



**CINDERELLA**

Black Devil

keeper of my doll shoe  
rotten like a scab

flat dark face

who invades the champagne  
with a gesture  
the lights strung in the smoke  
loom

and you  
pretending in white sheets  
have turned me  
into a pumpkin

fat and smooth  
full of seeds

that will not show themselves  
until I am broken.

You have raked my gown  
into a pile

sure

that the coach  
is not coming back.

Leslie Miller

**HER HOUSE**

1

At night, in the dark,  
she sucks on thoughts of it:  
square and brown, it's her sugar cube,  
her love, her all-night lolly,  
four grainy walls and a crimson carpet  
to lull her to sleep,  
whispering  
"someday we'll be all yours  
to keep, to keep...."

2

Two mice in a cage  
going round and round.  
Where one is hidden  
one is found.

Three mice in a cage,  
leaping, leaping.  
One eats, one sleeps,  
one does the keeping.

Four mice in a cage,  
dancing, prancing.  
One eats, one sleeps,  
one's romancing,  
and one is weeping, weeping....

3

She says: "They speak of the House of Atreus,  
why not the House of Hilda,  
the House of Angela,  
the House of Mary,  
the House of Artemis?"

4

Dear God! One day she opened  
the pantry door and saw  
the sea beating among the cupboards,  
its webs of brine tangled  
like fine white linen  
where the cups once were.

5

The House of Hilda is a broom closet.  
Angela's House is a waxy bell  
like the bowl of a lily.  
But the House of Artemis (she decides)  
is slim, expensive, almost invisible—  
a green needle, stitching and unstitching  
the borders of the forest,  
the hems of light.

6

"This is all too Female," he said.  
"Effeminate. Your basic  
Earth Mother Number  
or else your fundamental  
Furies Bit— Norns, Fates,  
all that."

He laughed,  
for O he was a whiskery cynic.

When a great green paw  
slid from the fleshy earth pit  
and batted him into blackest shadows  
as if he were a silly pebble,  
he hardly noticed,  
supposing that in his profundity  
he could no longer tell night from day.

7

After twenty years she daydreams  
she's wading through a carpet of blood.  
At night, the long thin sharp  
tongue of the dark  
licks every drop  
up.

8

Thirty years. The house swells, bulges, rocks  
like the head and belly of a  
Disney madman,  
or like an enormous balloon,  
straining to rise, to rise and  
break its ties  
with the weedy, buzzing, taking-  
off place.

9

She wakes in the pearly sweat of  
just before dawn: the long sea receding  
from beneath her bedroom window  
leaves a lawn wet with moonlight  
and the beached bleached ribs  
of one more question: *fifty?*  
(*Years? Months? Minutes?*)

She pads downstairs in a hissing silence, thinking  
What will I find now  
in my kitchen?

And, truly, the forest has made its way  
in and out of her oven: foxes  
in the breakfast nook, mice  
beside the sugar bowl,  
mosquitoes droning, moths fluttering,  
clicking and scrabbling of shadows,  
twining, untwining of branches,  
clattering, twittering, rustling:

the House of Artemis, she thinks,  
unstitching itself,  
as if somewhere  
in some tremulous wine-stained dream  
the animal goddess in her skull  
had heard a woodland horn blow  
and seen the loved walls fall...

Sandra M. Gilbert

**INSPIRED IRON**

*The shop of Felix Randal, farrier. Bedford Leigh, Manchester, 1879. With Randal is Gerard Manley Hopkins.*

HOPKINS: I need a sermon, Felix.

RANDAL: Chains, axes, ploughshares, grabhooks,  
Shoes for ox or horse, I can even  
Forge a special shoe to keep  
A clumsy hack from tripping on his own hooves,  
But a sermon? You'll wait a long time  
Before I hammer one out on this anvil.

HOPKINS: You can give me one by giving me  
A lesson in smithing.

RANDAL:                   Father, you're  
Not likely to make a smith. Your arms  
Are too thin, you've the chest  
Of a boy, you're not half the size  
Of my striker, and he's only fifteen.  
Praying and preaching is your work...though  
Perhaps your preaching could be tempered  
A bit by common experience. We all  
Admire your words, the sound of your ideas,  
But the theology they taught you at St. Beuno's  
Is hard iron for us here in Bedford Leigh.  
Iron too hard is brittle, breaks easy,  
Is of no use.

HOPKINS:           You touch me  
At a point I often touch myself.  
So that yesterday, when I was here,  
And I heard you speak of "roseheads"  
And "the bloom inside a charge of ore,"  
I thought of other blooms and roses,  
Smithing and spirit mixed in my head,  
And I caught the seed of a sermon finding  
God in a blazing forge, and a forge  
In His way with us.

