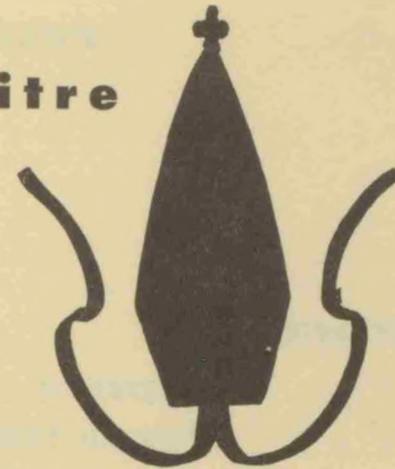


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in this issue

poetry

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WENDY ROBBINS
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REINER BUSSE

prose

"MORGAUSE"

cover

DEAN I. L. CAMPBELL

acknowledgements

To Professors Gray and Gustafson for the interest they showed and the ideas they put forward.

introduction

BE DRUNK

And is sometimes, on the steps of palaces, on the green grass in a ditch, in the dreary solitude of your room, you should wake and find your drunkenness half over or fully gone, ask of wind or wave, of star or bird or clock, ask of all that flies, of all that sighs, moves, sings, or speaks, ask them what time it is; and wind, wave, star, bird, or clock will answer: "It is time to be drunk! To throw off the chains and martyrdom of Time, be drunk; be drunk eternally! With wine, with poetry, or with virtue, as you please."

—BAUDELAIRE

To be completely enveloped
and infused with thought
to capture impressions of an instant
to communicate and so to share
we create, we write

the editor

STUART ROBERTSON

"Très lentement dansent en rond".

VERLAINE

Imagine a garden of Lenôtre,
"Correct", ridiculous and charming

Some round points in the middle: some spouts of water
Straight paths; sylvan in marble; sea gods
In bronze; here and there, some Venus is displayed;
Some quincunx, some bowling-greens.
Cyrus revisited.

But, some dwarfish roses unweaving a cultured spool
Some yew-treed triangles
(An excuse to differ from Cyrus
An excuse for frivolity)

The moon of a summer's evening
Filters through the clear
To the second sabbath of Faust.

A deaf, slow, sweet air of the hunt
Melancholic at midnight
The air of the hunt of Tannhauser.

Songs lilt as the tenderness
Of the senses grasps the timidity of the soul
In these unions
Harmoniously out of place in ecstasy.
Moonlight makes opalines among
The green shadow of branches
—a Watteau dreamed by Raffet—

Irresistible dizziness shakes
But dawn, humid and pale
Destroys all that went before
Nothing — absolutely — as a garden of Lenôtre
"Correct", ridiculous and charming.

MODIGLIANA

Beatrice, with breasts
of chrysanthemums
Innocence of Jeanne
promising the soul on the canvas
splattering herself on the pavement
of evermore

Dedo consumed by Dante
Hashish tickles the abdomen
while red ink
drips over foamy eyes
picking up the youth
and casting
 into streams
 of his own beauty
(away from the caressed
 buttocks of Renoir)
 a stream to flow
 from the gutters of Montparnasse
 through Cagnes
to the rock of the Valkyries

Orestes with sword of vengeance
eye red
silken barb on regal cheek

Clytemnestra
victory on purple rug
shocks to despair
the Choephoroi

AEGISTHUS

Vengeance is your platform
yet
a muscle would best be borrowed
from the adulteress

avenge your father
not the sacred warmth
of a union more divine
than sun to soaken wheat

glut and rot
blood more delicious than your brothers':
treasure it
 the only warmth
 your lust not deserving

Paris and Helen
held a flame brighter than the signal
of your murderer's return,
yet he as well
when blood the light disclosed
regretted abdominal pulls
 ending in blushing whimpers of servants

when
the Destructress meets her phallic end
let her cause the infection
of feared Priapus;
let penetration be not as satisfying
(but as hot)
as your limp effort
Orestes
wield your sword
let cries resound in servants' ears
again
on this your second conception

THE LOVESONG OF THE OLD POSSUM

When harbours dance
with lights from your eyes,
and ships bounce
like your curls

jump with me
into the depths of the
polluted froth
and wash the seaweed
from your dripping thighs

let us float with tears
losing themselves in the filth
swallow the water
and let us sink
to die with the detergent
but
we shall be resurrected

ROBERT HACKETT

DIALOGUE AT THE CAMEL MARKET

Sholem aleichem
The same to you, Hamet.

I'm sorry to see that it rained in Keirouan
before the president go there.
I hear there was quite a wind too.
Oh? That's too bad.

