilight to the end of the world.  
Over and over I fall asleep.  
I sink in the past  
as in a giant scab  
inside of which sky and earth  
are confused in the laws of dust

## PLACE

After two years in these parts  
 the fruit trees dry up.  
 On the skin of the water  
 a sort of curly hair crowds.  
 The leaves shrink  
 as if a hot pan scorches them.  
 Blood leaves its natural beds  
 to gather in superimposed clusters  
 at the joints.  
 The plum trees release purple spirits  
 wrung from stones.  
 The mirrors in the wall  
 take root in the mold.  
 Night strangles children between the sheets  
 voices are whips  
 hands are calling in the drought.  
 The hair of women is a country of smoke  
 under which the embers of their eyes blink.  
 Old women in the nests of belltowers  
 hatch the incoming snows.  
 Birds blow up at night in their nests  
 when the moon puts her claws through the clouds  
 to burst them with bad luck.  
 The old fangs of the road  
 pierce the arch of travellers' feet.  
 Oh how old I become in these parts!  
 The earth pulls me  
 I fall.  
 The rains of autumn penetrate me  
 to the seed

*translated by Andrei Codrescu*

Gellu Naum

CONVERSATION IN THE CARRIAGE

371074.

10.90

13.90  
 With the veil over the face  
 And with an electric lamp in hand  
 At the junction of the void

13.90

371072.

16.90

12.90

14.90

371080. At the junction of the void 10.90

371079. A terrifying green fire  
 With those two  
 supplementary dimensions 9.90

You are one who shouts  
 Without pain  
 And wears a dedication  
 In the corner of your mouth 9.90

371082. And we are standing like two drunkards  
 Twins in profile  
 What can we do. 4.90

You will see  
 How the morals of the flat foot  
 Gives birth to a dramatic  
 complication 11.90

371083. Memory out of two who is going to talk  
 About his dead sister  
 About his alive goat 0.90

THE CONVERSATION GREW INTIMATE (perfectly communicating)

371103. Many times, it seems  
 That at the genesis  
 of the proofs nothing  
 It's too happy 13.90

371104. As in the  
 evenings when  
 The model-wife  
 Enters the room  
 of the  
 imaginary lover 8.90

In spite of  
 The appearance  
 I had the impression 9.90

Or when  
 In front of the tape  
 Recorder 9.90

That we are in front  
 Of some elements  
 Of an answer  
 Which never were fully conveyed 13.90

Is revealed  
 The compensatory power  
 Of great depressive meditations 10.90

371106. Irrecoverable desertion  
 So many hygienic ideas  
 Oh! but it's better  
 To remain silent 16.90

Then, the rain  
 Of the white locust  
 Strokes her cheeks 19.90

What good are they  
 The bed-spreads covering the mirrors 18.90

Plus  
 The model-wife  
 Knows the way indubitably  
 And everything is happening  
 On tip toes 12.90

I am trying to say that one of the walls is covered  
 With paintings representing  
 Sail boats  
 On one of the boats in that room 8.90

To keep telling myself  
 That nobody is a prophet  
 In his rail station 19.90

And when  
 We the witnesses  
 Preparing the bouquet  
 of the insults  
 Half asleep  
 The boat sets off

THEN the native coffins are shaking which we NEVER ABANDON.

Paul Morand

## KISSES

A kiss  
shortens the human life 3 minutes  
states the Psychology Department  
at Western State College,  
Gunnison, Colo.

The kiss  
provokes such throbbing  
that in 4 seconds the heart works  
harder than it does in 3 minutes.  
The statistics show  
that 480 kisses  
reduce life by one day,  
that 2,360 kisses  
deprive you of a week  
and that 148,071 kisses,  
it's quite simply a lost year.

*translated by Ron Padgett*

Francis Picabia

## MAGIC CITY

A dangerous wind tempting us to sublime nihilism  
pursued us with a quickness which was prodigious

An unexpected ideal

Loss of balance

Panic

Sudden freedom

All over men and women with a music which made me happy  
publicly and in secret

exercised their sterile passions

Opium

Whisky

Tango.

Spectators and actors

with greater and greater subtlety

rose above fleshly satisfaction.

Women were weaker

more beautiful and more unscrupulous.

The men with a reflective silence

regarded their pleasure.

Years of genius and of oriental sun,

1913-1914

## ALMOST FINISHED

In the street as in the hymn  
A huge  
Bonbon  
Dressed in white  
When I play a kiss tears me apart  
The taste of Paris consoles me  
I see an arabesque in tulle  
The dark-circled eyes around me trace the divan of togas  
The rosy light in my flattened hair  
Useless questions  
In a family of flattened hair  
Useless questions  
In a family of flattered candy-makers  
I am searching for my style

*translated by Tinker Greene*

Phillipe Soupault

## I RETURN

My hat is dented  
I understand the recent barking  
The window applauds me instantly  
and my table smiles

I see in the distance the buzzer of a doorbell  
and the forceful wind titillates my hair  
the innumerably winged being I am momentarily  
I leave forgetting my hat

*translated by Tinker Greene*

Max Jacob

### THE ENEMY OF THE CITADEL

It was good the labor of building a citadel to the muse. But now  
after one hour of sleep the devil has broken into my grey room on  
a black horse. Peasants have followed with picks and sickles and  
here in their midst is a ghost with red eyes who looks even more  
hideous than the rest. My God, save me! But it's too late.

*translated by Ted Berrigan*

Charles Baudelaire

### THE MORE JOYOUS

Dance alone tear grass eat plain discharge  
Jaywalk cruise the month of may own false depth  
Ouija leisure pleasure in the attic my old views  
And dormer windows dance. Come Enrique dance alone.

Jesus hates lay testaments and henpecks the tomboys.  
Pluto, quit employing alarm, do more!  
Get lively! gems earned invite less wolves  
Assign twos. Less bouts, half the body around.

Over now compatriots since you really eat sin yourselves  
Voyage to Venice. Allow one more liberty—eat joyously!  
Philosophy lives, faeces dew apparitions.

A traveller may ruin a last dungheap sense of remorse.  
Eat ditto more the sill is overwhelming torture  
For savage group sins I am eaten more in Parma,  
less is more.

*translated by Annabel Levitt*

Phillipe Jaccottet

THE SCREECH OWL *untitled in the original*

The night is a big city asleep  
when the wind blows . . . He came here from far away  
to the refuge of this bed. It's midnight in June.  
You are sleeping, I was led to these infinite shores,  
the wind shakes the hazel tree. The appeal comes  
draws near and withdraws, one would swear  
a light fleeing across the woods, or else  
the shadows that they say whirl in hell.  
(How much could I say about this appeal in the summer night  
and about your eyes . . . ) But it's only  
the bird called the screech owl who calls us from the depths  
of these suburban woods. And already our odor  
is that of decay in the morning twilight,  
already under the hot skin, the bone pierces,  
while the stars go down on the streetcorners.

*translated by Susan Plunkett*

André Breton & Benjamin Péret

WORLD CALENDAR OF TOLERABLE INVENTIONS  
(selections)

FEBRUARY

Venetian Blinds — In Gao, Mohammed Askia garnished his windows  
with palm leaves in order to reduce the sun's ardor.

MARCH

Kite — Conceived by Lao Tsu to demonstrate that man's  
power is negligible compared to that of a paper  
fish.

Mannequin — Brought back from the Carolina Islands around 1860  
by Francisco Lazeano, where it was adored by the  
natives who called it Tino.

APRIL

Kaleidoscope — The young son of a Portugese captain opened an  
old telescope and put in some feathers he had pulled  
off a parrot his father brought back from Brasil.

MAY

Red Eggs — Eggs which were offered, at the beginning of this  
century, to May Day demonstrators by merchants  
posted along the route of the parade.

Mustard — Produced in 1165 under the orders of the Anti-Pope  
Guy de Creme, who was looking for an anti-honey.

JUNE

Neon Sign — First thought of by Arlini, the celebrated artisan of  
the 18th century, who made the presentation of a  
pair of gloves with buttons made of glow worms.



## AUGUST

Surprise Package — Actually a bomb, which was placed by a mysterious hand near the prayer kneeler of Catherine de Medicis the day after the feast of Saint Barthelemy.

Cafe Terasse — Granted by Tortoni to Alfred Tattet, a friend of Musset, in order that he might, "benefit from the air of the boulevard."

