

READING EDITION

RECURRENCE

12

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A QUARTERLY OF RHYME

Spring 1953

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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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MY SUMMER STRANGER

Carol Hogben

Evening will come and guests be ushered in,
Cloaked in the day done, scarfed in muttering;
But I recall the other end of the day,
Watching the still blind where my hopes all lay.
Below— a green maid, sprigg' d in white, scoured the
step

With steady whisper, scattering after-sleep;
The pavements woke, chattered of trusting feet,
And laughter's cap lay begging in the street.
Now, though, the maple shadow stands at noon,—
And a summer stranger walks into my room!

THE DARK DART

Carol Hogben

I have shot the bolt of my own arm
To close the outer gate,
Shot the bolt of my love's arm
To stave off ghosts, too late.
Harm is my guest.

I have latched tight my window lips
And barred all my five doors,
But death is even now within
And walks the corridors,
Sleeps wakefully.

I carry the keys of my jewel case
Clasped on a golden chain,
But death has all my strings of pearls
At the end of a purple vein,
Laced to his heart.

GULLS

Josephine Miles

These putrefactive chemicals muddle the gulls' feet.
The purple assuages, green corrodes.
Crystalline forms decline a kind of powder,
Spraying at the beak, clinging the nodes.

0 deceit. It would be better, says my teacher,
If the gulls would get out of this factory yard.
The natural storms of ocean winter
Will teach them that life is hard.

TWILIGHT

Hannah Kahn

Smoke, mist and diminishing light,
lone branch like skull
overlaid on the pattern of sun . .
This interval
where pause is ritual, where time
is suspended in space,
and a spiral of light is lost
without a trace.

THE UNDINE

Leah Bodine Drake

They go down deep, O deep beyond all telling,
The mind's cold underseas: a secret tide
Sets bells of drowned forgotten temples tolling
For gods whom long ago the shore denied.

Here rust old treasure chests bulwarked by supple
Red octopi and coral towns of death,
By pirate bones that bloom with white and purple
Anemones' soft feral funeral wreath.

Shining and blue the surface! None surmises
What hides below, what filled some innocent shell
Cast on the beach! Only when undine rises
Green-haired, web-fingered, on the wave's long swell
Do alien eyes beneath our eyelids stare
And those who love us see a stranger there.

LOVE SONG

Josephine Jacobsen

This will the fisher lose
If he angle forever:
Sorrow in lovers lies
Under such silver cover,

Deep as the depths of fjords,
Deep as the dream of the sleeper;
Too quick for the fly of words
Joy lies deeper.

Quench, hush, light and bell
Fathom on fathom;
When shall lovers tell
Word of the chasm?

As to the last abyss
The midnight sea is shaken
By motion of this kiss.
Be love unspoken.

COMMUNICATION AT DAYBREAK

Myron H. Broomell

It will have long been day before I sleep.
The birds now waking will grow mute with sun,
And the dry grass its myriad secrets keep
With no small chirrup for a wooing done.
This dawn now veiling the wan east in mist
Will have unfolded to the mightier day
Before I dream the hands which I have kisse'
Are spiriting my wakefulness away.

In the white hour before the sun has risen,
The world is not this world, and death is life;
The dead. are free from their preposterous prison,
And Orpheus shadowily regains his wife.
Then Dido's shade, in the gray groves of hell,
Answers Aeneas once—to say farewell.

ALIENATION

Ing Smith

This is my tower: with righteousness
I am ringed round as with spears—
W all to the enemy, steel to assault
Of pity or tears.

Yet friends, friends would I have; let them come
To me: I will open and wait . . .
(Cold, cold . . . Not even a beggar
Cries at the gate.)

THE CUP IS BROKEN IN THE END

Eric Nixon

This road is not the road we chose where rock and rose
and weed entwine red leaf, sharp edge and Judas spine.
Sorrow and grief are out of use when we must be what we
abuse, the ill and the outcasts without blend whose cup is
broken in the end.

The garden of our dreams has gone. The birds have
eaten all our youth. We drank the bitter wine of truth and
found the bread had turned to stone, and now ,must face
what time has shown that neither will nor hope can mend
the cup that's broken in the end.

Saints and angels here might see the seed resurgent in
the sand, fields and irrigated land, ploughing and new
fertility, but clouded by anxiety, we see but birds of prey
descend. The cup is broken in the end.

Where leads the road we walk along, cloudless by day,
fireless by night? We find the dark who seek the light,

AND LAMPLESS SO, GO
STUMBLING ON.

Eric Nixon

Evil from good, and good from wrong
mix in a riddle we defend
whose cup is broken in the end.

Neighbour and neighbour strangers stay
companions to the single end;
guilty and guiltless both attend
upon the secret of the way
and neither can nor cannot say
whence came the gift they cannot lend,
the cup that's broken in the end.

CHILD'S QUESTION

Joseph Joel Keith

“Where did today go?” It went up the hill; it ran with us laughing, and then stood-still.

“Will it return, and how shall we know?” It will come in a shower after the snow

runs in the river: almost in an hour today which was planted with a seed will flower.

HAPPINESS

Madge Hales

Happiness comes by stealth, by night,
Not by known ways
Or compelling light.

It arrives unannounced, unsought,
On the very breath
That never gave it thought.

TO AN OLD-WORLD ARISTOCRACY

Eleanor Glenn Wallis

From the hilt of your sword
You wrest ancestral gems to buy your bread:
Blade, a forgotten word—
The language dead
That was once the tongue of kings.

Bombs are another style:
An impersonal mode of war,
Projectiles quit of guile
Though innocents pay the score
As the weapon sings.

You do well to pry
From the rusty hilt of death
Bread, lest the body die,
A thirsty root of faith
Lack vital springs.

CONTRIBUTORS

CAROL HOGBEN is an officer of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. He won the Cambridge short story competition in 1950.

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN's book, *The Human Climate*, is being published as one of the Library Series of Contemporary Poetry. A book by ELEANOR GLENN WALLIS was published in this same series a few years ago.

"Precarious Ground" by LEAH BODINE DRAKE received first prize in the collection of magazine verse, Poetry Awards 1952.

A long narrative poem by JOSEPH JOEL KEITH recently appeared in *Prairie Schooner*.

HANNAH KAHN lives in Miami, Florida, and her work has been published in *The Saturday Review of Literature* and *The New York Times*.

MADGE HALES and ERIC NIXON are English poets who have made previous appearances in *Recurrence*.

JOSEPHINE MILES was represented by a poem in the recent anniversary issue of *Poetry*. (Chicago).

ING SMITH lives in Oakland, California, while MYRON H. BROOMELL still continues to write and work in Durango, Colorado. Several hundred poems by Mr. Broomell have been printed in such magazines as *Poetry* (Chicago) and *Furioso*.

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