RANDAL:            You'll not find  
God in my forge. I've got charcoal  
And, as long as that old bellows blows,  
A steady stream of air all around  
The charcoal, giving it that glow, but  
Nothing else. I built the forge myself,  
Brick by brick, fifteen years ago;  
I didn't put God into it. I'd remember that.

HOPKINS: I think men take shape by fire  
And hammering. I mean the fire surrounds  
Us, God breathes on it, then lifts  
Us out only to strike us,  
Before we cool, into something  
Closer to his idea of us. Then  
It's back into the fire. He's not  
Quickly done.

RANDAL:            I've had pieces like that—  
Over and over, to get them right. But  
I found this out: too much work  
On a piece is sure to ruin it.  
Its inner bond collapses from the  
Strain. All its tiny particles  
Just give up holding on to each other,  
The whole mass relaxes into weakness.

HOPKINS: There, you're giving me precisely  
What I need. Some men are too many  
Times struck, too often in  
And out of the fire; man is sorry  
Material to make much out of.  
Yet there is a mystery here: the doom,  
Dear doom, of success by failure.  
Man collapsed is Christ on the cross:  
Total victory through total loss.

RANDAL: Father, I think you've started your sermon  
Already.

HOPKINS: Then help me finish it.

RANDAL: I've got a wagon to repair this afternoon.  
I've got to forge hooks for the whiffletree,  
And a kingpin, the old one snapped in two.  
Factory-made. If answering your  
Questions now means I'll get  
That much sooner back to my work,  
I'll help you finish yours.

HOPKINS:                   A few  
Ideas is all I need. Some  
Will generate others will generate more.  
I'll soon have enough for thirty sermons.

RANDAL: Shall I start with the anvil or the fire?  
My time is moving between the two.

HOPKINS: The anvil, for all its ferocious heft,  
Looks like a home. Start there.

RANDAL: It has to be a certain height.  
A little too high, a little too low  
Is no good, I'd wear my arm out in a day.  
To keep it from sinking from its own  
Weight, eighteen stone, and my pounding,

It's mounted on a green tree trunk  
Upturned in a hole dug down  
To hardpan. Careful measurement ahead  
Of time saves a lot of trouble.  
This square end is the heel. What looks  
Like a steer's horn at the other end  
Is called a horn. One end's as graceful  
As the other's squat. Both serve.  
Am I helping you at all?

HOPKINS:           It's important  
I understand the anvil in itself  
Before I convert it for the purposes  
Of my sermon into something else,  
The instrument of God, malleable man's  
Lure, his love and loathe, You help.  
You tell the text for me to translate.  
And the fire?

RANDAL:       This is the second fire.  
The first is in the furnace at the ironworks,  
Where the ore goes in ore and comes out  
Iron. The fire is for purification.  
The more slag left in, the more  
Brittle the iron. Wrought iron, what  
Smiths use, is almost pure iron,  
The weakness burnt, and hammered, off.

HOPKINS: I am distraught I am not wrought  
Enough. Nor iron.

RANDAL:       What's that you say?

HOPKINS: Mere mumbling. Mad. Continue.

RANDAL: The iron comes from the fire as a bloom.

HOPKINS: "The bloom inside a charge of ore"?

RANDAL: The same. A charge is ore and charcoal.

Lit, and fanned to hellfire, it blossoms  
At the core to cherry-red, the bloom.  
That hot beauty is what it's all about.  
It's removed and worked. In minutes: iron,

HOPKINS: I like the wonderful inversion of nature:  
No blossom on branchtip, but inside, deep-leafing.

RANDAL: You'll like, too, if I understand you,  
The word for the furnace: it's called a bloomery.

HOPKINS: A bloomery! I would like to live there,  
In there. "Sir, you can find me at  
'The Bloomery'."

RANDAL:           The second fire is here,  
A shaping fire. We know by color  
What it can do. From red to white,  
The range goes by degrees, a shade  
Difference and the job can be undone;  
The dull red of a near-dead sunset  
Will do for a cat's-ear on a shoe,  
But you need a bright Midland plum  
To get a point back on a ploughshare.

HOPKINS: What would you call that color now?

RANDAL: That? I'd call that the blush of a lady.

HOPKINS: What's it good for?

RANDAL:           The blush of a lady?

HOPKINS: Felix, you're having fun with me, a poor  
Priest. I mean, what job does coal  
That shade do?

RANDAL:       That will turn a rod  
Into a ring. By bending and a seamless  
Weld, you introduce it to itself.



Quick, touchy. You have to stay  
With it, nor blink. I sometimes think  
The iron works the smith as much as  
He it.

HOPKINS: Here comes another smith  
For the iron to work. Your boy  
Just turned into the lane. He's taking  
His time.

RANDAL: Jack? He always does. He's a bit  
The fool, though he's strong and has an eye  
For where to swing the sledge. He hits  
With good effect.