## SEPTEMBER

Mayonnaise — Brought back to France by the soldiers who occupied Prot Mahon in 1756, but probably first conceived by the Minorquins upon hearing pheasants sneeze while flying over ocean-front olive trees.

## NOVEMBER

Coffee Mill — Derived from the primitive goat mill used by Abyssinians to grind their coffee. (Everyone knows that goats led to the discovery of coffee.)

## DECEMBER

Zipper — The zipper was not invented by a Swiss Doctor, as is commonly assumed, but by W. Landolph, author of *History and Pre-history of Ferns* (1892), *Ferns and the treatment of Epilepsy* (1906), and *FERNs and the Art of Paul Klee* (1923).

*translated by Tony Fusco*

Blaise Cendrars

## SHRAPNEL

- I. In the fog the shooting crackles and  
the voice of the cannon comes right  
up to us  
The American bison is not more terrible  
Nor more beautiful  
Lying in wait  
like the Cameroun swan
- II. I cut your wings, o my explosive brow  
And you don't want a military cap  
On the national road 400 thousand feet  
strike sparks with mess tins clanking  
I think  
I pass by  
Cynical and stupid  
Stinking battering ram
- III. All my men are lying under acacias  
the shells upset  
Oh blue sky of the Marne  
Woman  
With an airplane for a smile  
We are forgotten

*translated by Annabel Levitt*

Stephane Mallarme

TIRED OF BITTER REPOSE

Tired of bitter repose, my laziness  
that offends the ambition  
I left my hildhood for—  
    that adorable childhood  
    of rose woods  
    under the natural blue

And doubly tired of my harsh pact:  
To dig a new grave every night  
in the cold and stingy ground of my brain,  
— What can I say to this Dawn  
    when in fear of her livid roses  
    the cemetery gathers its holes?

I want to leave behind me  
this country's voracious Art  
and smiling at the stale reproaches  
of my friends, the past, genius,  
even my lamp, that at least know my agony

I'd imitate the Chinese  
of limpid heart  
whose purest ecstasy  
is to paint on cups of snow  
ravished from the moon  
the stem of a bizarre flower  
that perfumes his transparent life—  
the flower he smelled as a child  
and grafted to his soul  
with tiny blue beads

Death would be serene to me  
like the only dream of a sage  
I would choose a young landscape  
to paint, absent-minded, on the cups  
A line of blue, delicate and pale  
would be a lake  
in the sky of nude porcelain  
A gleaming crescent  
lost in a cloud  
would dip the calm horn  
in the glaze of the waters  
near three lashes of emerald—reeds

*translated by Rodger Kamenetz*

Gérard de Nerval

À J \_\_\_\_\_ y COLONNA

Daphne, do you know this old romance  
at the foot of the sycamore, under the white branches,  
under the plaintive olives or the trembling willow,  
this love song always beginning again?

Do you remember the TEMPLE with its immense columns  
& the bitter lemons marked by your teeth?  
Or the fatal cave of the shameless hosts  
where the vanquished dragon's seed is sleeping?

Do you know why the volcano re-opened?  
Because yesterday we touched it with our swift feet  
& its ashes now cover the horizon.

Because a Norman duke has broken your clay gods  
& forever beneath the palms at Virgil's grave  
the pale hydrangea merges with the green laurel.

*translated by Bill Davis*

Paul Valéry

LOVING WOODS

We took clean cut thoughts  
clinging our own way together  
hands locked with no words—  
among flowered shades;

an esplanade almost wedding us  
alone in night green pasture  
we swallow fairy fruits from  
the moon amiable beyond sense

until we are dead on moss  
our loins licked silver cloud  
doused moaning inner woods.

Beneath the streetlight of the skies  
we go down breaking tears like bread  
sweet sink of speechless companionship.

*translated by Charley Shively*

Joyce Mansour

## COLD THURSDAY

Blue tree  
Snowdrop with the impossibilities of writing  
The elusive comma that precedes the word  
Night  
Luxurious in my hair  
I pray solemnly  
I dream  
A large band of shadow  
Cuts  
Your face in its uncertainty  
Sadness falls in slow motion  
Odor of cigarette butts  
Inactive ovary  
Tango  
My mortal remains pose nude  
Without the excess of chains  
Nor useless despair  
There can be no dividing wall between the snow and the night

*translated by Susan Plunkett*

Louise Labé

## SONNETS

9  
Two i see and i begin to wonder  
In the den of the mole i rest my desire  
My sad spirit whores away my retirement  
The song of the toy is incontinent in the rendering

Lord, advise me what descends into my tender skin  
Jetting the good the tan jay aspires  
And for the sequel the jay suspects high places  
That the sandlots softly quit fondling

O douse sleep, night of my horror  
Pleasant repast planned for tranquillity  
Continues tempting the noose of my song

And see Jamie, my poor amish lover,  
Not drawn from bed with variegated  
Fates in the months that honor my song

2

O beautiful brown jews, o rigors of the tournament  
O chaste sighs, a spanish alarms  
O black night vainly waiting  
O sure Louisiana will vainly return

O sad plains, o obstinate desires  
O lost time, o despondent pens  
O mile of deaths and tenacious ruts  
O pier mounted against my fate

O Rio, fount of the hair, arms, legs, indwelling  
O plentiful lutes, violins, arches, and voices  
Enough the flame pours the ardor of the female eunuch

The toy fills me with fire in the doorway  
Listen to the place of ice where my heart tiptoes  
Nest of the servants toy, voluptuous and sparkling

11

O due regard, o jews, plain and beautiful  
Small gardens full of flowers of love  
O scent of love, leis of dangerous flesh  
Taunting view where my eye is arrested

O central felon, o rude cruelty  
Taunting tent of rigorous factions  
Taunting coolie of langourous arms  
The sentiniel of love demands tournament of the heart

Donkeys, my eyes, taunted by pleasure vector  
Taunted by bones turning, by eyes receiving  
My toy, my heart, plus lesbian voices seeking comparison

Plus two who languish, plus one an ass of sauciness  
Or divinity, see i swing also  
Sentient my eye, estuary against a contrary heart

Do not reproach or damn me if i have loved  
If i have felt a million sentimental torches of ardor  
A million travels, millions of dollars down the tubes  
If i cry, it is my own temper that consumes me

Sandy-voiced ardor of an accused volcano  
Sandy, the beauty of a dumb accuser  
Pour, if you can, the pluses of an amorous rendering

In a yawn motion carries away the occasion  
And puffs the strangers and the passionate fort  
And guards the view, pedestrian but plumed for the hour

36'

AUGUST

The stems  
with golden milk  
spout over the mangers  
cool breezes  
which protect  
from beaks  
the scarecrow  
that one composed  
of dead wood,  
of old clothes,  
and of chaff.

And they ripen, the espalier,  
the vine,  
the orchards,  
while the angular tippler  
of the air  
startles the wings  
and the wool of the shepherds  
bleats  
to the rake  
who weeps before the poutings,  
so distinguished,  
of peacocks with their haughty steps.

*THE FRUITS*

Buffoon of the empty gesture,  
Buffoon scared by the beaks!

*THE SCARECROW*

Alas, never was the good doll as it pleases you to say!

*THE FRUITS*

Ha! Make us laugh!

*THE SCARECROW*

Darlings, ignorance draws you on,  
and my carcass weeps  
these two pearls of very old rain:  
I am  
the unconscious valet of the man  
who has set me here as  
jailer of the fruits.

*THE FRUITS*

Jailer of the fruits?

*THE SCARECROW*

Triffling knaves;  
those nothings on two wings  
that one calls  
sparrows!  
your most ardent  
executioners  
( olives, figs, prunes, raisins, peaches, apples, pears . . . )  
are, permit me to say,  
Her Highness the Jaw  
and her Pages the Teeth.

*THE FRUITS*

Those ivory fairies  
that reveal the human face  
in its joy?

*THE SCARECROW*

The very same, o tiny prey,  
you will be served to them in porcelain  
or else on silver,  
and, my loves, that will be your last moment.

Man, the ambition of a lifetime  
Senselessly crowns your head at an infinity of festivals,  
The unsatisfied  
Lie in wait for you.  
In vain you try to avert the trap,  
For your eye and your flesh  
Are pledged, from the dawn onwards,  
The eye for the casket in the bomb,  
The flesh for the maraudings  
Of the worm.

False goldsmith of decease,  
The sun simmers bit by bit  
The pilgrims in their fate,  
And Death is the gourmand.  
In order to plot this ivory denouement  
He will want you, repudiating your charms,  
To disfigure your progress toward victory;  
But the jailer of your personal beauty,  
A paradoxical scarecrow,  
Is raised up in this vale of tears  
By one for whom this struggle will be useful.

