

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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CONTENTS

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--|
| 1 | DAVE ETTER | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 3 | ALEXANDER KUO | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 6 | DUDLEY RANDALL | <i>Pacific Epitaphs</i> |
| 8 | CAROL TINKER | <i>"Where there are
no gods . . ."</i> |
| 10 | HAROLD WITT | <i>Three Poems</i> |
| 13 | THOMAS FITZSIMMONS | <i>Eight Poems</i> |
| 21 | | <i>Eleven Japanese
Poets</i> |
| 33 | STEVEN ORLEN | <i>The Final Peach</i> |
| 34 | SHEILA PRITCHARD | <i>That Giant</i> |
| 35 | ALBERT FOWLER | <i>Four Threats</i> |
| 41 | SY KAHN | <i>The Trees of Israel</i> |
| 43 | BARRY SPACKS | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 45 | ROBERT SWARD | <i>Doctor in the Horse
House Mouse</i> |
| 46 | E. F. WEISSLITZ | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 48 | DIANE WAKOSKI-SHERBELL | <i>Sleep Incantation</i> |
| 50 | | <i>Books in Brief</i> |

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TWO POEMS

Home Country

Rain that falls at patchwork dawn
greases the cracked hides of barns.

The whole state is sticky
with elms and spit of sun.

A woman with two shopping bags
climbs out of the auto cemetery
and hobbles past a brown school bus
that is rusting behind the gas pump.

Beyond the Funk's Hybrid sign
a windmill has a face of broken bones.

I think of the ruined houses
of run-off Mormons in Nauvoo
and the empty skulls of steamboats
blinded on the Illinois.

These trampled flowering weeds
by the old interurban tracks
beg me to lie down and sleep awhile.

But a boy is building a new tree house.

Country Graveyard

Cows with eyes of buttered moons
doze along the barbed wire.

Weeds grow to impossible heights.

I call out my family names
across the camp sites of stone:
Etter, Wakefield, McFee, Goodenow.

Cedar trees shake fat crows
from their ragged beards.

In the farmhouse back from the road
shades are drawn against noon sun
and grace is said before the meat.

I stand among these gravestones
where a wet-nosed wind coughs
gray dust on my pinching shoes.

The rusty bells of the black church.

Goodenow, McFee, Wakefield, Etter

Dave Etter

TWO POEMS**The Descent of an Early Winter**

The afternoon is ending,
the country colors waning
in the dark logic of sepias,
and, besides us, only a slight chill
in the air is taking
into account the vacant wind.
The clouds collect
noiselessly overhead, distort
the landscape and, ignoring
our present resistance
to the weather, release
an obscure cover of snow
quietly falling, a picture descending.

For some moments
a few small birds gather
in the accumulating snow,
much as we
stand, momentless but awed,
changelings in our history
of a thousand other days,
geometric figures walked off
on some imaginary summer morning
we all have known.
But nothing can hold
the moment, whitened by the snow,
to itself: it moves,
like ourselves, in a memory
all its own;

and we must in the end descend
in the final despair
of letting go
what no dream could ever call its own.

Ideas of Order at Key West

We take what symbols we can
find and undress them
in our mind. In this stage
of disbelief we can only guess
and be marginal. Take
the *Amanita Vaginata*, tying
up spring with its red cap
and milled edge
pushing up through the earth.
We can only assume
in it the hint of green;
no facts, but guess work,
and we remain
perfectly partial in our charm.
We tear the mushroom off
its slender stem,
examine it for pitch
and tone, become specific
in our diction, and put
what's left in a glass jar.

We have come upon this
prism of Crane and Stevens
as if the bars
of refracted light have
led us into seeing
the almost unseen.

We are alone. The rain
has left us,
the children, too, gone
to the corners
of their imaginations.
The sun still
beats against our bodies
and we have
only ourselves to answer.
We try to make
some sense out of chaos,
but you
hesitate, looking up
past me into the sun,
your years
held like sun spots
under your eyes, unbelievably.