*Enter the apprentice farrier.*

Jack, get in here.  
The wagon's waited more patiently than I have.  
Take off your hat to Father Hopkins.

JACK: Sorry, Father. I meant no offense.  
My ears are cold. The wind wants  
To blow me away, but I won't let it.

HOPKINS: It's just the wind loves you so.

RANDAL: Where have you been?

JACK: In my bed.  
I fell asleep.

RANDAL: I hope you dreamed  
You finished all your chores by nightfall.

JACK: I dreamed I was a master farrier.

RANDAL: That's one dream won't come true. You'll not  
Learn to shoe a horse in your sleep.

JACK: Then my nightmare must go hobbling.

RANDAL: Father doesn't sleep when he has work to do.  
He's here now to write a sermon.

JACK:                               To write one  
Here? In our shop?

RANDAL:       My shop. He means to  
Put the anvil in the pulpit on Sunday,  
To bring us up to heaven with it.

JACK:                       Father,  
If you'll forgive my saying so, It won't work.

HOPKINS: No?

JACK: No, it's too heavy. Won't rise easily.  
But there's a way to do very much  
The same thing.

HOPKINS:       What's that?

JACK: Hang a weight on heaven and bring it  
Down here. You'll find it less of a strain  
To keep heaven from floating away  
Than to hold what's heavy up that high.

HOPKINS: If you dreamed that idea  
In your sleep, I'm going back  
To the rectory to take a nap.  
There might be a sermon there  
Better than one I could fashion awake.  
Felix, I'll apprentice myself to Jack.

RANDAL: Then Sunday's sermon will need as much  
repair

As this wagon. Jack, get busy. Fettle  
The hammers and hardies. And rake the fire.

HOPKINS: Thank you for your time, good farrier.  
It was a double-time for me: I heard



**ARTHUR'S LAST MOVIE**

Man in torn coat walks down theatre aisle,  
puts out cigarette,  
sits down.

Rest of audience settles down;  
house lights dim;  
film starts;  
theme comes up.

On the screen  
big screen audience  
takes their seats, settles down;  
house lights dim;  
their movie starts:

Camera pans huge expanse of snow, white sky and  
dwarf pines.

Silence.

Hero appears in distance, out of focus, a round black  
dot.

Hero stumbles through snow toward camera  
in torn coat—inches closer and closer until  
entire screen is filled with bottom half of hero's big  
face.

Screen audience mutters aesthetic disapproval.

Wave of snickers crosses real audience.

Close-up of hero from behind  
as he stops, lights cigarette.

Silence.

Enduring shot of hero stumbling away, across snowfield,  
finally disappearing into white distance.

Silence. Profound silence. Snow. Dwarf pines. Sky.

Shadow of mike boom appears on white snow.

Laughter.

Applause Noise, Applause Noise.

Shadow disappears.

Cut to hero spreading out sleeping bag in snow.

Wind machine starts up.

Hero puts out cigarette in snow. Loud sizzle.

Film breaks.

Screen audience boos, stomps feet;

real audience mutters approval.

Real film breaks.

Real audience boos—laughter mixed in.

Real films starts up again.

Fight scene starts in screen audience.

Applause Noise!

Mike boom itself appears in upper right of theatre,  
just above fight.

Real audience whistles, laughs.

Mike boom disappears.

On screen, house lights dim, audience settles down,  
fight scene stops,

film starts up again.

Real audience boos.

Hero puts out cigarette in snow, loud sizzle,  
inches into sleeping bag  
goes to sleep teeth chattering.

Switch to hand-held camera.

Hand-held close-up of hero's big face twitching in cold sleep.

Hero sleeps for a long time. Sleeps. Sleeps.

Tumbling feeling! Tumbling feeling!

Hero and sleeping bag tumbling across screen into snow!

Screen whites out! Silence!

Audiences figure out cameraman has dropped camera into snow.

Laughter in real audience. Applause Noise!

Screen audience murmurs.

Two huge black-gloved fingers fill screen, wipe snow from lens.

More laughter. Howls in real audience.

Screen audience grows entirely silent.

Much jiggling;

camera finally refocuses on sleeping hero.

Hero wakes up;

crawls reluctantly out of sleeping bag to pee, does prat-fall on ice.

Uproar of laughter from real audience.

Screen audience begins to weep.

Asst. Film Editor credit flashes on screen, flashes off.

Screen audience bursts into uncontrollable fits of tears.

Hysterical laughter from real audience.

Entire teary-eyed screen audience turns in their seats and glares at real audience.

Real audience quiets down quick—gets very nervous.

Hero disappears into snowy distance leaving sleeping bag  
and torn coat behind.

Screen audience stares and stares at real audience.

Real audience begins to fade, begins to disappear.

Entire screen audience giggles, shouts in unison:  
"HA HA YOU BASTARDS—SO LONG!"