Your pride puffs up your cheeks and waist; even your eyes,  
For the macabre profiting of fate.  
Since your will is unable to amend your destiny,  
You be the hero now, upon the stairway of hours  
Advancing to the lures  
Of the tomb,  
Absorb the treasures  
Scattered amid the scenery  
Of the slaubrious mornings.  
Become angel, lion, ibex, bee, dove  
And more, but better yet,  
For the sake of this haughty Triumph  
Dazzle, with the diamond of your body,  
The somber mouth  
Of that sow;  
Death  
Always lean, is present at the banquet slab.

## SAINT-POL-ROUX

I am the great Sower, great Sower of Ideas  
Who stirs the Age with his artful motion,  
Swelling emptied breasts to fullness with a new milk  
And gilding furrows with unheard-of wheat.

Spontaneous fav'rite of the Queen of the World  
With womb that brands a millennial child,  
I banish the old kings and my vagabond creed  
Gets of Beauty a triumphant bastard.

Revolt is to genius a living law,  
And the proud joy for an inspired mistake  
Kills with its glow our atavistic austerity.

Above the disdain of these cowardly times  
Beyond, a laurel descends to crown my task  
And I entrust it to the hands of Posterity.

*translated by A. Mangravite*

Rene Char

## EXPLOIT OF THE STEAMROLLER

We others are prepared  
To expect everything to believe everything  
We make our tops spin  
In the beam of our beaters  
By snow-breeze and by breeze of dog-days  
Huge foreign personages  
For a kingdom of lizards  
You we won't tolerate volunteer  
Our universe rises  
Out of the speck of your reason's funeral

A miracle the string  
From it that you obtained  
A package ugly as a policeman  
Because the filaments are the fabrication  
Of the fantastic of the fishes

You who pretend to unravel the ripples of our sources  
—which of you's architect and which of you mason?  
Your conceptions don't exactly harmonize  
But you sign at the same time  
You are the dear little soldier of the treaty  
Lout who's hanging hanging from the pothook  
And saddles himself with the landslide  
In the meadow where she'll be going to smoke  
Between the two thunderstorms the hoarfrost spread along skin  
Came a steamroller to shut  
Flexible as a male-cricket with an enormous intellect  
Some two men were ascending it  
We have understood their silk kercheifs  
Cooked wine of sufficient matter to lay hold of you  
It's not enough to prepare  
The gypsy's van was containing a pregnant woman  
The bridges and causeways were closing their eyes  
The trio was adjourning to pleasure the time of the delivery  
It was listened to, to beat oneself, to wash oneself  
The cylinder pleated in a solitary place on the horizon  
Such a millennial myth  
How happy we were in the meadow  
Under the protection of The Friend!



An interminable week  
The tambours of the rain beat fit to burst  
Across the skylight of the garret  
A proclamation of hoorahs had gone up  
In honor of the sun's reappearance  
Galloping charge of the galoshes  
Towards the verdant mead all dumbfounded with gorse

Some adder in swollen coils  
Has she expired cylindrically  
A dune crawls along  
Now there where he'd grown worse  
Before his mirror of migraine and of needles  
The employer cracking with cold  
Blind evacuated landscape  
The friend was hollowing himself out of a great hole  
In the earth and had pulled the mud in on himself

This exploit didn't upset anything  
No single spade could disturb  
Calamity passed as good sense  
Secretly we commuted it  
Then the gypsy's van one morning pretended to be behind other

You who do not believe in wonders  
In the crimes of the lazy flames  
In black stars being laid like eggs  
On the metal-plated highways  
It's true you are only men  
The storm you breathe  
Is phantom steam.

*translated by Frank O'Hara*

## I STRANGLED MY BROTHER

I strangled my brother  
because he didn't like to sleep  
with the window open.

My sister,  
he said before he died,  
I have spent long nights  
watching you sleep,  
gazing at your reflection in the window.

*translated by Tony Fusco*

Pierre Reverdy

22 POEMS from *Les Ardoises du toit*, 1918

On each slate  
that falls from the roof  
there  
is written  
a poem

The gutter is bordered with diamonds  
that the birds drink

ADVERTISEMENT

Hangar ready  
door open  
The sky  
An offering of two hands on high  
Eyes raise  
A voice lifts  
The roofs begin to tremble  
The wind stirs the dead leaves  
And the clouds that hang back  
Move on to the end of the world  
Who would have started to whistle  
In the calm of the summer night  
The song  
The bird  
The stars  
And the moon to hear you

## AIR

Forget  
    closed door  
On the sloping earth  
A tree trembles.  
    And alone  
        A bird sings  
  
    On the roof  
There's no light  
        More than the sun  
  
And the signs your fingers make

## STORM

Window  
    Living mouth where the light beats  
Full of impatience  
    The noise breaks the silence  
Nobody knows anymore if it's night  
    The house shakes  
Amazing  
The voice that is singing is going to break off  
We were getting so much closer  
    Beneath  
Those who look  
    Greater than what they are looking for  
So that's it  
    To be  
Under the open sky  
    Bursting  
A thunderclap stopping the breath

## SUN

Someone went away  
In the room  
Desolate life  
Remains a sigh  
The street  
And the window open  
One ray of sun  
On the lawn

## STREET

First we have to cross past the front  
Words the wind carries off  
How long will it be  
One more minute and I'm there  
I stand alone against the door  
The trees would have rustled  
If a heavy cloud had come to a stop  
In front of the closed door  
And beneath the sky  
The hours go by  
I've even forgotten my name  
On the sidewalk where they were born  
The birds are crying  
Other voices unroll  
The bell starts to toll  
All the heads turn away  
Who might have spoken to me as they went by

## FALSE DOOR OR PORTRAIT

In the space remaining  
Between four lines  
    A square where the white plays  
The hand that supports your cheek  
A face lights  
    The moon  
    Outline of another  
        But it's your eyes  
I follow the lamp that guides me  
A finger on the moist eyelid  
    In the middle  
Tears fall in the space  
    Between four lines  
    A mirror

## WATCH

Then noon was about to sound the sun's  
                    Gigantic gong

A heavy fist smashed  
To the applause of everyone

No one stayed in bed

The sunbeams were already standing in the alleys

    A white figure over each one  
Everything was drowned in air in foliage  
But when the evening came to again  
The door was too low

    The body was tired  
And dragged its shadow

    The watch case had been reclosed  
And showed a different number  
On nightwatch the moon had begun its vigil

## CORRIDOR

We are  
    On the same line where everything follows  
    In the meanders of the night  
A word is in the middle  
    Two mouths invisible to each other  
    The sound of a footstep  
A body lightly glides toward another  
    The door trembles  
A hand moves  
    Wanting it to open  
    A clear beam of light stands upright  
    Directly before me  
    And that's the fire that has kept us apart  
In shadow where your outline gets lost  
    A moment without breathing  
Your breath just burned me as it passed

## PICTURE FROM THE PAST

The bell was ringing in the distance  
    Since awakening  
Beating of a wing  
    On my head where the sun plays  
The memory barely stirs  
    My heart stops hearing  
    Voices that speak  
Everything happened so long ago  
Is it the same one  
    Who looked at me as he went by  
  
Those are the same eyes turning  
    But the portrait has been erased  
  
The characteristics of your face fall away  
    Another comes  
The wrinkled forehead is hidden by your hand  
Finally the voice rings  
    A running child brings back nothing  
But that one leaving over there  
    Your lips tremble  
In a dark country far away  
    You resemble him

## PATIENCE

The raised voices hover at the horizon  
Everything is calm in the clearing  
Everybody leaving was seen passing  
On the road with no ruts  
Where does the one we don't know come from  
Inside people watch  
The livelier hands pass  
Over those we don't see  
The words are heavier than they sound  
    They fall  
The eyes blink  
    It sounds so quiet to say it this way  
A new star rises  
A glimmer of hope  
    A door moves  
    The tree before us leans  
The wall extends to infinity  
    Nothing's clear in my head  
    On the dark and glittering sidewalk  
Which comes to an end after all

