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JANICE D. SODERLING

Green Ivy Grows Over Their Grave, Tra La

Here is a blue sky and here is a new day
and here is a lonely child
threading wild strawberries, filling a grass stem.
His thoughts are cumulus clouds.

And the ivy grows over the graves, tra la,
green ivy grows over the graves.

Here is the same sky and here is a new day
and here is a stout young fellow,
still a lonely child
threading wild strawberries, filling a grass stem.
His thoughts are thundering clouds.

And the ivy grows over their grave, tra la,
green ivy grows over their grave.

Here is a black sky and here is a raw day
and here is a middle-aged man with his anguish,
once a stout young fellow,
still a lonely child
threading wild strawberries, filling a grass stem.
His thoughts are rain-heavy clouds.

And the ivy grows over their grave, tra la,
green ivy grows over their grave.

Here is a threatening sky, tra la,
and here is a brand new day
and here is a withering geezer,
once a middle-aged man with great anguish,
once a stout young fellow,
still a lonely child
threading wild strawberries, filling a grass stem

His thoughts are wispy as clouds.

And the ivy grows over their grave, tra la,
green ivy grows over their grave.

JENNA LE

Baltimore Song

Down south, spring's start is suddener.

A man says to his gardener:

“Those thorn-trees make me timid.
They really should be trimmed.”

From Dominion Ice Cream's lintel swings
a menu on a taut white string.

“Those thorn-trees make me timid.
By noon, see that they're trimmed.”

Crows hover over profs' parked cars
and daub their hoods with pale-edged stars.

“Those thorn-trees make me timid.
Why haven't they been trimmed?”

Teens, midriffs bare, stroll St. Paul Street,
enjoying each last ray of heat.

“Those thorn-trees make me timid.”
“Ain't the trees, sir. It's the women.”

JENNIFER REESER

Dead Is The Dream

Dead is the dream of lady, picket fence and house,
and children brought to bless at the baptismal font;
of local royalty and loyal, loving spouse.
Goodbye, gold girl. Farewell, beloved debutante.
How many well-fit years have you now worn and wasted
like gowns at Mardi Gras – gowns tailored to a 'T,'
like king cake left upon your silver plate, untasted,
all for a shallow show of vain sorority?
How many scholars' hearts and hopes shall you now alter,
as their equations multiply, but answers falter?
I count them with his truant teardrops, while they pass
as bachelors in your black-robed, graduating class,
and wonder at how much we waste, ourselves, on schools
of party politics, producing learned fools.

GAIL WHITE

If She Comes Back

It won't be like Persephone returning,
bringing fertility, the grass, the grain,
but just our old disasters back again,
the conversations that were so like burning

yourself with cigarettes, until you find
the places that were burned have lost sensation,
the everyday reminders that the mind
has marshes, tarns, depths beyond revelation.

Why do I feel enduring so much grief
is just a privilege I gained by living
with someone shining like a lost belief
with love she seemed just on the verge of giving –

Unendingly she haunts my heart, my head.
Unlike Persephone, she isn't dead.

MICHAEL FERRIS

Teresa, Entomologist

The smallest creature, she wrote,
'even an ant', vastly exceeds
what we can conceive;
such a thought should not oppress
(she concluded, soft but adamant),
it should relieve.

Her task was not to dissect,
not to coldly autopsy,
and her tags append;
it was to embrace the living whole,
and warmly to love
where she couldn't comprehend.

Her world was like a butterfly
bobbing sun-drunk
on the lemon-blossom wind;
she would not recognize it,
she could not suffer it
netted, jarred and pinned.

QUINCY R. LEHR

Mouvement Collectif

Elated, though I kind of feel like hell
on the 747 bus
winding through overpasses coiled as tight
as an electric magnet. Just as well
I'm leaving now. I might have stayed for years
in partial wish fulfillment, each of us
living in graffiti exile, fears
of new expensive jackets taking flight
like I am now, faithful, reluctantly,
to lease and love, to grocery bags and mail,
to bleatings of alarm clocks on my phone,
to staying off the pipe and out of jail,
to struggling toward the man I want to be
at home, with things to do, but not alone.

STELLA NICKERSON

Orange

He loves her like an orange bird
that sings too early in the day.
She checks her phone for other calls
and swipes his messages away
until her thumb is stained with white
electron light. She thinks she may
grow old and never be a bird –
unfeathered, grounded, die that way.

j. tate barlow

A Fatigue of Sparrows

Incessant hedge – curbscornered – do you yearn
to soar? O darkly rooted yew, your din
assails the woman dashing for a bus
her son in tow. (They well out-run the fuss.)

Sparrow-choir gathers in your hidden rooms –
sopranos explicit, sure of their psalms
chirp in exclamation or beaky cheer.

We live to wing. We sing therefore we are.

When morn is mid they lift in duos, threes
or fives, alight on high in nearby trees –
wee bumps on branches dressed in dunnish brown –
look down. O yew, your needles ever-green
comb soft the blatant snow, becalming hours
until a dogged flock roll-calls *All here!*

HENRY KING

Jeremiad

*The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

– is true of a poet's, no less than a king's:
their arts are deceitful above all things.

Though hope for sincerity stubbornly clings
to people, and some of them never outgrow it,
the heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately wicked: who can know it?