That camel has open sores . . .
have to slaughter the wretch if no one buys her . . .
A bloody mess to kill a camel, it is.
Because she's got sores they won't take her for meat.
A thousand times ill-fated luck!

We camel dealers are thieves . . . but it serves those who
deal with us right, for my fathers before me have said
"Look ye from the finger nails up".
And my nails are broken, they are.
Ach, so what my nails are dirty and broken and untrimmed
ACH!

NIMBUS VITRIOLIC

cloud roar
unquenched & unquenchable

vulcan's flames out
forge cooled
dust whorls
unwind
the white & pale-leadened
winding sheets

the white epimethean
light - winged - harbinger
of brighter spirits
flits singed - tipped
from a parched palm

the wind hot
the thunder acidic

Epimetheus (Afterthought) was brother to Prometheus (Forethought). Afterthought married Pandora and it was Pandora who opened the box to let out all the world's evil. But from the box whose lid fell shut after the escape of evil, came a little voice, "Let me out, I'll help you". Pandora hesitated then flung the box open in despair. To her surprise a beautiful white butterfly emerged and flitted about her. The butterfly was called HOPE.

RODIN

I dreamt I was naked
& rolling nape
over haunch
in a cloud that was
the sea
& the turbulence
flesh warm
wave like crested
between thighs
& foamed into
ecstasy

IN PRAISE OF TREES

Spring

A smiling afternoon,
And the air is still.
The dappled trees
Stand proud and poised,
Without a breath,
Waiting, as though
To be photographed.

Summer

Wet early morning,
Air cool and sky blue.
Blustery wind from the north
Blows branches of pine and spruce
To play uproariously in the wind,
Like children jumping in the waves.

Autumn

Soren was happiest in autumn.
It is a religious season.
In the spring, the emergent green
Fastens our gaze on earth. But now, Look!
Hailing the Fall, all the trees are priests
Who lift our eyes to the heavens.
These gentle priests, in summer's night
Seduced by a meretricious moon,
Now vested in death like rainbows
Sing a hymn of riotous color.
Splendor breaks and — oh — spreads all around
'Til earth and heaven are one.
And we are won to praise
The Father of trees and fall,
Of glory and all.

Winter

In the deserted city of dead trees,
Mourned by fallen leaves,
A black crow stands sentinel
Over the repressed life.
A pall of dirty snow cowers bone cold,
Down, away from an ubiquitous sky,
Which would wail if it could,
As it slips into the night only to vanish.
Wait! The trees sleep on a secret.
Life's trumpet will alarm them into spring.
Now in their end is their beginning.

JANA VEVERKA

I SPEAK OF LAST THINGS

like inclosing

(love)

in a letter

the Indian Paintbox . . .

leaving only the colour

. . . (orange)

flat and crushed

violent . . . once

HAIKU

customs of lonely silences

following progressions of time

broken by the loons flight

THE MUSIC!
I LIKE HER. SHE FITS
THE MUSIC

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

mad lover you
come full moons high
and the dance begins

witches howl, withered
witch I laughed yesterday a
thousand brooms swept
the night clean, leaving

a trail of ashes
a trace of her incense
—Black Cat

And I came unto
the night, so sang
the witch while

the cocks crowed
and gazed at myself
in the glass unbelieving

A dance of madness
like whirling lovers
kaleidoscopic
emptying herself
on you
leaving everything
with you
except

Scream warlock
the winds are howling
around your pointed
ears
and you don't give
a damn

TED HARPER

PHAEDRA ii

Livid smile

and firelight slashes blood across her —

Quickened voice

and violins sing their siren song —

And hands

that lithely play their restless game —

And hair

that roughly sneers at wind and rain :

All cry to be loved, but no —
a gypsy's heart is in the wagon wheel
and the warmth of stagnant love must never feel —
the wheel goes round and calls my gypsy every turn.