## CORTÈGE

If the hands were raised any higher they would touch the roof  
Further on the eyes close on what you can see  
The moon has its neck wrung the arms are crossed  
The trees out in the wind are in a hurry to get walking  
At the vibration of your voice the tepid sky empties itself  
And pearls glisten on your fingers  
Yet no rain falls  
We shut the windows  
Clouds fly lower  
The street is shut up against the storm  
Against all the blows one doesn't understand  
When the last one goes through that low doorway  
It's behind the thickest wall that it all goes on

## PROJECTS

Where will they go to find out all there is  
that is dark just behind their heads  
The sky wrinkles its forehead  
Preparing a storm  
The others have come for the fair  
And the stars stretch their wires  
From house to house  
The vibrations of the bells are rattling the partitions  
It's all sad further on  
And so are the songs  
The exhausted men stretch  
The lights fade in the daylight  
And on the sidewalks glitter  
All their squandered desires  
Lying dead in the wings  
Of the gathering darkness where they were born

## DAY'S MARCH

The dying cavalryman raised his head even though  
The stars were shooting at him  
The black hedge of his dreams was still too dense  
We shall never escape a prisoner's fate  
But already we can see what's happening  
In the buildings and on the rooftops  
And the huge crowd that's gathering  
Even the men who make it up  
The animals follow in a herd  
Dust surges in waves from the route  
A river drowning all reflection  
And memories that swirl  
In the remade universe that turns before you  
In a fleeting instant  
A tree shatters in your face  
A ramp slopes along the bank  
Everything's on an angle  
It is necessary to slow down  
Due to cancelled plans  
Due to deaths  
And revivals that aren't what they seem  
Under the weeping stars



## SCREEN

A shadow glides over your hand  
The lamp has changed your shape  
The pendulum swings  
                    Time hangs heavy  
Because nothing is happening  
The spectators have gone  
                    The world turns around and laughs  
To see everything alive

                    Yet one doubtfully moves on  
A turn at the end of the road  
                    A forest  
A bridge without arches  
                    And the house I want to live in  
I have to leave no matter what  
And the moving shadow  
                    The one who was watching  
The world that laughed  
                    Fades  
Into the background against the wall  
                    Silhouettes glide

## THE FINAL SEASON

A glance  
                    or a grimace  
                    The sun shone  
In the mirror it's no longer the same  
                    A cloud is passing on horseback  
                    The running wind overtakes it  
A shadow on my eye is an irritation  
                    I slip into a nightmare  
  
                    A black mask  
                    with an outlined smile  
                    And the person who drags me away is shouting  
It could be better or worse  
                    and I laugh

                    In the courtyard is no one but me  
A dark coat floats over the roof  
                    Full of holes  
                    and someone calls my name

My eyelid is brushed by a swallow in flight  
A gloved hand  
                    The rest goes on behind the memories

                    But what is there I could hold on to  
  
If only you weren't always looking back

## BELOW

The flash moves across the ring  
The diamond stays on your finger  
    The line began in the darkest corner  
What was in his arms made out of shadow  
had changed  
    The women smiled  
Under the play of the light  
    The piece itself was transformed  
The ceiling stays black  
    Look up on the balcony  
Today the stars are walking  
    We pretend not to see  
Sometimes eyes are also raised  
    Not so high  
    We might fall  
The attacking wind would carry everything away  
Nothing stays but the earth  
And the ones who couldn't make it up this far

## A HEAD

We are no longer there  
                    Others came  
                    During the night  
I'm in back  
    I recognize the faces  
Between the chimneys that eat the light  
The sky grimaced  
    An anxious forehead appeared  
While we were at the fair  
    And we saw it turn all the heads  
    That the laughter had exploded  
A lamp lit  
In the house that opened its windows  
The eyes started to shine  
    The pieces broke falling into the street  
And the voices we had heard were floating away  
I would have mingled mine with the ones that remained  
But your eyes had closed again  
    And the blinds  
    Hang down

## MEMORY

Hardly a minute  
And I'm back again  
I don't remember anything that happened  
A point  
The huge sky  
And at the last moment  
A lantern going by  
Sound of a footstep  
Someone has stopped in the midst of everything going on  
Let the world go  
And what's within  
The dancing lights  
And the lengthening shadows  
There's more space  
Looking ahead  
A cage where a living animal leaps  
The breast and the arms were making the same motion  
A woman laughed  
As she turned her head  
And those who were coming had us confused  
We were three though we'd never met  
And already forming  
A world full of hope

## NIGHT

Behind the door where I'm hiding  
The evening's overdue  
I see the sky through this diamond-shaped eye  
Midnight  
The birds of fire have almost all passed  
Through signals of alarm  
In my pocket is an arm  
A wing beating lower and lower  
The moon holds back tears  
And the mocking laughter in the folds of the curtain

*translated by Tinker Greene & Susan Plunkett*

Pablo Neruda

28325674549

One hand made the number.  
It joined one little stone  
with another, a thunderclap,  
an eagle fallen  
with another eagle,  
one arrow with another  
and in the patience of granite  
one hand  
made two incisions, two wounds,  
two grooves: the number  
was born.

The number two grew and then  
the four:  
they were all coming out  
of one hand:  
the five, the six,  
the seven,  
the eight, the nine, the zero,  
like perpetual eggs  
from a bird  
hard  
as stone,  
who laid so many numbers  
without tiring, and inside  
of the number, another number  
and another number inside that one,  
proliferous, fertile,  
bitter, antagonistic,  
calculating,  
growing  
in the mountains, in the intestines,  
in the gardens, in the underground,  
falling out of books,  
flying over Kansas and Morelia,  
covering us, blinding us, killing us  
from the tables, from the pockets,  
the numbers, the numbers,  
the numbers.

## ERRANT ALBATROSS

At high sea the wind navigates  
guided by the albatross:  
that is the ship of the albatross:  
he crosses, descends, dances, rises,  
he hangs in the dark light,  
touches the towers of the wave,  
nestles in the boiling mortar  
of the disorderly element  
while the salt decorates him  
and the frantic foam hisses,  
the albatross slides flying  
with his great wings of music  
leaving above the storm  
a book that keeps on flying:  
it is the statue of the wind.

*translated by Janine Pommy Vega*

## THE FALL OF THE FLOWER

The seven petals of the sea  
are joined in this corolla  
with the diadem of love:  
it all Happened in the falter and plummet  
of a rose that fell to the water  
when the river was nearing the sea.  
Here one scarlet bubble  
leaped from the enamored day  
to the thousand lips of the wave  
and one rose slipped  
toward the sun and over the salt.

*translated by Dan Propper*

## THE UNITED FRUIT CO.

After the trumpets sounded & everything  
was ready on earth  
God divvied up his world to  
Coke, Anaconda, Ford  
& other multinationals.  
The UF Co  
bit off the juciest part  
for itself, the core of my land  
the tasty waist of America.  
They baptized their acquisition  
" The Banana Republics " & over the  
sleeping dead & over the  
hyper heroes that will never sleep,  
their flags flapping stiffly, overall, ITT  
set up a congress of buffoons:  
they stole the ticket to ride,  
crowned with Ceasar's crown,  
they unleashed the lecherous, releasing  
the regime of flies—  
flies Trujillos, flies Tachos,  
flies Carias moscas Martinez  
flies Pinochet, flies Ubico flies everywhere  
humid flies of jellified humility  
flies smashed on power knocking over  
myriad tombs,  
circus flies, clever flies, flies clever  
in the flight of tyranny.

Then the bloody flies  
of the fruit company came down to scoop up coffee & fruit  
stuffing their fat boats that slip away  
like bowls holding the spoils  
of my drowning land.

Meanwhile in the sugary  
abyss of an anonymous port  
an Indian plunges to his burial  
in the morning fog:  
a body unwound, a thing  
without name, some number tumbling,  
the fruit killing the branch.  
A branch spinning away from its fruit.

*translated by Evelyn Villalba & Jeff Wright*

Jorge Teillier

## THE ACACIA

Time kept it in its memory  
to dream about it, in winter nights.

The lips of time awaken,  
and pronounce, wet of rain,  
the first word they remember.  
And the flame of the acacia lights up  
with no fear to the wind, with no envy of the sun.

The acacia is the first day of school,  
is a mouth stained of cherries,  
a yellow wave from where the morning is born,  
a glass of wine on the poor's table.  
The acacia is a sunday in the provincial plaza,  
is what is born from the seed  
of a dead child's bone,  
the friendship of the sheep and the mill  
in the old calendars,  
and the happiness of arms  
reborn when they embrace the body of one they love.

## LITTLE GIRL

From the evening tree cherry or apple you are.  
Your checkered apron vibrates blue in the courtyard.

