

“IF YOU WERE A TREE POET, WHAT KIND OF TREE POET WOULD YOU BE?”

Marvin Bell

I'd be the poet of the Bodhi and banyan,
the mulberry, willow, cherry, ginkgo
the redwood and all the others, too,

for are we not born of their sap,
and are we not welcome under the elm
to recall the diaspora of our fancy and desire,

while we sit with the leaves to hear the wind speak?

Poetry
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THE CHILD WITHIN

Scott K. Strode

Is the child still within?
And if she is,
Are there windows to see out?
And if she sees wonderful sights,
Are there doors?

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BLACKBIRD

René Paine

red-winged blackbird
freighting a tall blade of grass—
riding the bend of it—
and the grass—
not at all burdened into crumpling
If only I could freight
with such accomplished balance

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WISDOM STEPS UP

Usha R. Balakrishnan

Out on a walk

My trusting shadow

Truncated by the light

Has me

Stand taller

Lean less

Grow up more.

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UNTITLED

Claudine Harris

Eyes alert, one foot in front of the other,
I roam the coloratura city
listening to it spread filaments of sound
into the blues and hues in my mind.
Soon I will know what I needed to need.

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The War in The Gulf, London, January 12, 1991

Victor Camillo

"Stop the countdown to war." I read the sign, a football field distant,
Below Nelson in Trafalgar Square. The low sun is glittering a brilliant
mission

But only deaf language signs to my eyes.

There are old socialists in beards everywhere,

And pigeons, here and there, like bewildered soldiers, dragging their
shadows.

I am a lover in London of banners, speaking as they flow, of red
scarves and open coats,

Of a Saturday about tragedy in January with only dead places to go.

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CATBIRD

David Duer

The catbird sips on the grape jelly
we put out for the orioles
and then flies off to some thicket
and sings an intricate medley of melodies,
an improv sampling of scats and riffs.
In his sleek grey suit and cocky black beret
he's a hepcat bird showing off his chops.

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AND THIS MORNING

Dónal Kevin Gordon

One slice to a plate. Two plates to the
tray. One plate one breath from the other.

And now her mother dying.

She telling me, banana bread had
always been her mother's favorite.

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THE POSTMAN

Dixie Saylor

The cheery postman

Making his rounds,

never knowing he broke my heart today.

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ALWAYS LOOK

Christian Schoon

“See that?” The man said, pointing out beyond the pipe corral

The lines on his face like an old map carved into leather

The six horses, still as dead trees, six hearts beating, all eyes compass-north,
searching the far wind break

Looking for that wolf or panther, that two-leg with a rope, deer, dog, barn
cat, rabbit set to bolt,

Tin can glinting, bale twine trembling, worst of all, that nameless shape

With a shadow no horse could explain or dream or ever once imagine

“Always look where the horses look,” the man said, and spit.

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REBEL, 13

Chuck Hauck

Sometimes, we wonder where you came from--
with your raised voice and red face. Your
baiting and testing and pushing. The exhortations:
“you just watch me!” and “you can bet I will!”
The bright ones catch on eventually, a friend says;
those words our hope, like a desperate chord
on the guitar you play, in the room we sent you to.

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STILL LIFE WITH BOOKS

Carol Tyx

She sleeps in a double bed
beside books face down,
their spines stretched next to hers,
the page marked, ready to resume
their intimate exchange
as if to sleep were merely a pause
between words.

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EXILE

Melissa Serenda

A lone *Musa* watches the seasons pass,
potbound in a soaring slate atrium.
Broad leaves arc, elegant, toward the sun
to be met only with flat cold glass.

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UNTITLED

Dottie Ballantyne

Depression glass made during
a tough period in time

Resulted in many colors and hues;
beautiful patterns.

Now the fun becomes the hunt,
Searching the vast array of glassware
To make one perfect place setting.

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UNTITLED

D.L. Pughe

I heard that entropy was like a
drop of ink falling into a white basin of clear water,
a measure of disorder in the universe,
absorbed, irretrievable—but also, possibly, beautiful.

I hold my brush of brown ink, made from stewing and
straining black walnuts, touch it to paper then wait,
wait for a thicket of a forest to grow in crooked lines.

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THE GOAT IS LOOSE

Dick Hakes

The goat is loose
Escaped its pen
Some fear it may freeze, starve
Or get run over by cars
It laughs in the bushes
Eating rocks and drainspouts
Knowing it could survive on Mars

Poetry
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MOVING WATER LIES FAR BENEATH

Paul Diehl

the surface I curl against. Hard cold has

held it smooth and grey, with tuftweed,
branches, debris. I listen for it,

not stopping or slowing, beyond freeze and
flame, beyond the river itself and the

rushing ear, more song than flood, and at its
core, the providing dark placental roar.

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in public

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RAYS OF LIGHT, STRETCHING

BOGI TAKACS

We carve sturdy walnut into rosebuds and leaves,
fold teabags into spiky star shapes,
make dolls out of cornhusks.

We crossed the ocean to bring word that we exist,
and every time we roll out the trash
we stop to stare at the moon.

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ECHO

Patrícia E. Noeth

in church
hearing my mother's cough
from me

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BUTT DIAL

Alison McGoff

My phone startles me when it rings
"Hello? the voice of an old friend, unexpected
so out of the blue. "What a surprise !"I say. "What's new?"
We visit, catch up, he's too polite to admit
he's returning the call made from where I sit.

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UNTITLED

Rachael Carlson

My barista wears cowboy boots cause she's got plans after work.
But we're west of the Mississippi so maybe she does
have cattle, or a horse, or dogs...or an angry cat.
She slips and stomps and clicks and slides.
But she doesn't have time for this,
she can't even.

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WIGS

DAVE MORICE

If hair
weren't there,
we all'd
be bald.

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