The waves pile up
before us and we listen
to a seashell, our blood
crashing like brass
behind our eyes. We look
longingly for some gulls
once seen flying
in impartial pairs, wing seeking
wing with the wind,
to remind us of Crane and Stevens:
but all that remains now
is the sense of the long,
eccentric snow of being somewhere
else falling
through this perfect weather.

Alexander Kuo

PACIFIC EPITAPHS**Rabaul**

In far-off Rabaul
I died for democracy.
Better I fell
In Mississippi.

Palawan

Always the peacemaker,
I stepped between
One buddy armed with an automatic
And another with a submachine gun.

New Georgia

I loved to talk of home.
Now I lie silent here.

New Guinea

A mosquito's tiny tongue
Told me a bedtime story.

Tarawa

Tell them this beach
Holds part of Brooklyn.

Iwo Jima

Like oil of Texas
My blood gushed here.

Espiritu Santu

I hated guns,
Was a poor marksman,
But struck one target.

Luzon

Splendid against the night
The searchlights, the tracers' arcs,
And the red flare of bombs
Filling the eye,
And the brain.

Bougainville

A spent bullet
Entered the abdominal cavity
At an angle of thirty-five degrees,

Penetrated the *pars pylorica*,
 Was deflected by the *sternum*,
 Pierced the *auricula dextra*,
 And cut off my medical career.

Vella Vella

The rope hugged tighter
 Than the girl I raped.

Borneo

Kilroy
 Is here.

Dudley Randall

"Where there are no gods there are ghosts"

— Novalis

Ur sumer nippur
 hattusa gods of the
 kaffirs and goats Gil-
 gamesh we
 are not interested in
 believing we are

interested in talk-
 ing As
 long as the disease follows the
 prescribed course we have
 nothing to worry about. Fever
 as expected. Lights under a
 bushel light falls
 off by squares. Seed the
 clouds. Audience falls
 off by squares. Cataract
 signify
 badsex goodsex nose
 Pharisee and Sadducee
 were two little fishes that
 lived in the sea and
 they both looked alike so that none could see
 which was platyhelminthes
 and nemathelminthes
 nematodes. Two—
 the girl of the golden triangle
 him and his golden section
 Bushmen: prehensile nose
 prehensile toes
 prehensile flaplike labial polyps
 proletarians — artist.
 a different principle operating.

Carol Tinker

THREE POEMS**No Doubt**

No doubt about it, my mother would have kept me
in curls if I'd had any;
men, though she married one, she didn't especially
care for;
her days were spent up to her elbows in Ivory Soap
washing the stain out,
her nights, a question of quiet behind the bedroom
door.

No one had a penis in our house, even the dog
didn't—
like male statues in the Vatican, we wore her fig-
leaves,
in dreams came leaking to life peeking behind
innocuous pictures
where women of dimples and nipples had us in mind.
Her secret immaculate silence made me more eager;
I thought I was going to piss when I kissed Lois
Grant
in that first garage of greasespots and black widow
spiders
and didn't know what
groom of the future was budding inside my suddenly
outgrown pants.

I'm not blaming my mother for my having been
a virgin at twenty-one, she'd never even heard
Sophocles' version let alone the dirtier one

and might have hanged
herself if she had in her doodaddy bedroom.

It seems to me nevertheless that if she'd kept up on
things
instead of by hiding them trying to keep them down
it might have saved all the men in her life from
ignorant aches,
but on the other hand
sometimes learning from errors of darkness is what
enlightenment takes.

Berkeley Dusk

Those two and their baby came into the room—
young as our yesterday—he
the genial blue jeaned student protestor—
eagerly beautiful she,

and tinkling casual drinks, spoke of
rafting upriver as if
such journeys were simple—just climbing on
and poling against the drift—

they told of their interest in liberal causes—
the baby babbled, robust—
and we sat conversing high over Berkeley
as though with ghosts of us

against the gemwork of bridges and streets
in the blue of Berkeley dusk—

oh there were differences—we only dreamed
their present into our past—

but hadn't we once come into that room
from a run up the twilight hill
with a dimpling daughter (now a young woman)
and met ourselves sitting still

and hardly could guess as we mentioned our lives
in that light, to a music of ice,
why the strange older couple responded so oddly,
as if they had met us twice.