Sad sleeping beauty, guarded by roses,  
how lonely this house is when you close your eyes!

Your hair falls rumorously of rain  
was it given to you by a day of luminous autumn?

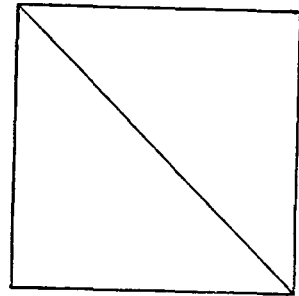
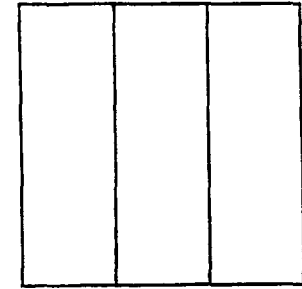
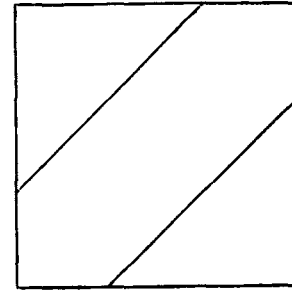
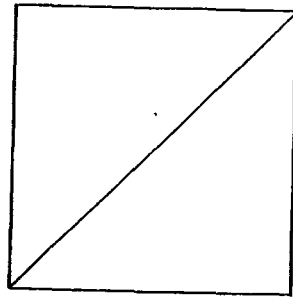
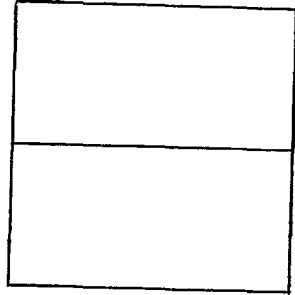
The trains of childhood leave to you as a gift  
a basket of smoke from stale springs.

You are so small that the wind turns into a child  
to play with you, like it does with the hay.

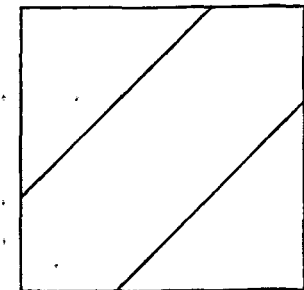
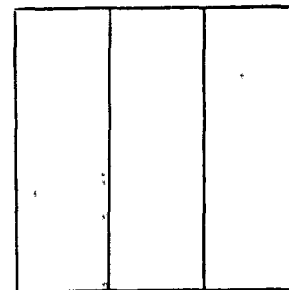
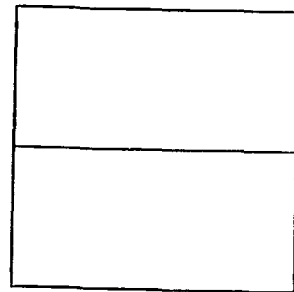
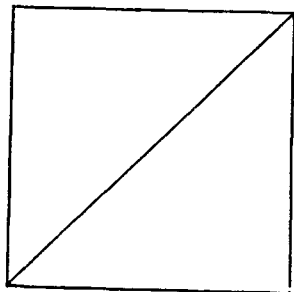
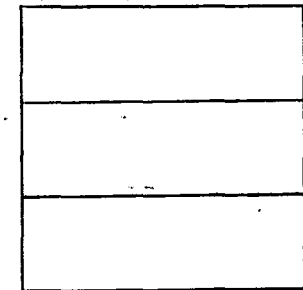
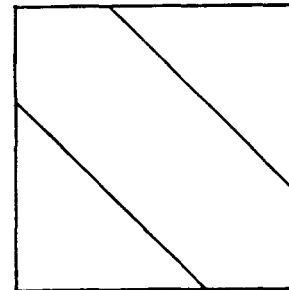
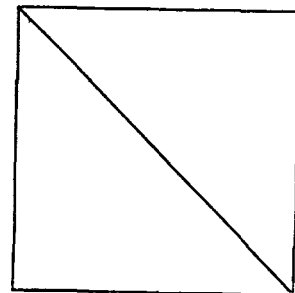
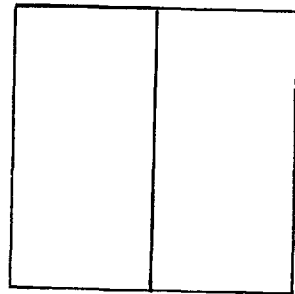
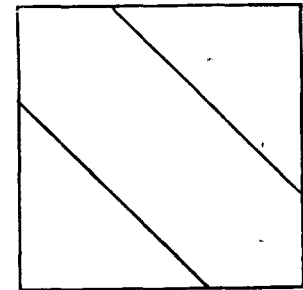
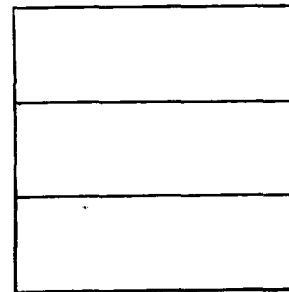
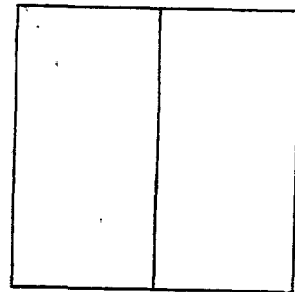
To dream you I look at a glass of fresh water  
and I see you so close that I forget that I am looking.