DEBUT

first snow

falls

in silence

(like that after love . . .

bloodheat: vortex in a sea-shell to the ear
from the room: steady breathing)

SEA - WATER . . . REFLECTION

ivory arch

in the dark light
arcing from a flowing forming flesh
to features

moulded
quivering
distorted
in distention
grace

to be normalized with a snap
(a word, a sound, open lips)

a vibrant union

growing
entire entities now start pressing
slowly starting
writhe
and moan
and more

to salty stuff

packing harder every blow
a brief pause in between each flow
and again, to soak the shore
and force its fluid subtly to the mark
of last high tide - beyond ?

no anguish
when the moon says 'none - away'
we stand
cold air drying
leaves whitened skin
feel the ocean pull from out beyond our hands
(nothing to hold - no purchase left)
the tide has lost its pressure and its drive
and left its marking -
new line of crusty salted sand

ii

we'll walk the beach many more
and cross the high tide mark
from that night

the ocean
will drift too high again, and
give us flight in freezing brine
to flame too hot for chemistry

but till then we can glide
(a noiseless flight)
no effort, energy to lose
—just skill to catch each updraft
to push us higher than the clouds that threaten
—just skill - Wordsworth's 'Tintern'
(memory living full as parent sense)
—just skill in love
while we wait
for the tide

to swell its undefined whole
to throb

pulsating
while we grip in agony of waiting
for the foam

our feet are cold
(sand cools in drying)
but it's coming from below
seeping now
and rising
swelling
slowly faster
soon to cover in its chilling warmth -
contact

SKETCHES

A gallop of horses
A start of rabbits
A splutter of sparrows.

An anger of squirrels
A lick of puppies
A damn of flies.

A glitter of snakes
A giggle of girls
A poem of swallows.

A one of hawk.

BE STILL MY HEART

Reste tranquille, mon coeur,
Et laisse le sourire
Des anges te montrer
Les instants de paix
Universels.
Et de ces ailes
Des hirondelles
L'amour te
Touchera
Gentillement

SOUNDNESS

the gate creak pries the night apart

gathering, the whisper confuses
slumbrous breathings with
the velvet exhalations of the night.

heaped shaggily
chunky chains
in coin-shaped armour,
unguarded,
the loving dragons sleep.

staff-stood and lantern-lit,
you crept and watched them:

terrible claws embraced,
claws softened in mutual clasp.

you wonder how, loving, they fought to death —
and dying, how they loved until the death.

a castle is a sometimes-place;
in summer, with the plum-tree moat;

the silver smell of the moss-walled ballroom.
from the sole hot stones
watch the dragons curl and roar
while dart the tiny, native fishes
in the secret pool, hidden by the swinging shade.
hear the slanting sheets
spilling in the mouths of demons
one by every door; they guard and watch evermore.

a castle is an echo, a whisper;
a silent archive, bearing marks of only the times
that were; the times heaped up upon the old, damp floor.
if I could stand and watch again,
watch the rain spew past my door,
would I still hear the dragon's roar?

WENDY ROBBINS

PRAYER

Heart
flutters and
body
evaporates

mind
swings dizzily
searching for
tree tops

air
and open
spaces

thought
unshackled
encompasses
Heaven

SUSAN FARGY

When the last footstep is fading with your sighs
and the driver's horse is turning back
cause the detour sign is up,
all the nannys on the block are making tea
for Master Nigel and his cane
and the little man who sells roses
has left the faded petals for the birds —
even the street sweeper has passed you by.

REINER BUSSE

FAITH

Across the world
Thousands of Babels
point the way-up.
Minarets, steeples,
The bulbs of St. Basil's
Missiles
Seeking to leave the earth
By the motive power
of a congregation.

THE COVEN

In one fist she clutched a black umbrella. Tucked securely under the other arm was a large covered earthenware jug. She was hatless, and her neck-length dark brown hair curled slightly in tendrils at her nape, because of the drizzling mist. She wore knee-length black boots, and a beige trenchcoat, belted tightly at the waist and with snaps holding the skirt shut.

Breaking the rhythm of her step, she turned up the walk of a large brownstone house, and closed her umbrella. She went up the steps and used a key from her pocket to open the front door.

Once inside, she hurried upstairs to an enclosed passage, at the end of which burned a single bare lightbulb. Two men wrapped in blankets lounged outside one of the doors. They looked up and straightened as she approached.

"Evening, Elan," one, a tall good-looking blond, greeted her. She put down the jug and umbrella, pulled off her boots, and began to unfasten her coat. She wore nothing else. As she handed her coat to the blond, the other gestured to the jug.

"It's done, then?" he said.

"Yes."

The blond, having carefully placed her coat atop the pile on the floor dipped a tea-cup into a basin of oil which stood on a hotplate. Elan stepped onto a rubber mat beside the hotplate and lifted her hair out of the way while he poured oil on her body.

"No trouble, eh?" said the other man.

"No. Not from David. He was good." She pursed her lips, thinking of tales of previous cowardice. Stretching her hands over the hotplate and flexing her tapering fingers, she looked down at the blond, who squatted as he rubbed oil on her long legs. "Put the jug on the hotplate a couple of minutes, Clive. It's probably solid by now. The weather's bloody awful."