GEORGE SZIRTES

Mottoes from Schnitzler

1

Talking is negotiation. Strike the deal
and go your way. Leave no grounds for appeal.

2

Innocence is a form of nagging. Lose
the pathos but be careful what you choose.

3

Sweet young bodies. See how they revolve
in the firmament. Zoom in and dissolve.

4

Cruelty is inevitable in the end.
A lover once can never be a friend.

5

What goes around comes around then goes.
The other side of your face. Your eyes. That nose.

6

Cynical? Me? Is that my eyebrow raised?
Certainly not. It's just me looking dazed.

7

Would you prefer desire? Or call it lust?
I call it vertigo, or plain disgust.

8

Let's break up the line. Let us instead stroll
around the park and talk about your soul.

9

I prefer a motto to a top hat. I prefer
an indiscretion. Leather perhaps. Or fur.

10

I'm going to sleep. I'm off to dream the light
inside my head where it is never night.

LIAM GUILAR

Lady Moonlight

Lady Moonlight
come the sunlight
you and I will cease to be.
So until our histories claim us
let me hold you close to me.

You're the moonlit
midnight water;
you're the night breeze on the sea.
Fragrant as the scent of jasmine,
let me hold you close to me.

With the morning
I must leave you.
There are people we must be.
So until the dawn comes fumbling
let me hold you close to me.

CONRAD GELLER

Let Me Be Old

Let me be old. There is no need to stay
beyond the welcome of the springing years,
and time's strict mandate warrants no delay.

Enough of anger at the world's foul play,
the bill for justice always in arrears.
Let me be old. There is no need to stay.

Enough of pious schemers. They betray
the easy fool who trembles when he hears
that time's strict mandate warrants no delay.

The feast is ending. Soon all guests will pay
for what they got, and what they lost, in tears.
Let me be old. There is no need to stay.

Enough of love – yes, even that. They say
that moonlight deepens when the morning nears,
but time's strict mandate warrants no delay.

Enough of language, too. There is no way
to make a liturgy from fading cheers.
I will be old. I do not want to stay
when time's strict mandate warrants no delay.

CONTRIBUTORS

Janice D. Soderling's work has appeared in past issues of *The Rotary Dial* and is recent or forthcoming at *Think*, *Alabama Literary Review*, *Measure*, *Literary Bohemian*, *Light*, *Sappho's Torque* "Poetry Month" feature, the "Poets Respond" feature at *Rattle*, and in the Swedish-language journal *Aurora*.

Jenna Le is the author of *Six Rivers* (NYQ Books, 2011), which was a Small Press Poetry Bestseller. Her poetry, fiction, book criticism, and translations have appeared or are forthcoming in *AGNI Online*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Measure*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *Pleiades*, *The Raintown Review*, *Smartish Pace*, *32 Poems*, and elsewhere.

Jennifer Reeser is the author of three full-length collections: *An Alabaster Flask*, winner of the Word Press First Book Prize, *Winterproof*, and *Sonnets from the Dark Lady and Other Poems*. Her poems and translations of French and Russian literature appear in periodicals such as *Poetry*, *The Hudson Review*, *The Formalist*, *Measure*, *Light Quarterly* and *Able Muse*. Her work has also been widely anthologized in books including *Longman's Introduction to Poetry*, edited by Dana Gioia and X.J. Kennedy, *Poets Translate Poets: A Hudson Review Anthology*, and *Phoenix Rising: The Next Generation of American Formal Poets*.

She has received awards from The World Order of Narrative and Formalist Poets, and from *The Lyric*. She is the former editor of *Iambs and Trochees*, and was a mentor on faculty with the West Chester Poetry Conference. She lives in southern Louisiana with her husband, fiction writer Jason Reeser, and their children. Her website is located at jenniferreeser.com.

Gail White appeared in *The Rotary Dial* in 2014. She is a regular contributor to formalist poetry journals and has twice won the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award.

Michael Ferris has published in a few venues here and there, like *Rattle* and *The Lyric*, where he's won a prize or two.

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j. tate barlow moves to the music, and favours the key of Eflat. Singer, composer, mother, lover of the extraordinary ordinary – c'est elle. Born in Toronto, uphill from a great lake.

Henry King has a Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Glasgow. His poems have appeared in a number of journals in print and online, and in Carcanet's *New Poetries V* anthology. His essays and reviews frequently appear in *PN Review*. He currently lives in Scotland, while his family are naturalised Canadians living in Vancouver. henrymking.blogspot.co.uk

George Szirtes was born in Budapest in 1948 and came to England as a refugee in 1956. He was brought up in London and studied Fine Art in London and Leeds. His poems began appearing in national magazines in 1973 and his first book, *The Slant Door*, was published in 1979. It won the Faber Memorial prize the following year. By this time he was married with two children. After the publication of his second book, *November and May*, 1982, he was invited to become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Since then he has published several books and won various other prizes including the T S Eliot Prize for *Reel* in 2005.

Liam Guilar lives in Australia. His most recent book of poems, *Rough Spun To Close Weave*, is published by Ginninderra press (ginninderrapress.com.au/poetry.html). His next book, *Anhaga*, will be published in 2015. He runs a blog about poetry and related subjects at ladygodivaandme.blogspot.com.au.

Conrad Geller is a Bostonian now living in Northern Virginia. His life was once saved by the Canadian National Health Service, for which he is grateful.