Deciding They Need Each Other, The Nations Get Together

Pretending peace, the wild tribe visited,
dressed in their skulls, their neighbor cannibals—
they had a plan—conferred in secret, closeted
with drums and bones and telling guts of animals.
Only the wisest went, those with the most
bracelet teeth—trophies from dead enemies—
and grinning greeted their advancing host
dressed in their skulls and just as many teeth.
And all sat down to watch the dance of masks—
some friendly symbol hiding knives beneath—
dinner was passed—the chiefs bent low to laugh—
meat of a common foe served up on leaves—
and each tribe saw, while licking off the juice,
the toothsome others tense to make their move.

Harold Witt

A Kind of Prayer**for Bill and Gertrude**

That man on that bed is my friend.

he is not alone

the lady with the face of stone

twines her fingers through him tugging

swaddling mother come too soon

her arms are cold

Legs water, arms stone, voice a bubble

he bubbles a joke

They have cut a hole in his throat.

and the other

who has borne him sons and can only touch

fill his eye and joke for joke

heart big enough for a man to enter

and warm him—wyf

Not alone.

Give us this day others a life come and go no more

Is asked busily no more can be or wait (I) no less

Weyve

She seems a woman turned in flesh,
 interned in trim containers edged with days,
 who, tautened by a child's lament,
 counts coin against a list of purchases.

yet notice how her fingers move
 elegance into the run of hours
 how at the curving of her lips
 brightness softly bursts
 how when she walks hints of dance
 infuse a measure gather shape
 within a dominance of grace

She seems a woman turned in flesh
 and is the swallow's strength,
 the sea's inturned caress
 along the crags and shallows of my ways.

Homer Blinded

lightsong
 lancing birds
 the curve of a surfing sea

I knelt upon a field of sand
 let the sunlight fill my hands
 and drank the sun

I drank the sun
 and sang by the winding sea

galehowl
sudden birds
wail of a changeling sea

dead voices cursed
sand split my tongue

a thing for wings I fed cold beaks
torn bits of meat an eye of blood
by the winding winedark sea

Night Rain

we don't die
we disappear

(haven't they all
ways said so)

it begins very early
and when it ends
you can't call it dying
there's too little left

only the lucky ones die
those who've survived

or so it seemed
in the window
after rain
smelling the earth
waiting

Brutal More Gentle

If that cloud there slipped
ribbons into its hair
while flowers sang blue
for birds to dance
still I would stare
wonder at this child

single as any hawk
thrust blur brutal
more gentle than a little
beautiful and mad

amid the furniture
beneath the voices
the lips the hands
learning wonder how love is
bartered for behavior
and still able to laugh.

In Esse in Posse

"A nickler is a pickler that . . ."
"No!"
"Anicklerisapicklerwhopickspicklesforanickel."
—for a couple of kids
wanting them to laugh
and they did
and for christ a second
it was good
it was all
right
everything

I laughed and they laughed
and pow we were angels
clean bright and high on wings
and we cored a hole through the middle of the dark
riding laughter alike a posse of knights
me and a couple of small boys

Coronation: New York

another night has died
day revives
thinsceptered under clouds
the city poises
lances raised
to take the stain of dawn

birds are sparks now
towers bronze
the crimson cock
that cracked the glaze
while seas beneath him burned
is crowned

purple:
 the color
 of an empty vein

Seven of Japan:*1. Under Mt. Asama*

early
 wet lovely
 strange world of mist
 half in dream
 I sit to smoke
 one forbidden cigarette
 smoke mist mingle
 dream voices faces a dog
 barks a train couples
 far and
 one drop burns
 on a leaf

 dawn

2. Kyoto

bright
 In the markets of Kyoto
 dance of steel in the fishman's fingers
 whisper of water on wood and stone
 old wood and stone
 flash of the eye in the light outside
 glistening flesh on the altars of Kyoto
 odor of incense chicken and bones
 worn wood and stone
 blood thinned to wine by the waters of
 chalices of fingers in
 in the markets of Kyoto
 death
 is