White out! Entire real audience whites-out!

Uproar of laughter from screen audience.

Theme comes up—wind dies, snow melts,  
cut to hero who has made it back to civilization. Film  
ends.

House lights come up. Applause Noise. Applause Noise.

Screen audience puts on coats, lights cigarettes, ambles  
down aisles

out of theatre. Outside it has begun to snow.

Silence.

Real theme comes up, film ends, silence.

Curtain falls, silence.

The projectionist puts on his torn coat  
alone in all the world  
rethreads the projector  
puts out cigarette in the snow. Loud sizzle.

Sticks head out of small square hole  
high, high above empty theatre

shouts:

Applause Noise! Applause Noise!

### THREE POEMS

#### Rim Trail

Indians, summer  
tenants, blazed it: it was  
a rim trail: it dogged the wandering  
bluffs deep in sea daisies, ragged  
with stonecrop, & Indian  
lovers used it.

No winter residents  
bore the riptides & wild days:  
the tribes trekked back in May,  
came coastwards & restored it: year  
after year's wreckage—one rim,  
then another.

& Spring  
by settling, by fog, by wind, by  
toll of feet, by shale trodden, also  
eroded: a brink like an axe of cloud,  
& aspens, handholds over  
jumping places.

I think of aspens:  
my hands dream to close still  
on clear aspen arms, & they bend,  
& I leap out where white waters curl,  
& land safe, not like  
some Indians . . .

. . & think of them:  
lost peoples who made driftwood  
flame in the coves, to char sea lion,  
who steamed clams in seaweed, & threw  
shells on iridescent pyramids,  
& were content . .

. . & think of you,  
now you walk the rim, & think:  
Suppose you fell . . & wish it, to see  
the span of you arc to sea, no sound  
made . . Why not? You were  
my untrue friend.

Cooling lover, if  
anyone, you're who we want  
dead: you make this rank difference  
with your breath . . As for others  
with their lives & deaths,  
who notices?

Between wish & do,  
a brain shadow lowers: it's  
the dark hole in my small universe:  
Conscience, critic of the touch,  
claiming the angry trip & shove  
. . indecorous.

Sea stacks stand  
where the seas collide, they were  
continent; you were heart's main, sea  
meadow, flora; & your change of mind  
—turning away—becomes  
my stopping place.

. . she saved her children,  
herself, she . . she reversed  
malignancy, put fevers into canteens  
to drown, she beat the evil eye,  
voodoo, the bastard years,  
& lost this round . .

I am the rim,  
you, the runner; I, the trail,  
you, the god who went in shadow, saw  
by star, was rash, cruel, hurdled  
death, & returned for more  
carnage . . But we

claw aspens, we  
break hemlock boughs, break  
our last vow—silence—& cry: I  
didn't wasn't don't . . Here's where  
we embrace Goodbye: for one mistake,  
two natures die.

### Intervene

#### Fair-a-day

least said soonest mends  
& winds spill over the warm bluffs as sand  
flurries over & out & down & star  
bright the grains burst from the creekbed  
as when blizzards blew sending the snow  
rocketing as when with bare feet  
he thrust the covers down  
least said mends  
earliest

& here comes  
the colonies of clam

hoed by the wave the mussel solitaire  
 least said soonest mends & still lips  
 lie by his fingers in the succulents  
 at bluff lip he tastes their purple show  
 watches the curtains of the falling sand  
 the coal of his cigarette  
 the wine moves  
 in his mind

& heart speaks  
 to his thought the heart speaks  
 how it can't endure more than one bivalve  
 per chamber nor love surfaces except  
 the ingestible the unshelled the poor  
 passive people simple or complex  
 least said & the amenable chiefly those  
 nor any fissures fit  
 but the one grip  
 only its

& how hearts  
 the wine moves in his mind  
 mind foreign hearts' demise not at all  
 why not in the name of mollusk why not  
 heart's hold's avarice a mark of strength  
 how just now the latest love an animal  
 hangs from the frilled mantle of his lip  
 babbling a protest  
 plebeian love's  
 eternal

eternal  
 the shroud of tissue face  
 the byssus strands fair-a-day for legs  
 the wine moves slow the mind moves dark  
 behold king mussel in his own sand roil  
 while sun pours filaments of light down on

while the sand canopy split discloses  
 to his regal amaze  
 a new set  
 two bound to

reproduce  
 his days & ways least said  
 & a dead squid a sort of nautilus  
 scoots from the surf & back there's a girl  
 crooked naked in the dune elbow & there's  
 man's arms a vise around her he won't have  
 her sunny unfocused eye fair-a-day  
 she must concentrate  
 no heart would  
 chary thing

allow her  
 least said soonest mends  
 time to swim had rather suck her up  
 fair-a-day the wine moves in the mind  
 than risk what love's like with no power  
 he burrows his fan foot into the flat  
 below his base that prey's overcome  
 bowed down & made to serve  
 itself up  
 makes a drunk

head who had  
 love stripling himself once  
 but sent dissolving acids on through  
 & grew replete fair-a-day while she  
 grew his dim mother-of-pearl insides  
 least said he palpitates the other pair  
 appetite & consent a throbbing mix  
 finds they're one host plus one  
 wombful one  
 i n t e r v e n e