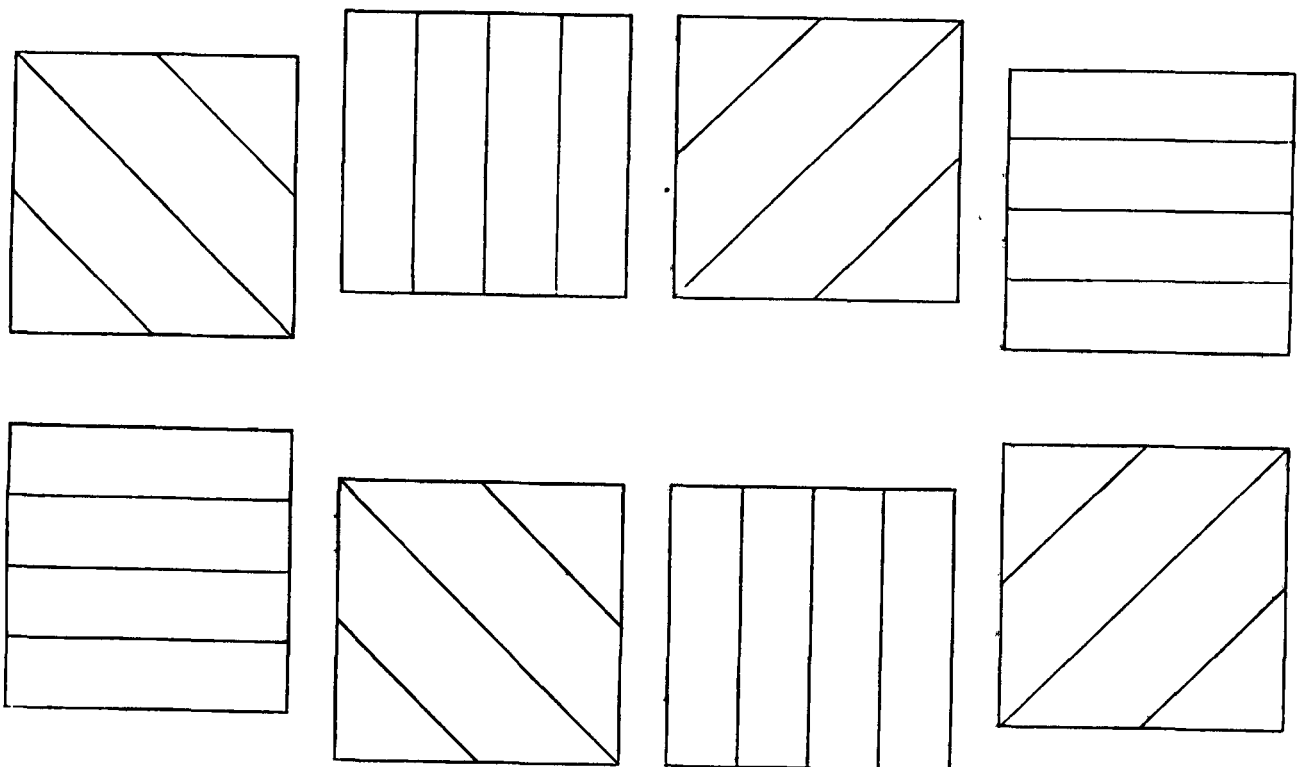
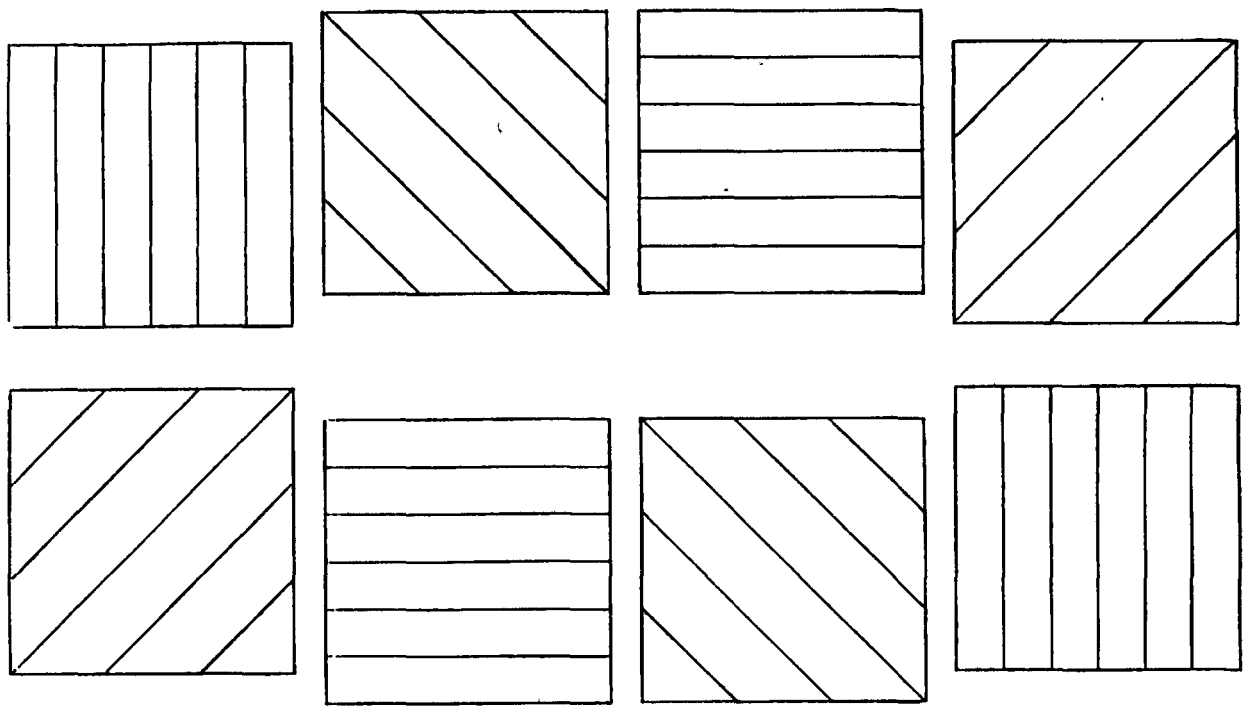
The light turns into your hand and opens the windows  
and the night goes looking for its daytime gown.

*translated by Pilar Titus*

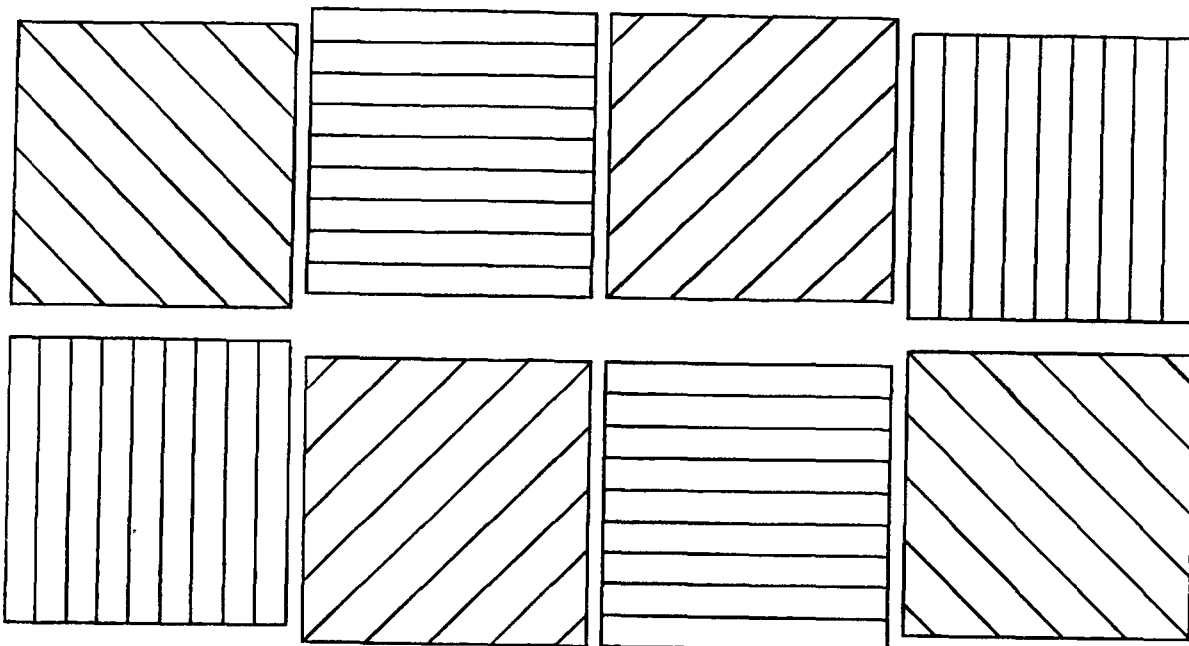
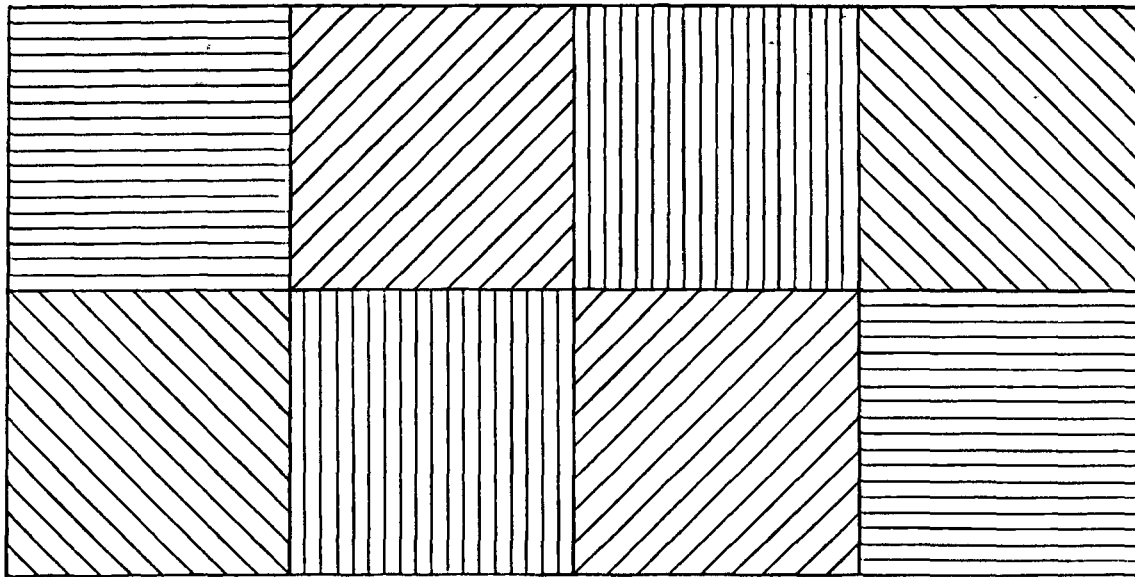


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Harry Hoogstraten

### ALL OF THIS IN THE ARABIAN VEIN

Harsh valley music to your stark assassin ears  
Hair on the heart fur under the tongue  
Swirling sun round your trash fingers  
Take my breath flat resides in which  
Middle Eastern Region ?  
Change is absence of horses gear preparing  
The chinese salad crushing cards years of sunflower  
Seeds vitamin D dishing out the stuff in mid-air  
To no-body's late night business but up your rivers  
To cross up your rockets to launch up your shoulders  
And up your shares and rabbits up your air and up  
Your fucking subways everywhere ! And up your etceterara  
And up your other assorted general bark up your shirt  
And ties up your 15 rounds and up your drunken  
Raving luna rossa random destruction and up your stairway  
To the stars there's too much no-time you know  
For the people to know what to do with it and once they find  
Out what to do with it with all the surplus of no-time  
They'd only find out from knowing how not to do it and  
So go on doing it be it as rose may sway the mint  
And burning sticks tween hills keep well stay close  
Keep in touch lose what delicate passage lines and radar  
Web your photo face seen from a more than considerable closeness  
To the last of the Liverwurst minorities ?