3. The Turn

Blood of autumn stains the trees
 crisping leaves
 white figures weave
 bright silks of silence
 binding seed
 into a wheel of seasons
 rimmed in
 gold

 Leaf is
 luminescent

 Bushes burn
 but no voice speaks

4. glimpsed

broken reeds
 butteryellow
 butterflies
 flickering
 the sunturned edge of shadow
 sunspray and shroud
 gossamerwinged
 skimming golden seeds

5. Zenscape

Softly green
 luminescent seas

follow grey
 friezed
 tumbling crescendoes

turn to blue
cool
cadenced quiescence

then to darkness
and the Moon

6. Archer's Song

three stars)
 one rises
 in the west
 another leaps
flames out—
 who dies now
 between dawn
 and cockcrow?
(point east

7. My Hand

where sound is scene
and colors weave
tones of intricate harmony
my hand
thing of bone and tissue
limits all I do
 a paw
however fabulous
must root its mother clay
for forms that will not
crack
beneath its weight

Thomas Fitzsimmons

ELEVEN JAPANESE POETS

Rendered into English by
Thomas Fitzsimmons
R. Fukuda
and Tadayoshi Onuma

STRANGERS' SKY

Koichi Iijima (1930-)

The birds are back
Pecking the black void of the earth.
Circling up, down
Round the now alien roof-top.
Lost . . . ?

The sky buries its head in its hands
As if it had eaten stones.
Broods.
Blood it cannot bleed veins the air
Like a stranger, circling.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
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Koichi Iijima—Books of poems: *Strangers' Sky*, *My Vowel*
and *Microcosm*. Known as poetry critic; wrote *Introduction to Surrealism* and *Essays on Art for Exorcism*.

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島
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一

大
塚
堯

WHAT WAS EATEN AT THE SOUTH POLE

Gyo Inuzuka (1924-)

Gull big in the pot insisting he still has wings.
A seal, boiled and boiled, asking, demanding
"Water. One glass of water. Sea water."
My guest sits quietly;
He might be dead.
And on the table (I can see icebergs
drifting by) my
whiskey monotonously proclaims
"Born 1820, still going strong."
It takes vigor to cut the soul
to just the right size, carefully, and fork it.
Wrapped in smoke, I eat
furiously, a demon.
And sometimes I almost shout
"Remember these, my canine teeth."

**English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda**

Gyo Inuzuka—Works for the Asahi Press; accompanied the Japanese expedition to the South Pole as a reporter.

SMALL TUNE ON SNOW, IMPROMPTU
Choku Kanai (1926-)

Who
 out of this world
 tears
 scatters

So many letters #3
 n
 d
 l
 e
 s
 as if a mind were spitting ashes
 l
 y

What
 compells you?
 Like a child
shaking his head obstinately. S
 quietly n
 quietly o
 w heavy as muffled
 sobbing

From a deep deep hollow

**English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda**

Choku Kanai—Publications include *Hunger, An Inordinate Ambition* (for which he obtained the H Poetry Prize), *Suspicion, Small Tunes on Love and Death*, and *Songs of Innocence*.

金
井
直

NOTHING MORE TO BE LOST

Saburo Kuroda (1919-)

Even if more had been asked
I had nothing more to lose.
Leaves blown into the water
Flow down with the current.

Once, in a boat on the sea of death,
I could do nothing but stare at the sky, seeing
nothing.

And once I sat still by a friend on a tropical island
As he raved through madness to death.
Now looking at this swollen city,
Safe in the window of a white building,
I doubt that my way has changed—or its end.

Fate crashed upon my head
Like a girl hurling herself from a roof,
And I turned over to meet . . .

But it was not death.
Who lifted me, drew me?

You. A young girl.
Whispering,
Offering
All I had lost.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

Saburo Kuroda—For his first collection of poems *A Une Femme* received the H Poetry Prize, the best known poetry prize in Japan. Other works: *Thirsty Heart* and *With Little Yuri*. Also known as poetry critic. Works for the N.H.K., Japan's national broadcasting station.