Carlos

*When I was born, a crooked angel  
the kind that lives in shadow  
said: Come, Carlos! be gauche in life  
—Carlos Drummond de Andrade*

1

Carlos, Come! Call in  
the sentries from the wall  
Dusk, the private, the caring  
comes watch your demise

The weather-forecast: threatening  
The study-barometer: out-of-whack  
The seas propose a major tide  
Carlos! be *gauche* in death

Father—I've heaped the books & cleared your desk  
I've closed the correspondence with America & France  
I've told the newsmen: Leave! No more pulp  
on Father of Sundays, Carlos-for-copy!

Love—in the last sad reaches of Minas Gerais  
lanes of dying trees in dustcoats guard  
shacks where the humble & picturesque have led  
short iron lives . . . Below the *montes*

which lean with crippled flanks, strip-mined,  
the rural burial yards go unvisited:  
flocks gone, no pastor services the church  
flocks dead & gone, only the random ox . . .

. . . Carlos!—Death fans the wind  
The dusk falls gentleness, release  
the wraiths of the mind, the sons,  
my stillborn brothers . . . Come

& like some Russian aristocrat  
 mazed in the chapters of *War & Peace*  
 leave the tepid tea in the dragon glass  
 lay yourself long on the leather couch  
 & stop! Serfs will clean up,  
 editors will revise

2

You won't? Stubborn man!  
 That's no surprise! What  
 does Carlos keep living for? the dead!  
 He's the savage link that binds

to Gone, Carlos is out-of-time  
 dead-letter, litany, he walks  
 dry-foot on the waves we drown in . .  
 Here! Kicking their nags

down from the ranges ride the Andrade men:  
 a storm, a jangle of bits, colt's scream  
 then boots dropping clay biscuits on the floors . .  
 Until they eat, they stand, drink *aguardente*

from goblets, to unwind. They are emotionally erudite  
 Their black eyes estimate the stamina of their sons  
 read how son-by-son each may resist the decrees:  
 Untilled-Land-Shall-Revert-To-The-State . .

How each in turn shall procreate & dispose  
 herds of mares with Andrade sons astride . .  
 Kitchen odors come to the *sala* in a visible steam  
 Shoulders slump, hands spread, backs have a cat's

temper, the women's sandaled feet  
 slur on the parquet floors,  
 there is laughter at the back doors  
 of the verandaed house: love has

had to wait till the men came in  
 & dusk fell. The beds are not  
 comfortable, but bulky sacks  
 of summer hay. The surface under-hip  
 is never twice the same. Carlos, despite  
 all precautions, you are the last

## 3

How the British raj  
 in the person of an engineer  
 impersonating a visitor  
 found wild iron there

What mountainpiece! Wizard  
 his eye, which lifted the veneer  
 the life-scalp: scrub & stream  
 the bee the bird the beast the brute

long affair of land & patriarch, & saw  
 pounds sterling! Quite so his Belgian peer  
 who wrote How'd feed all European Industry  
 So Profit moved the mountain piece-by-piece

& men grew scars: the deep felt of dust, the tear  
 of the mining sites, the hidden hurt in mind & limbs  
 of people who'd loved there once. How when  
 bread was broke, ranchers talked of holding on

but too many sold for any one to keep  
 power on the slope, vigor in the bed  
 So some did die heartbroke before the move  
 & some the cities killed, not outright but piecemeal

of pride. When, sidling  
 from the kitchens, the women came  
 for the fallen reins . . . Times change  
 ways swerve. At the difficult dog-leg

women held the wagons to the road  
 Without particular regret, Father, we  
 citified; in the parlor, regrouped  
 bickered at the fairs, arms comely

from heavy work, quite free  
 while the men spooked

4

Carlos, Father, Believe  
 What you want I want, I swear  
 to God if you could I would  
 have you live forever, I

would even take your part  
 It sounds outrageous, but  
 Truth is not tampered with:  
 I would die for you . .

