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manuscripts have had to be rejected. We wish you
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University of Pittsburgh Press
International Poetry Forum

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LONG WAY TO MORNING

Glenна Holloway

1973

LONG WAY TO MORNING

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OBSERVATIONS OF A TRAIN RIDER

NIGHT BREAK, COUNTY HOSPITAL

ROSES IN THE WOODS

It was where the map ended;
The place was half swamp, full of deadness, never owned.
Kudzu borrowed skeletons of pine and wild berry bush,
Snapped off canes for its stalking
Of the few swatches of good ground fleeing ahead.

An out of season quail broke cover, crazed silence;
I reacted like an overdrawn wire. Fallen branches
Split underfoot. Sudden pointed pain
In my ankle—two small punctures—thought went off
Like unaimed shots: Snake! Poisonous snake!
But the skin was claw-tracked and blood-beaded and
All around was the cause. Beyond,
Magenta spurted up like open arteries between
Birch bones.

It was no man's land, anti-personnel entanglements,
Tightrope-walking boughs over redoubts of wood spikes,
Caltrops on hidden runners conspiring
With limbs to make trip-nooses. At last
I touched layers of battle-dyed satin
With hesitant fingers, and funeral fragrance
With wide nostrils, perched amid exploding life
Like a parasite. All blooming ⁴⁴⁰ concentrated in a six

cont.

Foot radius. Upright tufts of petals hid their stamens
Till they dropped. Untame, but never wild.

I prodded languorous green mimics
For a rusty plow, chimney bricks, foundation parts—
Things that outlast ramblers—
But under the leaf-locked shapes
Only more plantlife and death, a pair
Of ten point antlers and a piece of crumbling carnelian.
My long stick struck another something hard. The vines
Quivered, veins darkened. The rose defended
Like a many-headed Medusa until, cursing,
I hacked it with a hunting knife.

Thorn-crude carving on the stone read: Jebel Caleb Jones,
Orphan & Bachelor, 1845—1864. This was his wish—
To be buried where he fell.

I don't know why my eyes were wet and flaming
Or why all roses flamed out and shed,
Red blown shrapnel for an instant, then
Soft panoply for the breached woven shield.
Such quail cover! But I never went back to hunt
There where the map makers quit.

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FANTASY IN C# MINOR FOR TRUMPET AND ORCHESTRA
Glenna Holloway

You didn't expect him here amid silk draperies and life-size
classic stone sculpture. Nobody knew where he came from
behind the fountains and topiary shapes. But when he turned,
you knew he was a trumpet man:

Son of a long, ragged line who inhaled used smoke
and applause to blow from bulging cheeks,
and the black case followers, the rolled-up bus riders
down the stretched streaking nights, who, closing
their eyes saw brass hanging over them, floating easy,
waiting hugely to be snatched and buried or at least
sabotaged for a night or two of peace and supremacy—
who saw it turn to an armored snake in jealous
helpless hands, belling laughter on three ribs,
tonguing out morning and a hangover
in some mispronounced town.

Nobody saw this loose angled one pick it up;
the instrument came like quick cell division from
his fingers, his tough lip. And the sound began:

Uncoiling slow, coming for us,
crawling into our skins, changing the texture of our bare arms.

You know that sound, mama? Nothing so
simple as heartbreak, Eili Eili,

wild animals moaning up the moon. His quicksilver eyes ignite
and lightning arcs from his hair
striking a conductor that zaps it into your gravity center.

The sound, mama,
leaching tones out of/^{the} marble statues, rearranging
molecules, making them glow like neon in fog,
fulminating red and purple,
alive like magnified pond water.

How much is music, dropped now half a step,
gone minor again, flowing that little groove
where pain runs concave to the surface?

How much is the glint of jet-cut crystal hanging from silver
arches, moving slowly with audience breathing,
striking flints in his pale eyes?

Pushing aside champagne, women whisper:

"He's too much—a collection of priceless vibes
in badly tailored suede." "He's a lone seance
with Gershwin and Gabriel, Debussy and Beiderbecke
and all the shining ones." "I'd like—" "I wish—"

He is a prophet: Forecasting rain,
blowing out the sun, predicting your heartbeat,
willing it, playing your spine like a keyboard,
electrifying veins. He compresses a grain of hot salt
in every pore, starts a hundred little internal
combustions, all pistons at odds, then one enormous
turbine synched with his,

cont.

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generating enough current to throb down the columns,
revving the riderless carriage outside the fourth dimension.