BIRDS

Taro Kitamura (1922-)

I love birds. Water life is foolish.
And the things that creep on the ground,
Wriggling through dust, are base. Butterflies,
Flickering against grass, bees, winged ants
Live but a portion of an hour, a day. . . .

Held, a bird is warm—
Silken feathers, knowing eyes—virile,
Lonely and virtuous.
Yet their legs are the limbs of a man
In agony.

The piled clouds rub darkly together
And the rain floods down. Heavily. Slowly.
Suddenly, there: blue for a moment,
And into it swings a bird. . . . I

Am human, a creature proudly erect
With ideas and images;
A meat grinder spewing hate and desire.
And so I like the limbs of birds—
Rigid even in life.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

北
村
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郎

Taro Kitamura—One of the most promising post-war poets
in Japan. Works for the Asahi Press.

HOMECOMING

Tsunao Aida (1914-)

Finally I returned.
To my desolate village.
Returned
Where my home had burned.
Wheat,
Wheat feeding on the ashes.
There I squatted
And emptied my bowels
For the last time
And fell along the earth
Like molted skin. . . .
Some wandering dog
Will take my shoes.
And I
Will rot into earth,
To feed the wheat.—
Grind the fat wheat
Into flour.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

Tsunao Aida—Visited Nanking in 1940, then worked for a publishing house in Shanghai. Returned home in 1945. Given the first Kotaro Takamura Poetry Prize for his collection of poems, *A Lagoon*. Works for a publishing house in Tokyo.

I laughed and they laughed
and pow we were angels
clean bright and high on wings
and we cored a hole through the middle of the dark
riding laughter alike a posse of knights
me and a couple of small boys

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day revives
thinsceptered under clouds
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lances raised
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towers bronze
the crimson cock
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while seas beneath him burned
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purple:
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wet lovely
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one forbidden cigarette
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dream voices faces a dog
barks a train couples
far and
one drop burns
on a leaf
dawn

2. Kyoto

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In the markets of Kyoto
dance of steel in the fishman's fingers
whisper of water on wood and stone
old wood and stone
flash of the eye in the light outside
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odor of incense chicken and bones
worn wood and stone
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 follow grey
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 tumbling crescendoes

turn to blue
 cool
 cadenced quiescence
 then to darkness
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three stars)
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 another leaps
 flames out—
 who dies now
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where sound is scene
 and colors weave
 tones of intricate harmony
 my hand
 thing of bone and tissue
 limits all I do
 a paw
 however fabulous
 must root its mother clay
 for forms that will not
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—

大塚
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WHAT WAS EATEN AT THE SOUTH POLE
Gyo Inuzuka (1924-)

Gull big in the pot insisting he still has wings.
A seal, boiled and boiled, asking, demanding
"Water. One glass of water. Sea water."
My guest sits quietly;
He might be dead.
And on the table (I can see icebergs
drifting by) my
whiskey monotonously proclaims
"Born 1820, still going strong."
It takes vigor to cut the soul
to just the right size, carefully, and fork it.
Wrapped in smoke, I eat
furiously, a demon.
And sometimes I almost shout
"Remember these, my canine teeth."

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NOTHING MORE TO BE LOST

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Even if more had been asked
I had nothing more to lose.
Leaves blown into the water
Flow down with the current.

Once, in a boat on the sea of death,
I could do nothing but stare at the sky, seeing
nothing.

And once I sat still by a friend on a tropical island
As he raved through madness to death.
Now looking at this swollen city,
Safe in the window of a white building,
I doubt that my way has changed—or its end.

Fate crashed upon my head
Like a girl hurling herself from a roof,
And I turned over to meet . . .
But it was not death.
Who lifted me, drew me?
You. A young girl.
Whispering,
Offering
All I had lost.

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Saburo Kuroda—For his first collection of poems *A Une Femme* received the H Poetry Prize, the best known poetry prize in Japan. Other works: *Thirsty Heart* and *With Little Yuri*. Also known as poetry critic. Works for the N.H.K., Japan's national broadcasting station.