Fortune is the lady from the stem of *fort-*  
 (Latin, *fortus*, strength) Hers is the true  
 power. Your dictionary says she's an hypothetical  
 force . . it's your dictionary's hypothetical

but for Proper Names . . Fortune is  
 breaks children from their homes—ore, ore  
 ore undid us—takes stallions from their stalls  
 (Father's waiting till they haul the mountain back)

Fortune wipes out a line with a single writ  
 but Carlos in the poem writes it back: Sons  
 in bouquet, Bombast of birds, a Bush  
 of dynasty where rose-grandmothers unfurl

a Mountainpeak replaced!  
 Give up! You had no sons  
 but me, who tried to make it up  
 by having some: city-boys, who play

tag round the columns of the apartment house  
 who once sat ponies in a park  
 got poison oak, got ringworm  
 in public school, chiggers at summer camp

who—unlike you—have no past  
 who—fortunately—no pride to lose

5

He comes like a crane  
 in from the porch. Heron  
 wading in foul pools  
 where no fish swim. He

flaps an arm at a moth  
 he himself let in

—Beautiful were the men-children

—Beautiful were the mothers of men

. . . ERASE! Be yourself your son ready-for-bed, be  
 Child-Christ Pretty-Carlos Carlos-my-little-one  
 Blessed are the dirninished for they are  
 next in line for Subtraction. Blessed the new

Cross of God: the Minus-Sign, & what was taken  
 you also must give, & most, most you did:  
 the family the authority the faith, order in things  
 the sweet illusion that you communicate

& friends, who preceded you in droves  
 to the mathematical place where Aught turns Zero  
 Earth is inhospitable in the grave but life by halves  
 pleases you no better . . . What's next is

Father! Say something dire  
 Say something hilarious  
 about dinner. Call me  
 by my name: Carlos-my-son!

I'll begin: That's rain, I suppose  
Oh! you say, I suppose it is  
. . . Where's speech at the hour  
it's wanted? Subtracted

Here then the residue  
Still the live remains

Virginia De Araujo

#### SIGN LANGUAGE

Driving north on Grove  
I can see this fellow  
thumbing his way south.  
He's on the west side  
of the street, midblock:  
a neat-looking guy  
in a denim jacket  
with a gorgeous applique  
on the back which I see  
only because, as I said,  
I came on him from behind  
while he was facing north.

It's a pity whoever gives him a hitch  
will be going south, so they won't see  
the back of his jacket or they'd surely say,  
Wow, man who did those stitches?  
I mean, man, that's really art,  
that great portrait  
of Charles Manson.

Alice Wirth Gray

**THREE BIRTHS****1. Three Winds for Candice**

Such a strong wind  
    carries her now  
Over the wing-flossed sea.  
Fresh, bearing scents  
    of laurel, upland pine, it  
Swirls the snows of ridges, sweeps  
    through green and light  
    brown grasses  
Matted in the prairie's tide.

Your celestial breeze, it's  
    cool as the moon's dark side  
    and visible  
In the corona's scarlet flare.  
The surges reach us here:  
    Popping fissions splinter all  
    the brightening air.

They carry her  
    on a single course  
Far out on a deepening sound.  
Spurs of gold, snapping  
    her belly arced forward  
    racing-taut  
    with the spinnaker's bend,  
Her new body rides into ports  
    ever empty  
Of the hands of men.

## 2. Bearing the Calf

The morning red  
with frost in our eyes;  
Brown hawks in the bleary sun.  
She's young  
and can't lie down to give,  
Confused by the task  
upon her and  
The hemlocks, twisting  
into veils of wind.

Then Tucker with the winch,  
its spastic cable  
Jerking through the steel air,  
Arrives: Priest  
of all the howling valley  
rolls back his sleeves  
and sticks  
The looped end up  
its uterus.

With the winch secured  
to a shaking post,  
And four strong women  
to hold the front legs down,  
A white calf slams  
through the blood-slued light:  
Glistens, steaming like  
a new-milled log.

### 3. Oscar Mayer in Palestine

Men approach a truck  
abandoned on the road:  
Each with a solitary hunger.  
One smashes through the lock  
and sees  
    ripe meat writhing  
In a shaft of light.

With labor and much  
bad mooing,  
Heads lock with thighs,  
legs wobble,  
    running after eyes,  
Tripe, tails fight,  
    squirming for the dark meat.

All greedy and puffed,  
    no sense of proportion  
In this thing rising:  
Nostrils blowing out  
    blood  
In the light, dusty air.

It forces back doors, leaps  
    to the street.  
Bellowing, sliding on  
    red hooves and skin—  
Forty horns quilling  
    the body and  
    blood everywhere—  
The new Minatour  
    runs through the city  
Terrorizing  
    civilians.

Tom Moore

SEVEN LYRICS FOR ABSENCE

1

I walk to your fire.  
Often the other girls are there  
and you are taken.  
I circle the block  
or stand near the arch  
and wait in shadows,  
watching the stars move on.

I am not jealous when Fiat or Jaguar  
drop you down the street.  
The hand that waves them off  
returns to your hip.

You know me and I know  
your fee. Each night I hold your face  
for a moment, water  
cupped in my hands.

2

I see your face in the window,  
turn quickly  
but glass makes traffic, myself  
and chrome into a water of objects  
gleaming through moss between us.

