

READING EDITION

RECURRENCE

10

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A QUARTERLY OF RHYME

Autumn 1952

VOLUME III

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A Quarterly of Rhyme

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*Set from the scan of the magazine. The poems, their titles, the poets'
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GROVER JACOBY, *Editor*

NO RETURN

Evelyn Ames

How can the mind revive today
That moment when a shaft of light
Pierced through the clouds, and landscapes, grey
From too long winter, turned to bright
And open sun-fields? There is no way
To keep such radiance in sight.

Though like a pilgrim of the spring
I walked in orchards white with bloom,
So certain of revisiting
Months later in a midnight room
Each blinding tree—I could not bring
A fraction of that vision home.

Then why should I suppose that now
Forsaken senses might recall
Your voice, your look, your hands and how
They held me? Sunsets from the fall
Of darkness, blossoms on the bough
Cannot be saved. Love, least of all.

INTERLUDE

Evelyn Ames

Drink of this deeply. On the long mountain trail
It is the pool, cupped in a leafy hollow,
So clear that whether it is deep or shallow
And where its surface is, you cannot tell
Until you kneel down at its edge and feel.

Seen through it the least pebble is a gem,
The leaves pure silver; where your image bends
To meet you, the thick screen of hemlock fronds
Whose criss-cross of dark needles is your frame,
Is pierced with glimpses of cerulean calm.

Lower your face then to the yielding water
And take what you have thirsted for so long:
This unforeseen elixir on your tongue
And the new life it gives are all that matter;
There will be time enough for steep trails later.

THUNDER MOUNTAIN

Eric Wilson Barker

Two weathers from the climate-making sky,
Partitioned by the granite, cool and burn.
Lizards are colored like the southern side
And leave the north to toadflax and to fern,

Where you can lay your love down in the shade
Of alder branches in a temperate zone
A granite shelf from the Egyptian heat
Baking the lizards on the branded stone.

Bracken and moss will bed you on the north,
And long leaves shade you when the taloned sun
Is a fierce hawk tearing at the mountain face
Straight through behind you where the lizards run.

But the sky is wider on the southern side,
And silence deeper when the evening fills
The copper canyons, and the hawk-sun's track
Is a blaze on the cedars of the western hills,

Is gold to the sea as the hawk flies down,
And the owl-winged dusk on those burning scars
Deepens to dark as the mountain night
Drops like a panther from the sudden stars.

THE AWAKENED

Ann Stanford

Now the still, night-molded serpent
Uncoils in the warm day.
Bright eye gleaming among stems of grass
Circuitous he threads his morning way.

By arc and whisper through the spreading leaves
Half hastens one way, half the other bound.
Lovely the light on wind-rough surfaces—
Sound without movement, motion without sound.

Back-dappled by the broken sun
Cold in the blood that only noonday sped,
Straight toward desire the spiral facets run.
Fangs seize the prey, and every orb is fed.

TOURISM

Peter M. Urquhart

I have seen cities where deliberate men
Have fashioned the slow perfections of their growth
By slab and cornice into stony dreams
Frozen beyond their days in chiselled peace.

And, in their channels, I have seen the rags
The gaunt inertia and the beggar's scabs,
Have seen the apologetic living creep
Like sallow phantoms, trapped in dead men's sleep.

IN ANY OF THESE

Gustav Davidson

A fish in any sea,
A shell on any strand
Is marvel—more to me
Than magic from a wand.

So, in the stir of leaves,
In bird flight, or call,
In the smallest thing that breathes
I hail the miracle.

EXODUS

Pierre Henri Delattre

The horse and its rider
The horse and me
The Lord has hurled us
Into the sea.

And now I love
But I don't understand
How suddenly
I felt God's hand.

THE TIGER THAT WALKS

Madge Hales

The tiger that walks a gentle wood
Does not resemble the landscape,
He understands no tender tree
Only the elements' rape.

His marbled eye is hot with sun
And apt pads sullen wait;
Nothing his silent brooding proves
To shame his sultry state.

And when night colours darken near
With star-suspended naked might,
He sounds his thunder as a god
Against the landscape's tender light.

And close to him the gentle wood
Is full of tears as a maiden's eyes,
But the trees are mute to tell his tale
And try to hush his savage cries.

THE NIGHT WOOD

Martin Seymour-Smith

Unknown, unknown, our love
To the immortal stars;
No heaven's garland ours.
We are at least remove
From that dark lake
Whose shores we dare not tread,
Whose waves we lack,
Whose boats we cannot ride.

Dark, it is dark here:
Only the sad light
Through the trees where
The branches part.
And you and I, so much
Hand in hand, that we,
As sad we watch
The bird-world shore, the empty

Lake, forget desire
And enter grief: are One
Among the trees up there,
And weep alone.
I see us in one tear,
Our lips the blood:
Snow your skin and dark your hair
In this night wood.

M A T I N

Myron H. Broomell

The hour is dawn; behold the setting moon:
It bears the scripture of another age,
So often pored upon, with the same rune
Still undeciphered on the leprous page.
Perhaps it hides the words which if man knew,
He need but speak and they would save the world;
Perhaps a curse, suspected by as few,
Spun from the day when first the orb was whirled;
Perhaps the spell that no man learns to break
By counsels read in Paul or Augustine,
Or understands, though all night he should wake
Over a book of Lancelot and the Queen;
Perhaps the doom of all who seek to read
The warning words that not a man would heed.

ARRAY OF HOPE

Myron H. Broomell

"If I might have you for my own,"
Opined the tendril to the stone,
"Our intermingled lives should be
The same as with the earth and tree."

The stone replied by holding fast
To what it was. The tendril cast
About to breach that hard disdain,
And having died, was born again.

INTERIOR IN SHADOW

Leslie N. Jennings

In little spirals, random as a moth,
Talk hovered among marble urns; a small
Gray spider wove his careful winding-cloth
For what resembled the last rite of all.
By such observances a few survive
Their valedictions over tea brought in
Religiously each afternoon at five,
The silver crested and the bread cut thin.

If anyone had ever forced his way
Into that crypt of plush and ormolu,
He would have been oblivious as they
Of walls that let the solid flesh pass through,
Of doors unhung with wreath and purple crape
That still allowed the living no escape.

RECOLLECTION

Rachel Harris Campbell

We remember a country where the strong are sweet,
And honeycomb is found in the fierce death's-head,
And all the winds of arrogance lie dead.
We know a land where wisdom and laughter meet.

There is our stead, there is our real hearthstone.
We have come thence, and to that home we go.
Ours is a confidence they only know
Who are the lonely, never yet alone.

Men there have peace that is not bred of fear,
And holiness that grows an inward thing;
And all those kindly mouths have learned to sing
And all those spirits know that they are dear.

DAY OF REST

Muriel Spark

The clock knocked off at quarter to three
And sat there yawning with arms stretched wide,
And it was set going again by nobody,
It being Sunday and we being occupied.

Therefore the day happened and disappeared,
But whether the time we kept was appropriate,
To rend, to sew, to love, to hate,
No-one could say for certain; all that occurred
Was Sunday, London, bells, talk, fate.

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