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Taro Kitamura (1922-)

I love birds. Water life is foolish.
And the things that creep on the ground,
Wriggling through dust, are base. Butterflies,
Flickering against grass, bees, winged ants
Live but a portion of an hour, a day. . . .

Held, a bird is warm—
Silken feathers, knowing eyes—virile,
Lonely and virtuous.
Yet their legs are the limbs of a man
In agony.

The piled clouds rub darkly together
And the rain floods down. Heavily. Slowly.
Suddenly, there: blue for a moment,
And into it swings a bird. . . . I

Am human, a creature proudly erect
With ideas and images;
A meat grinder spewing hate and desire.
And so I like the limbs of birds—
Rigid even in life.

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Where my home had burned.
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Wheat feeding on the ashes.
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Like molted skin. . . .
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OLD HUNTER'S TALE

Tadayoshi Onuma (1943-)

My nights were once harried by bears:
From fear to fear they chased me round.
So many bears. All night
They drank my moons up empty and flat,
Snatching from my hands anything I had.
They scared me. But now I can't
Really remember them as they were:
How they banged around, how they roared.
Only know there were bears in my nights.

I sleep well now and love my dreams.
Waving at those who are still hunting,
I call the trees by their names again.

**English by T. Fitzsimmons
and Tadayoshi Onuma**

Tadayoshi Onuma—Sankei Publishing Company Fellowship
to the U.S.A. 1964-66. One of Japan's promising younger
poets.

尾
沼
忠
良

IMAGINARY GUERRILLA

Yoshio Kuroda (1927-)

Days and days of walking
a gun on my back
the road twisting
threading one strange village to another.
Beyond is a village I know well.
And to which I return.
Must return.
Eyes closed
it is there: shape of the forest
a path through fields
roofpeak
how to pickle vegetables
all the relatives
a scrap of farmland to haggle over
petty formalities and whitewashed walls
white always
a broken hoe and other people's soil
fathers and their fathers cringing into death
mothers driven off. . . .
I return.
On a secret path I remember well
I jump from ambush, rifle poised.
This is the season of revenge
keeping blood fresh in the old old wounds.
The village is beyond.
Here the road knits strangeness to strangeness
and I find nothing I know, as if in a dream,
alone on the road.
I ask the way to a house
and find silence:
walls with no windows
no doors.

Another house
no windows or doors.
No one.
No sound.
Now the road hides in a village the color of . . . what?
Where am I?
Where does the road go?
Tell me, please.
Answer!
The gun in my hands again I face the silent houses.
But something is wrong . . .
the weight in my hands is wrong . . .
wood—a rod of wood three feet long.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

黒
田
吉
吉
夫

Yoshio Kuroda—Engaged in the agrarian movement after the War, ruined his health and came to Tokyo. Awarded the H Poetry Prize for his collection of poems *Anxiety and Guerrilla*.

IN THIS COUNTRY

Rumiko Kora (1932-)

Here, in this country
where the last of the flyers is waved away
and the ship he hoped to return to is sunk

Here,
where they pack off the children for safety
and burn the cities, fathers and mothers

Here,
where the hand of a boy is taken
and he is smiled into a suicide plane

Here,
where soldiers are cheered to the front
while the land they die for is betrayed

Here,
where the young are welcomed to factories
that slowly change them into machines

Here,
where the people's weapons are seized
to be leveled at their backs

Here,
where hands offered as in friendship
slip new weapons into people's hands

Here, in this country

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

Rumiko Kora—Publications include *Pupils and Birds* and
Place. Obtained the H Poetry Prize for 1963.

高
良
留
美
子

INVISIBLE TREE

Ryuichi Tamura (1923-)

On the snow I found prints
and for the first time knew
the world of small life,
birds, beasts in the forest:
squirrel, footprints down an old elm.
across the path . . . gone among firs—
no anxiety, hesitation, nowhere
a question;
a fox, coursing straight down the road
through the valley north of my village—
my hunger never drew so straight a line,
never in my mind so smooth, blind, sure
a rhythm;
a bird now, prints clearer than her voice,
claw-marks sharper than her life,
feather-flicks frozen in the sloping snow—
my terror could never tremble to such pattern,
in my mind never such a pagan, sensual,
affirmative beat.