I'm sure your eyes are there—  
they blink, lips part to speak  
but my face thrust close  
dissolves into the darkened store  
with single light hung  
far back in an office  
and carved chair whose arms  
are held out stiffly.

## 3

That night I paid for all your hours,  
our loving done, we sit  
on the bench in a dark piazza.  
Delicate hands in your lap  
through weariness you take delight  
in a thumb-nail moon pale  
above the heavy cornice  
of some palace, and as it rises  
a white planet follows it  
over the low canteen of its flight.

When the sky is soaked blue  
we rise shivering and walk  
as closely as we can  
to the earliest cafe to open.  
With coffee bitter in our mouths  
we go to our beds.

## 4

You do not bring  
only the jangling glare of diversion.  
Your jewels are quiet,  
the passage of stars.  
How lovely the rustle of falling clothes,  
your long hair drawn across my face  
as you arc like a white bow  
above me. Your love cries  
are the small lap of waves  
the wide sea breaks in mid-ocean.  
Out of the sound of your breathing  
in sleep, I have learned  
the wisdom of silence.

5

Even if a pig is born with five heads,  
a woman gives birth to a monkey,  
or showers of bees cluster  
the head of Marcus Aurelius,  
I will not stop climbing  
the five flights to your bed  
near the window.

Only true prodigies  
prevent my going further:  
the door locked,  
some else's voice  
inside.

6

Because I am late I take a taxi.  
One week before, I left your bed  
at dawn while you still lay  
in sleep, dark hair like a cat  
stretched over the pillows.  
You had wept when I entered you  
and not told why.

The city always works against us.  
I wait for a funeral:  
its scrolled glass catafalque with wreaths  
and limousines of mourners, pale  
faces set in black.  
When I reach your flat  
the door is locked.

Are you inside clenched in anger?  
Do you hear my footsteps  
as I descend? Or is there  
only furniture, blank  
as your shuttered window.

7

Tonight I can not sleep  
and rise to watch  
a moon tear back the clouds  
and lie naked in sky.

Soon I return  
through gauze curtains  
smelling lightly of dust  
and enter my bedroom.

With the moon soaking  
the rumpled sheets,  
it might have been you,  
for only a moment slipped  
out of my bed.

T. Alan Broughton

## YOU ARE IN MY JUNGLE

*(line from a Tarzan movie)*

There is no way out  
but death.  
You will change here,  
unalterably.

I drop fruit at your feet,  
send bright birds,  
streaks of delight  
across your eyes, trick you  
deeper in.

My fears are vines  
around your neck.  
There are a few clearings.  
Slants of sun, my shadows  
fit your passing form  
like skin.

Hair-soft fern  
strokes your nakedness.  
Tendrils will reach in.

I will slowly fill even  
the hollows your heels  
and toes have left.  
I prowl back trails,  
scouting for your face—  
those fragile moments  
it thinks  
it isn't watched.

Years hang by their tails  
to shriek and mock.  
Fling them a dead stick.  
I hope you will become  
comfortable here,  
the twisting of each new trail  
somehow familiar.  
You are in my jungle.  
I am trapped around you.

Floyd C. Stuart

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

I'd like to say a strong word for the Godine Press Chapbooks in case someone out there isn't aware of them. There are two series: six volumes in Series One in 1974, at an incredible \$2.50 each, and five in Series Two (increased from 32 to 48 pages) at \$4.00. These are hardbound with handsome calico-looking covers, and beautifully printed. More important, they are astutely edited. The poets are all very good indeed, and each chapbook has a strong integrity in the poet's *oeuvre*. One of the epigrams in Kenneth Field's *Sunbelly* (Series One) applies:

Poets are known by readers and by lovers:  
Discreet, separate but equal under covers.

The other poets are X.J. Kennedy (wincingly funny), Mary Baron, N. Scott Momaday, Thom Gunn (including the eloquent sequence "The Geysers"), and John Hollander's sequence "The Head of the Bed," with a heavy comforter at the foot in the form of a long critique by Harold Bloom. Wit and craftsmanship are the common denominators. In the second series, 1975, the poems are on the whole more inward-turning and more organically shaped (though I can hear eleven very different poets protest at any generalization). The poets are Rachel Hadas, Donald Hall, Larry Rubin, Barry Spacks and Nancy Sullivan.

Imitation is a form of praise. In 1976 the Vermont Poetry Chapbooks emerged in direct imitation, five paperbacked volumes selected by Hayden Carruth from 85 MSS submitted anonymously, published at \$1.95 each by the Stinehour Press. The poets are Geof Hewitt, Lyle Glazier, Peter Heitkamp, Martha Zweig, and Carol Henrikson. (Order through Vermont Crossroads Press, Box 333, Waitsfield, Vermont 05673). It would be excellent indeed if each state Arts Council emulated Vermont (and Godine) and made such chapbooks a regular event.