*translated by Harry Hoogstraten*

Lucebert

### THE TIRED LOVERS THEY ARE MACHINES

the tired lovers they are machines  
dancing mouse-still in transparent chambers  
forging their invisible airship  
out of oil mire and steaming water  
long-drawn instruments laboriously shuffle  
laboriously through thickly greased body  
toward the hollow drained body  
big sunny eyes  
are fired off at heart level  
this goes very silently this goes on naked feet  
willpower wanders about in cold mantles  
this goes very far this goes on sleeping wings

*translated by Peter Nijmeijer*

Jean-Max Calvin

the blue of the sea where i read the story of your summation  
bled white on the partition of the world one should  
intoxicate thought drink to the dawn from great gestures  
in order to rediscover and cradle the sea which trundles  
off all our illusions my decorated walls return from  
their journey and your picture even though soiled by  
the rain had never troubled the water of waking since it  
perpetuated the dream and childhood  
o infancy my star of fire give me back my fingers which  
make the rainbow tremble

*translated by Barbara Holland*

Jacqueline Beauge

## HOUNGUENIKON

here is my fireless dream  
Abidhou my legend drops its silence  
and its cinders to my feet  
my legend clothes me in sooty rags  
my legend sings from my dead eyes  
to my perforated breast  
the bone cut off in the mid part of age  
my legend holds out its hands of air to me  
its ocean hands its dove hands  
and i never see its likeness  
even in the purple vapors of farewell tearing apart  
and the impenetrable pride  
in the depths of sleep  
my legend to me sweet and amicable  
my age dedicates the bees of its pain to you  
the streets dance  
the masque dances and Sunday is cold  
where you and i dream  
of vigorous dances turning like a nightmare  
in the street of silence

*translated by Barbara Holland*

César Vallejo

XXXIV of TRILCE

The stranger is gone with whom, late  
at night, you returned talking and talking.  
Now there will be no one to wait for me,  
my place arranged, the bad good.

The hot afternoon is over;  
your great harbor and your clamor; the small talk  
with your mother over  
who invited us to tea full of afternoon.

Finally everything is over: the vacations,  
your obedience of breasts, your way  
of asking me to stay there inside.

And the diminutive is over, because of  
my excellence in endless grief  
and our having been born like this for no reason at all.

*translated by Janine Pommy Vega*

HYMN TO THE VOLUNTEERS OF THE REPUBLIC

Volunteer for Spain, militant hero,  
your bones worthy of faith, when your heart marches to die,  
when it marches to kill with its global agony,  
I truly don't know  
what should be done, where to stand; I rush about, write,  
applaud,  
cry, scrutinize, shatter, extinguish things, I say to  
my chest it should end, to good it should come,  
and I try to disgrace myself;  
uncover my impersonal forehead till I touch  
this vessel of blood, restrain myself,  
my size obstructed by the famous architect's decline,  
with which the animal, honoring me, honors itself;  
my instincts swirl back to their ropes,  
joy smokes before my tomb,  
and again, without knowing what to do, without anything,  
leave me,  
from my white stone, leave me  
alone, quadrumane, nearer home, much further off,  
unable to hold in my hands your ecstasis,  
I offer my humble self, costumed in greatness,  
against your double edged speed!

One diurnal, intent, clear, light-filled day  
O biennale, you of the lugubrious and supplicant half  
years,  
through which gun-powder went biting its elbows!  
O bitter pain, and splintered rock more bitter still!  
O bits champed at by the people!  
One day the people lit their captive match, prayed in fury  
and fulfilled, supreme, circular,  
shut their birthright with elective hands;  
the despots who drag their padlocks,  
the padlocks containing the wind of their dead bacteria.

Battles? No! Passions! And passions receded  
by sorrows common with the hopes of men!  
Death and passion for peace, the popular ones!  
Death and passion at war amidst olive groves,  
let's understand each other!  
So, in your breath, the winds change their atmospheric  
needle,  
and in your chest tombs exchange keys,  
your frontal bone rising itself to the first  
kingdom of martyrdom.

The world exclaims: "These are Spanish matters!"  
 And it's true. Consider  
 during a balance, point-blank,  
 Calderon, asleep on the tail of a dead amphibian,  
 or Cervantes, saying: "My kingdom is of this world, but  
 also of the next": the sword's point and edge  
 on two bits of paper!  
 Contemplate Goya, kneeling in prayer before an empty mirror,  
 at Coll, the paladin in whose Cartesian assault  
 one could see a sweat of clouds walking slowly,  
 or at Quevedo, that instantaneous grandfather  
 of the dynamiters,  
 or at Cajal, devoured by his infinite smallness, or yet  
 at Teresa, a woman, dying because she does not die,  
 or at Lina Odena, in conflict on more than one point  
 with Teresa...  
 (Every decently-voiced action comes from, and returns to,  
 the people,  
 directly or conveyed  
 by incessant fragments, through the pink smoke  
 of bitter passwords which failed.)  
 Thus your child, civilian fighter, thus your anaemic child,  
 stirred by a motionless stone,  
 sacrifices itself, vanishes,  
 drops upwards, and through her incombustible flame, rises,  
 climbs, to the weak,  
 giving Spains to the bulls,  
 bulls to the doves...  
 The universal dying of the proletarian in what frenetic  
 harmony  
 will be ended your greatness, your misery, your outward-  
 spinning vortex,  
 your methodical violence, your theoretical and practical  
 chaos, your  
 Dantesque and extremely Spanish desire to betray your enemy  
 with love!  
 Liberator in handcuffs,  
 without whose effort unholdable expansion would still continue  
 today,  
 nails would wander acephalous,  
 the day ancient, slow, flushed,  
 our beloved helmets unburied!  
 Peasant with your green foliage fallen for man,  
 with the social inflection of your little finger,  
 with your ox standing with his heels dug in,  
 with your physics,  
 also with your word lashed to a pole,  
 and your rented sky  
 and with clay crammed in your tiredness  
 and caught under the nails of your fingers, marching!

Builders,  
 farmers, civilians and soldiers  
 of active teeming eternity; it was written  
 that you would make light, shielding  
 your eyes with death;  
 that, in the cruel fall of your mouths,  
 abundance would come on seven platters, everything  
 in the world would be suddenly turned to gold,  
 and the gold -  
 fabulous beggars of your own secretion of blood -  
 even then would in itself be of gold!

All men will love each other  
 and eat together from the corners of your sad handkerchief  
 and will drink together in the name  
 of your accursed throats!  
 They will take rest walking to the foot of this high road,  
 they will weep thinking of your orbits, they  
 will be fortunate  
 in and to the sound  
 of your atrocious return, in flower innate,  
 they'll settle up their affairs of the day, their dreamed  
 and sung figures!

The same shoes will fit the man who ascends  
 without roads to his body  
 and the man who climbs down to the form of his soul!  
 Embracing, the dumb will speak, the cripple will walk!  
 Returning, the blind will see,  
 and the deaf palpitating will hear!  
 The ignorant will be wise, the wise ignorant!  
 Kisses that could not be given are given!  
 Only death will die! The ant  
 will bring crumbs of bread to the elephant enchained  
 in his brutal delicacy; aborted children  
 will be born again perfect, spatial,  
 and all men will toil,  
 all men will engender,  
 all men will understand!

Worker, our saviour, redeemer,  
 forgive us, brother, and our trespasses!  
 As the drum rolls in its adagios:  
 how ephemeral a never, your back!  
 how Protean an ever, your profile!

