



PoemSheet

Poems by members of the Literary Arts and Humanities Section
who attended the
Toronto Conference at Rudolf Steiner College Canada
September 2024



Field by George Reitnour

The labyrinth consists of path and edge.
The path is three feet wide, and longer than
You think. You get a feel for walking it.

It takes some will to finish; once you start,
You see the same old things: blackberries; plums;
Joe Pye; bowed grass; straight reed; and at the heart,
A willow, supple, leaves elongate, some
Aflame with pink, and gold, and white.
The goal is getting there. And coming back?...
Well, that's what takes the time, for every slight
Thing speaks, now, words you'd lack
Had you not started walking those edged ways
Past things and through the heart of thought to grace.



What Was It?*
by Philip Thatcher

What was it
you said in
that moment?

Your words
tossed over
your shoulder

leaving me

stunned
and wondering

turned the
whole of me
just so
and I heard
what I would
not hear

saw what I
could not
see

an open door
yet my self
caught still

between a
faded dream
of myself

and my fear
of never
arriving

held in place
until my
hand

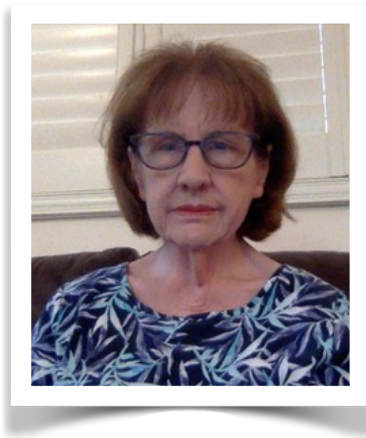
stretched
behind me
let go

of what was
letting go

of me

One foot moved
and the other
followed

**(From "Good Time;" Perceval Editions, 2022)*

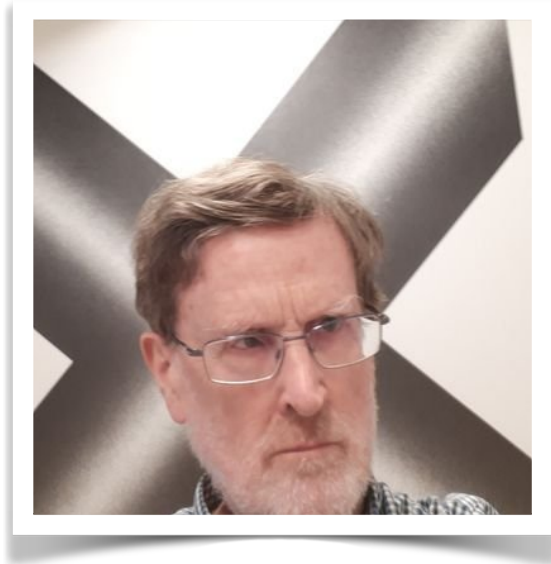


Grail Aphorism by Gayle Davis

The sun exclaims!
In tongues of fire
All is exalted

Poetry a spoon
Scoop out the vessel and taste it
Taste it - find your tongue
Ask the question

Jubilate Deo



first impressions on the journey by Mark McAlister

Outhollowed off we live
Steel clad on we die
The way through we shy

You come from the sky
You lay our armour by
You breathe that we may strive



EL CONJUERO

(after Goya's painting) by Susan Koppersmith

Goya started this way:

he painted the canvas a thick black
thoughts winged their way like demons
along the painting's surface

they communed with witches and owls
but they could see nothing in the dark

Goya took some paint away
he added bright yellow for a candle flame
his thoughts could now see!

they conjured up a basket of babies
and witches who smirked at evil

Goya painted a reddish yellow crone
reaching towards the figure in white
who is EVERYMAN trying to flee panic

if only the man could turn himself around
detect the light; it could save him



Saint Daniel of the Metro

by Robert McKay

Alone on a snow-covered subway platform well after midnight, eager to
board the last train home

I stand in the Designated Waiting Area, the place for nervous travelers,

and study the Passenger Assistance Intercom, just in case.
Black letters on a yellow sign: Press to Talk – Listen for Instructions –
Help is on the Way
For the blind, there is Braille on a shiny metal plaque, cold to the touch.

Curious, I run my fingertips along the lines of hard little bumps, eyes
shut
A staccato rhythm I can't translate leaves me stranded on the surface of
the text,
Pointing at what I can't understand
Broke, cold, and hungry, and a little scared in this part of town, I startle
myself, imagining
The prophet Daniel appearing beside me to interpret this strange writing
on the wall

Glaring at me with eyes like search lights, his lean body swelling with
inspiration,
he announces the most secret meaning: "No more trains tonight! It's
later than you think!"
Jumping down to the tracks, he strides off into the tunnel, his sandals
leaving foot prints in the snow.
From somewhere deep within the blackness, he hollers back,
"Come on! Get moving! You know what to do! We need every hand!"

Stupid fantasy..but then I start thinking, "Ah, shit, what if I have missed
the train?
No way I can walk from here! How in hell will I get home? I haven't got
money for a cab..."
Me and my worries, Vladimir and Estragon, chattering our nonsense to
the frigid air
Yearning to cry aloud, 'Wounded in childhood!' And it's true (for most
of us)
But that's not what the prophet is pissed about.

Even if the train arrives, no one is coming for me, not really. Nor for any
of us.

God is not dead but we are weaned. The generous breasts of easy revelation are withdrawn.
Nourishment changes form as we grow older. Now we have to work hard, climbing together,
Just to keep our heads above rising tides of our shared confusions.
What good am I to others? To you? Lacking even the discipline to care for myself.

As a boy, I asked my father if Belshazzar had to die, his kingdom, his pride, his body, all torn apart...
Living in the light of the New Testament, for my father, it was never too late
He said the king could have thrown himself down and begged for Daniel's guidance
Maybe. Even at the age of ten, I worried. Things can get out of hand.
Like that iced snowball I hurled with a giddy vengeance that no regret could recall

Why do we hurt each other? Walking across a steaming field of mangled and dying men,
Patton speaks for us, 'I love it. God help me, I do love it so. I love it more than my life.'
In fragments as small as the bones in my best friend's nose, red drops on white snow, as he fell sobbing
To incalculable sums as horrific as Nazi tractors tumbling scrawny broken bodies into gashes in the earth
Somewhere, behind the modern laugh track, you can hear machines grinding away at our roots.

Feeling a coldness in my bones, where I hide from myself the time and date of my death,
My thoughts turn to the mystic and the madman
Both have minds opened wide by fears most struggle to contain.
Both set sail beyond the harbour of common speech, deep into the heart-pounding oceans of meaning.

Both take strange paths into the shadows hoping to see a light coming toward them.

Upset, I yell into the tunnel: “You crazy son of a bitch! We don’t know what to do!”

I ‘Press to Talk’ and ask “When’s the damn train coming?”. “Cold, eh?” a voice answers

“Ya...train’ll be here soon. You okay? Were you yelling something?”

“Oh...No, I’m fine....Thanks.” Embarrassed, I yearn to lounge in front of the fireplace with friends and tell all my best stories over again. Can I still do that? Do we still have time?

The bright-eyed snake slithers into the station exhaling a gust of its dragon’s breath

In its silver belly, I join the others, the half-digested prey of modernity, scattered in one’s and two’s,

Jostling along together, I glimpse their faces in the flickering light, these my kin, and wonder

what will become of us, as we hurtle, half asleep, into the darkness...

From within my despair, I hear Daniel whisper: “Study the sun at midnight! Grow new eyes!”