He grins suddenly, mockingly, flats his fifths
then goes south on a short bridge, tootles to the carved unicorn,
puffs out the foyer candles along with the illusions
so for a jigger of time you can stand it,
draw your breath on the afterbeat, see
he is a real live trumpet man, not a sorcerer, not
a fakir pulling the cobra out of your basket.

He is a child: Blowing bubbles of incredible light,
each expanding on its own rainbow, clustered
with tiny replicas inside seeking to merge
with music. The trumpet his mistress and mentor,
an open-flower soul in his hands, a reformed panpipe
converted by his kiss.

He is Imperial Rome: An announcement of gladiators,
Caesar chariots, a boast of soldiers, a fury of fire-fleeing.

He is Africa: Black rhythm-cry, leopard stalking,
impala bleeding, eyes looking out of water,
torch eyes in darkness burning edges of night,
smoke rising, curling on winged scales,
sucking back into the bell, recycled in his brain.

He slams a fist back in your throat, your loins,
he turns you on a spit and hamstrings you
with blades of ice.

He stands knee-deep in hell, his head into heaven,

cont.

holds onto the horn, wrestles it, shares it
with devils and seraphs, wrests it away,
triumphant sovereign-slave.

Feel the sound, mama? He's concentrating on all
your edges now, honing, tuning, fining, sharp, sharper,
thin, thinner. Quivering on a sill to somewhere,
retiring to a small glistening waver in a hair's spectrum,
pulsing between green and turquoise, hanging
on like dying gills.

He's a trumpet man, mama, more lives than a cat,
more wind than a Kansas twister.

It's all the magic horn, mama, that
glossy eternal alloy always suspended
between you, even in bed,
shaping you to it, branding you. That
gilded haloed concubine, caressed and polished, surrounded
with plush. You, bleached, smacked, sewing a dress
out of motel curtains, earning your M.A. in martyrdom. That
accused fetish, possessed, possessing. That icon
he hocked once to buy you an emergency doctor in Detroit.
You sold your mother's ring to get it back.

And the man, mama, with the hard harsh mouth,
dead weight in the bus seat, little slivers of life
scattered and telescoped into battered cases and collapsible
stands. Trumpet man. Pitched all shades and sizes like
shadows, worse for women than drummers.

Gone too high too often. A pile
of singed feathers dripping wax on the downers, always
patching to fly one more set too close to the sun.
Trumpet man. Slow-moving target
for shooting galleries, fifty-two small pasteboards,
and heavy bookies, mean as a bull when you got between.

Was there a man at all?

Or just a flared gold phallus that seduced you
and crammed you into the gears of a music box on wheels,
hurled you across the bad weather map, into the broken-john hotels
with faded lint bedspreads, and the watered-gin back-corners
of never-quite-level-halls full of lurching bodies and bad acoustics?

Trumpet man. Inseparable composite
of flesh and that wind-thing you both die in different ways
without— cold spite for your touching,
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Tears emptied for the last set, he mounts
the god syndrome like mercury,
transcends music and sound, an entity
not protoplasm and metal but some new alchemy,
entering entrails and hair shafts
to that last submerged panging tunnel you had sealed and secured.
Deep, forcing down your fiercest barriers,
playing what no mortal ever played, filling
you, driving deeper yet overhead, levitating. Slamming
in the afterburner, rocketing upward, peeling
off new notes like bright blisters. Inhaling, exorcising

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Fantasy in C# Minor For Trumpet and Orchestra

6

the whole orchestra, resolving each chord himself,
breaking his lip down to blood, excoriating his lungs.
White involves you in Olympic cloud banks, immaculate,
nothing hurts anymore.

Old festers are incised clean, drained and benedictioned.
The trumpet fluoresces, fuses
With his phosphorous eyes; vivid crystal globules
orbit like berserk planets
around and through his lean cylinder of light until
the entire image blazes beyond looking.

You open your eyes as the waiter pours champagne,
hear something shut like a latch, focus absently
on a white alabaster herald
you hadn't noticed before.

FANTASY IN C \sharp MINOR FOR TRUMPET AND ORCHESTRA

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hear something shut like a latch, focus absently
on a white alabaster herald
you hadn't noticed before.