Italian volunteer, among whose animals of battle  
 an Abyssinian lion goes limping!  
 Soviet volunteer, marching at the head of your  
 universal heart!  
 Volunteers from the south, from the north, from the east,  
 and you, western man, closing the funeral song of the dawn!  
 Known soldier, whose name files past in the sound of  
 an embrace!  
 Warrior whom the earth created, armed  
 with dust,  
 shod with positive magnets,  
 your personal beliefs at work,  
 your character clear-cut, your intimate walking authority,  
 complexion immediate,  
 your language put on your shoulders,  
 and your soul crowned with pebbles!  
 Volunteer swathed in your cold,  
 temperate, or torrid zone,  
 heroes all around,  
 victim in a column of conquerors:  
 in Spain, in Madrid, you are called  
 to kill, volunteers in the service of life!

Because they kill in Spain, others kill  
 the boy, his toy which comes to a stop,  
 resplendent mother Rosenda,  
 old Adam who talked aloud with his horse,  
 and the dog which slept on the stairs.  
 They kill the book, fire on its auxiliary verbs,  
 at its defenseless first page!  
 They kill the exact case of the statue,  
 the wise man, his stick, his colleague,  
 the barber next door - all right he might have possibly  
 cut me,  
 but he was a good man, and, soon, an unfortunate one,  
 the beggar who yesterday was singing opposite,  
 the nurse who passed me today crying,  
 the priest staggering under the persistent  
 height of his knees...

Volunteers,  
 for life, for the good ones, kill  
 death, kill the evil ones.  
 Do it for the freedom of all,  
 for the exploited and the exploiter,  
 for painless peace--I sense it  
 when I sleep at the foot of my forehead  
 and more when I run about shouting--

and do it, I keep saying  
 for the illiterate to whom I write,  
 for the barefoot genius with his flocks,  
 for fallen comrades,  
 their ashes embracing the corpse on the road!

So that you,  
 volunteers of Spain and the world, would come,  
 I dreamed I was good, and worthy of seeing  
 your blood, volunteers...  
 Of this comes much heart, many griefs,  
 many camels of an age to pray.  
 Today the good marches in flames on your side,  
 reptiles of immanent eyelids follow you with affection  
 and, two steps, one step behind,  
 the direction of water coursing to see its limit  
 before burning.

*translated by Gerard Malanga*

Jalauddin Rumi

## THE WHITE FALCON

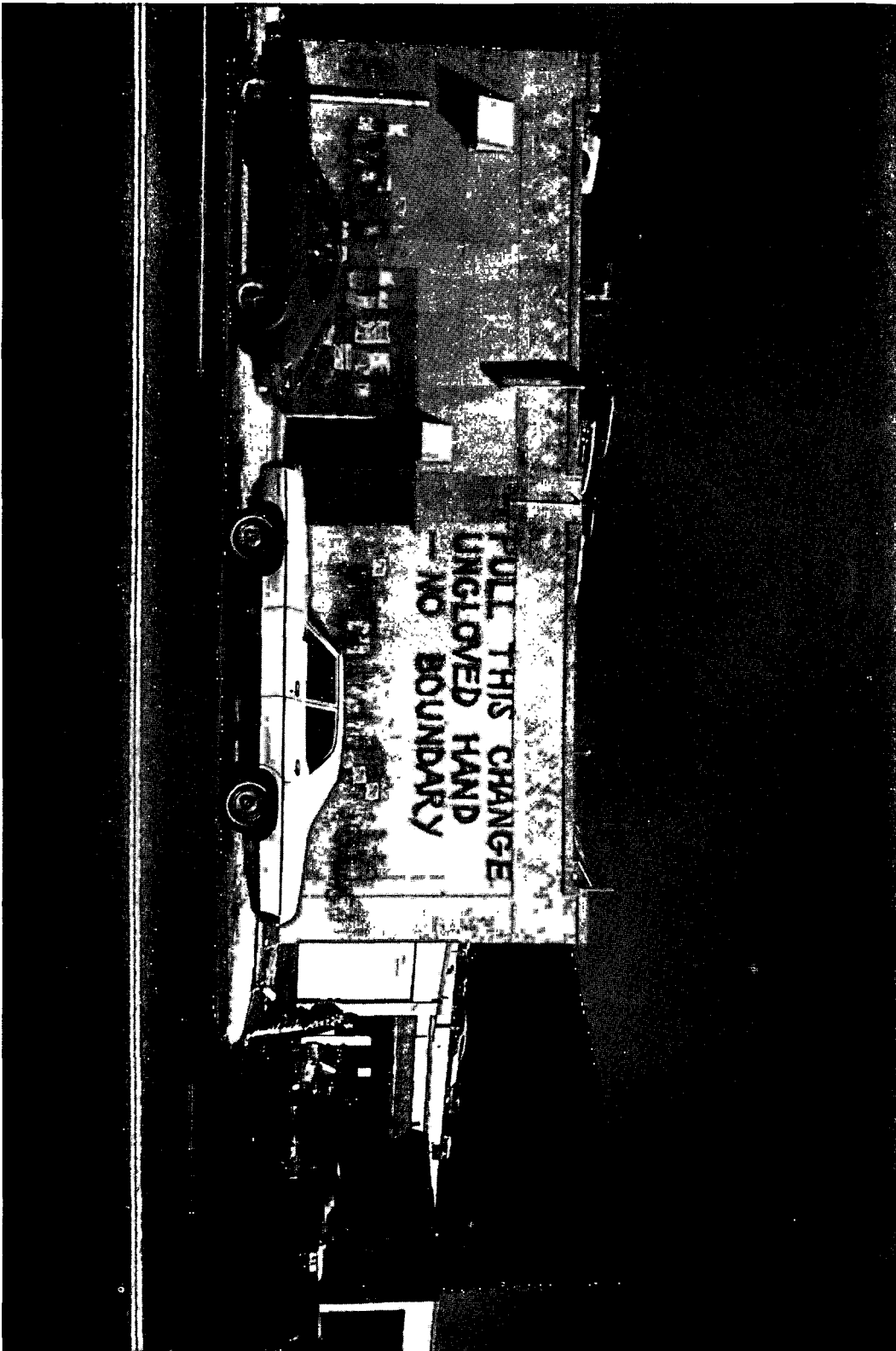
I got drunk and my heart flew away: where?

When I left the cage of reason open,  
in a flash my heart took flight.

It can only have flown to God's secret place.

My heart is not a tame parrot: don't seek it  
in the house. It's a bird of the air,

the Emperor's white falcon, and it's flown  
back to the Emperor.



## SILENCE

Die now, die now, die into this Love.  
When you have died in this Love,  
you will all receive new life.

Die now, die now, die now.  
Prisoners, blow up the prison,  
and you will all be kings and princes.

Die now, in the sight of the beautiful Queen,  
and you will all be queens and princesses.

Die now, die now, and climb out of this cloud.  
When you have escaped from the cloud,  
you will all be luminous full moons.

Be silent, be silent: silence is death's sign.  
Life on earth is only a flight from silence.

## THE INITIATION

My teacher gave me a broom, and said  
"stir up the dust from the sea."

Then she sat the broom on fire, saying  
"lift up the broom from the flames."

In confusion I knelt before her: she said  
"kneel gracefully, without your knees."

How can I kneel without kneeling?  
"Without even trying," she said.

That was too much. I lowered my head,  
and begged her to cut it off;

but with each chop of her ax  
my head grew bigger and bigger,

until a thousand heads sprouted from my neck—  
each one a candle, with a wick on fire,

and the light of my blazing candle heads  
filled the sky, from east to west.

But what are East and West in Nowhere?



## THE ROAR

If you are Love's lover, and wish to be alone with Her,  
slit the throat of your chaperone, Shyness.

Worries about the outside world only stand in the way.

Listen, with your spirit's ear, to the roar  
of the joyous ones in the green dome.

I will be silent now. Soul of the soul, you speak:  
every atom finds words to praise your face.

## WORDS FOR THE DOORMAN

*—at the Tavern of the Void*

Make sure to only let drunks come in.  
Sniff their breath:  
and if you don't smell the smoke  
of a burning heart,  
it's a sober man. Throw him out.  
Here is how to recognize a true drunk:  
ask him to give you his hand,  
and he suddenly hands you his foot.  
Also, he combs your hair with a knife.  
Take me, for example: I'm drunk,  
and I want a chanting waterfall voice  
to set fire to sleep  
and continue this song  
far into the night.

## THE GATHERING

The drunks gather in twos and threes,  
high on an otherworldly wine,  
and the lovers emerge from the forests  
to join them. And thank God  
the No-People, the sober ones, are going home.

Those blessed with jewels come to give them away.  
The souls of the dreamers  
come down as sunbeams.  
They begin in grace, they return to grace,  
and they love to journey from garden to garden.

*translated by John Eskow*