Suddenly—sunset
big on the summit of Asama.
Something not known has built a forest,
pushed open the mouth of the valley,
split the cold air.
Back in my hut
I light the stove
thinking an invisible tree
invisible bird
invisible small things living
rhythm invisible.

English by T. Fitzsimmons and R. Fukuda

Ryuichi Tamura—Formerly an editor of a publishing house in Tokyo. Publications include *Four Thousand Days and Nights* and *The World without Words*. For the latter he was given the Kotaro Takamura Poetry Prize in 1963.

田
村
隆
一

RIVER

Kikuo Takano (1927-)

Up. It would—wouldn't it—be good to rise?
But for you it is always down. Today
(yesterday, yesterday, yesterday . . .)
you claw and tear at the channel that holds you,
wanting . . . yes, not to be a river.
And the drive and swirl of that madness is fine.

But finer still is the suffering you hide.
What is this you would claw away?
What are these limits you cannot tear away?
Earth?—Not even that.

Something . . . something I think about,
think about always whenever I cross you,
knowing you suffer as I suffer.
And I look at the sky, the sky
you, falling, would seize. I look at clouds.
Birds. Fishes. The whirlpools of your despair.
And I know, whatever the sky is, whatever
a fish is, I
am as you, river:
channeled by failure,
caught on the rocks in my depths.

English by T. Fitzsimmons
and R. Fukuda

Kikuo Takano—Teacher of mathematics. Publications include
A Top and Existence.

高野喜久雄

THE FINAL PEACH

The night was wrung a final dry,
so I nudged the wedding quilt slowly from
my sleep and sidled out of bed.

The mattress kept my hollow,
not a spring sprung,
my bones too young to creak.

I crept out of the farmhouse door,
removed the ladder from the barn, and shouldered
it rung by rung across my back
and lit out for the orchard,
feeling strange.

What dark moment

could this be? Was I a hawk,
out this late to steal a sleeping pheasant
from someone else's orchard?

Full moon, and the yellow peaches
fat on the branches
sting my tired eyes.

I pause, then lay the ladder tight
against the bark, and kick the bottom rung.

I climb and wonder at myself,
newly wed, yet trying
to elope a peach.

Making a round basket

of my pajama top, I
begin to fill it, slowly, rung by rung,
branch by branch, peach by peach
and leave the wormy ones
behind, climbing,
climbing, not too high.

for high the peach tree is as thin
 as my wife's leg, and that's too thin for climbing.
 All but one within my reach,
 and that's too high. But
 I came this far,
 waited years, played

the hawk, dry but for the dew
 which licked my ankles dry. I reach and stretch
 my arm, the bone edges from its sac,
 one leg lifts
 off the rung,
 the ladder wet, my bare feet

slip and thud. I raise my bones
 and poke my eyes through the burning
 leaves and howl
 and howl at the final peach.

Steven Orlen

***THAT GIANT** bear frozen
 With daisies in his stomach,
 With his beautiful nails, his paws
 Tangled in more daisies—
 When the surmised white mist
 Sered the upright beast,
 Incased him in ice, what what what ?
 Syntax didn't matter,
 All his is was, the scream lost
 And the joke of it chokes forever.

Sheila Pritchard

* (News note in 1964, Paleontological discoveries in 12,000
 year old ice, the above, duly reported)

FOUR THREATS**Threat by Etiquette**

Hush, now, hush and hide.
Her tongue talking and his tied.
Her arm easy and his jerked,
Her body graceful and his quirked.

Demanded, she decreed, laid down the law
Of table elegance, a martinet
In the domain of full obedience
To silverware and napkin folds, glass galore,
Service plate soup plate fish plate meat plate salad
plate dessert,

A maze, a gauntlet she required the boy to run
Jerking quirking slopping spilling
In command performance Sundays,
Thanksgivings, Christmases and other holidays
With grace to God
And odd diversion to the guests.

She made his foolish body the outward and visible
sign
Of the inward and invisible fool she was told it
housed.
She flaunted him revealed for all to see,