We hear with acute regret that the Borestone Mountain *Best Poems* annual volumes are drawing to an end. What will fill that vacuum? Nothing I know

of in the U.S. For Britain there is *Poetry Dimension Annual: The Best of the Poetry Year*, edited by Dannie Abse (St. Martin's Press, 1975, \$8.95 cloth). More comprehensive than the Borestone volumes, it includes poems from both books and periodicals, as well as critical articles and reminiscences. In Number 3 we find such excellent and entertaining pieces as Basil Bunting on Yeats and G.S. Fraser's "A Tribute to Empson." Now, who will initiate the American counterpart?

In all the considerable history of dream poetry, nothing I know comes closer to simulating the experience of a certain sort of dream than Russell Edson's work. After reading *The Intuitive Journey and Other Works* (Harper & Row, 1976, \$10.00 cloth, \$4.95 paper) I found myself waking up to dreams that I recognized as exact analogues to Edson's prose poems. The intense psychological realism in comically grotesque scenarios, the gutsy colloquial language in formal, archaic rhythms, these are the true equivalents of dreams, yet with the tightness and verbal tension of art.

Some poems draw their value from the intensity & accuracy of their observation of the poet's life. These make me feel that I too could be a poet if I could only bring myself to tell the truth about my experience. But it takes more than saying sooth; the resonant language that fixes one person's experience for another comes only with genius and discipline. Two quite different poets who succeed in sharing their realities intensely are Robert Morgan, in *Red Owl* (Norton, 1972, \$1.95 paper) and Richard Hugo, *What Thou Lovest Well, Remains American* (Norton, 1975, \$6.95 cloth, \$2.50 paper). For example, Hugo has the art to bring us intimately into the town of Dumar, where somehow everything has gone wrong, to make the subtly blighted town ultimately an expression of the poet himself, and (one of the joyous ironies of the poet's craft) to accomplish this in a poem in which everything is exactly, irreversibly right.

One of the great reputations of our time is Robert Penn Warren (you'd need a foundation grant to afford to bring him to a campus for a reading), yet it baffles

me that his poems do not make their ways into anthologies where lesser writers proliferate and fall all over each other. Anyone contemplating an anthology that aims to show the range of contemporary poetry should take the time really to read Penn Warren's *Or Else: Poem/Poems 1968-1971* (Random House, 1974, cloth \$6.95). Whether you read these poems as a series of varicolored separable crystals (crystals of blood and cedar sap and brook water) or as one mighty interrelated organic whole, if you read with your ear and your mind you will understand that this is something major on the frontiers of poetry. *Or Else* is a poem that develops a new kind of awareness of time and the capacity of the mind to perceive it. And the music of this poem, in its elegantly varying, resonant and still colloquial voice, makes me think it would be worth almost anything to hear the poet himself read it.

Robert Peters in *The Gift to Be Simple: A Garland for Ann Lee* (Liveright/Norton, 1975, \$6.95 cloth, \$2.50 paper) and Millen Brand, in *Local Lives* (Clarkson N. Potter/Crown, 1975, \$12.50 cloth) have submerged themselves altogether in the lives of their subjects and have, out of profound scholarship and even deeper empathy, produced books that do what we usually expect of novels: transport us into the lives of other people in other cultures. Peters presents us with 84 lyrics as they might have been written by Ann Lee, the eighteenth-century woman who founded the Shaker faith. Sharing through these striking lyrics her traumas and transports, one comes to understand a way of life in which dancing and celibacy are equal powers. It is a powerful imaginative construct and an unforgettable poem.

Millen Brand's *Local Lives* has a similar imaginative power but on a vastly larger scale. For thirty years Brand has been recording the experience of the people who live close to the soil in a triangle that has Easton, Pennsylvania on the north-east, Reading on the west, and Philadelphia on the southeast—the Pennsylvania Dutch country. He records it not in an epic narrative but life by life, in a sequence of hundreds of portraits and vignettes, each an unique and separate poem squarely rooted on its own patch of ground. The overall effect is of a great and humane consciousness,

## Books in Brief

the consciousness of a major poet, saving for all time this mosaic of lives that add up to an entire culture. If it had been written in any other century it would now be required reading in all literature courses of that period.

Alicejames continues to discover first-rate poets. *Personal Effects* combines 3 chapbooks in one cover: Robin Becker's crisp, understated *Discretions*; Helena Minton's compassionate and delicate *After Curfew*; and Marilyn Zuckerman's *Turning Point*, with such strong experiences as "Childbirth" and "Pond: Vermont." For \$3.50 you get all these, including Becker's "The Waterclock" and "The Landing"; Minton's breathless "At the Lake," her condensed "Midas' Daughter," and many more from all three—related yet distinct voices.