He obeyed her, then poured a second cup of oil over her shoulders. She sighed, shaking her hair loose; she felt the extraordinary tension of the past hours easing as his large, strong hands massaged her shoulders, then her ribs. She leaned against him for a moment as his hands moved to her hips, then regained her balance and stood with her feet apart as he smeared more thick warm oil on her thighs.

She turned to the other man. "Who's missing?"

"Evelyn and Christine. Couldn't get off," he answered.

Elan muttered something about the nuisance of working, and the relative ease of university life. Clive smiled assent as he stood up.

"All done?" she asked, running a hand down her glistening side. Neither answered. She smoothed her hair, and tapped on the door in a melodious, anxious rhythm for about ten seconds. Within two minutes the door opened, and a young girl, naked flushed, and breathless, emerged to join the two waiting in the hall. The Sacred Circle of Thirteen was broken only for a moment: the warm jug clutched to her breasts, Elan stepped into the room.

It was dark, and hot. A thick carpet lay on the floor; a few candles were burning. The still air was heavy with incense and smoke. The odd light and potent air made Elan momentarily dizzy. A woman of about forty, wearing a headdress, lounged on a low table hung with purple velvet. Five couples and a lone male lay in various positions of exhaustion on the floor. One girl was gasping for breath and had her knees drawn up against her stomach. Elan glared at her, and the young man who held her apologized for her lack of control with a gesture. Elan made her way silently through the prone couples. When she reached the table, the woman gave her the headdress and stepped down to join the single man on the floor. Elan stood on the table, her oiled body glistening in the candlelight.

"The sacrifice is completed. The King is dead. Long live the King." She spoke in ancient Celtic, and only Malcolm, the new king, understood. It was one reason for choosing him. Elan repeated the words in English and the others murmured them. Elan lifted the jug high, and spoke again in Celtic, then English.

"I killed him, and caught his blood fresh. Now all must drink to preserve life, and faith. But first . . ." she beckoned to Malcolm, who left his partner and joined her. He knelt before her on the table and she placed on his head a heavy gold circlet.

"Hail, King of the Witches of this Coven, High Priest of the Goddess . . ." she chanted the ceremonial incantations. When she had finished, he rose. She lifted the jug to her lips and drank, holding him with her eyes. He took the jug from her and drank deeply. A

low moan rose from the watchers, and it became a cry of exultation as the two turned and faced them. Malcolm passed the jug to the nearest couple and it went around the circle.

Elan watched him. David, the last king, had been fifty-six, and she had known only older lovers. Malcolm was twenty-eight, picked so the seven year cycles of birth and reign would coincide, thwarting the double chance of sacrifice. He had a young, powerful, muscled body; and she felt her overwrought nerves tense again. But first she had to complete the spoken ceremony.

"Tonight we have crowned a new king and High Priest. Our last King went willingly to the sacrifice, and his blood has blest the ceremony. Though we are few today, and not powerful — the last of our kings to rule over all England was known as Richard the Third — our strength is lifted by the spirit of he whom we have sacrificed tonight and he whom we have crowned. For, as the Ancient Rite says . . ."

Malcolm watched Elan as she spoke. She was young to be a High Priestess. Of course, it was natural for her — her mother had held the same position years ago — but still it was excitingly unusual. He did not doubt that someday she would be Witch-Queen of all the covens in England. She was beautiful with a lovely face, and a firm, smooth body, and she was, he knew, highly sexed. He grew impatient along with the others for the final act of the ceremony: the passionate, symbol-ridden copulation of the Priestess and King; and then the return to the orgiastic worship her entrance had interrupted.

Elan turned to face him chanting the ancient words of the fertility rite. In an easy movement each grasped the goblets of wine and candles which were held up to them. They moved the candles in a series of identical gestures. The darting light cast eerie shadows of giant, writhing figures on the wall. There was a low whimpering from the watchers. Then, facing each other, they drank, exchanged winecups, and drank again. Their bodies shone. The light flickered on Elan's breast, rising and falling in quick, fluttery movements. She pressed her hands to her thighs, then his. Suddenly she looked up with a bold glance and bit her lip. Sliding fluidly backwards onto the table, she grasped his clenched hand and pulled him down with

her. The Coven witnessed the sacred mating of the Priest and Priestess.

Elan left the house at dawn. Cold and tired, she walked down the street, the empty jug under her arm.

*The facts of this story are as true
and complete as it is possible for
one to know and reveal.*

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