LONG WAY TO MORNING

Every night after the light,
after the meaning and memory of light,
it closes in slow, thickens, tall,
on greased silent wheels or a cushion of black steam.
A passing prison around my bed. Impenetrable
something. Nothing. I see it by
what I can't see because of it: no more
thin dark-on-dark blazonry making like goblins rampant
for half-reared children, no curtained rectangles
or bias bands on the ceiling. No more
wet marigold smell, tire whisper,
small wind balls banked off my headboard.
I am contained pitch-pit totally like once when I
crawled frown first into my father's sealskin sleeping
bag. This Now I don't touch—I know I can,
know it won't burn, draw back as if.
The only sight is echoing haloes of pyrotechnics I
explode behind pressed lids. My bones
sweat, marrow melts, runs, short circuits
my long red guitar strings. A Malay rebanna drum
bombards my bed, beat for this big exercise,
this big rehearsal. One night I'll stroke it
like sealskin, embrace it whole, hard. Only
sleep is the final fear: what I've never met
eyes open, all senses pricked like a wine connoisseur's tongue,
and nerve-fingered warp by weft.

BALLAD FOR A BAD QUEEN

Unnumbered songs and sonnets lie at Nature's feet—
The sentimental drippings from the maudlin tongues of those
Who try to catch her essence in a pentametric bleat—
Who do not recognize a whore because she wears a rose!

There was a time I mouthed her praise, believed her mother-sweet,
In days when new spring softly feathered hidden wrath's repose—
The resting time before the harlot showed her dire deceit
Concealed in every browsing breeze and every stream that flows.

Her ritual rhymes of season seem to charm the fool esthete;
I see a certain sameness to her sins I would expose.
She trysts with Satan at the poles or on some wild arete,
Then takes back everything she gives, each favor she bestows.

Her languid sighing promise makes her treachery complete.
While all her panders purify her soul with Sunday prose,
She kills a hundred humans spreading out her molten sheet
To lie and birth a bastard peak where no man ever goes. . .

cont.

Benign, black clay and sod belie her ancient heat,
While many miles below a devil's cauldron seethes and glows.
Unfinished faulty fissures and a gaping gulch compete
In stealthy silent movement of opposing rugged rows.

Until one day some distant unsuspecting street
Is swallowed writhing, spewing brick and glass and melting snows.
And next the sea is seized in Nature's fist to beat
The fallen shores and hopeless hearths, defenseless to her blows.

Don't trust the warming sunbeam she hangs out in retreat;
Why trust a wanton woman just because she changes clothes?
I've watched her fiery ensign burn the prairie wheat;
I've seen the crops I planted hosting hordes of worms and crows.

She saw my need for rain; she came to my defeat
With flood! The land and I cry out, but still the water grows.
Her slimy signature is the tragic trail's receipt
and roads
For trees/and muddy shades of sorrow that she sows.

She makes a whirling hell when rival pressures meet
And funnel down for bridge and barn as though they were her foes.
Don't be misled by calmness and manners more discreet;
It's mere time-out while she revives each lethal trick she knows.

I've smelled her perfumed breath, and heard the birds repeat
The legends of her flowered fields, her famous fabled pose.
Oh yes, I've marveled at rebirth, her flaunted favorite feat,
And drunk her moon-mad magic made of myth and false agos.

She bears my sadness well with her tears of slashing sleet.
My soul grown wary trembles still in autumn's passion throes;
Despite her timeless treason, I once again entreat
Her mercy, all the while recalling pumpkins that she froze.

She, the harsh, the beautiful, capriciously will greet
Each future generation with her wonders and her woes
Until we storm her secret doors and find the means to cheat
This reigning house's cruel clutch, this queen we must depose!

AUTUMN IS NOT A SEASON

but a gaudy arena where Summer and Winter
collide Where
a played out princess falls
to a truculent new monarch Thrown
out of her palace overnight a moat
of black asters surrounding it ice
bars at the windows gray
shades down smog stationed
on the perimeter to keep sun
from spying on the new regime a ready
fusillade of sleet to keep
subjects bowing Summer
retreats to regroup
between Capricorn and Cancer And you
must shed your ripe skin to blend with snow

WHO NEEDS EDEN?

*You**sighs*

I breathe the fog that crawls the beaver-run
And climbs until impaled by spears of pine;
It fled the sea and soon will flee the sun
To secret places where blue herons dine.

I watch the valleys for the twilight's rise,
And walk the blood-red hills against the wind
To meet the moon and wait there while it vies
With nimbus rings like cotton newly ginned.

The morning brings the rain that bleeds the clay;
It dabbles in the marsh and dimples sand.
A few miles down the highway's puddled gray
It rinses whitewash off the old peach stand.

I wander this kaleidoscope, a child
Whose patterned green and wood designs grow wild.

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SHE USED TO GIVE ME FLOWERS
Glenna Holloway

When I was ten I heard her called a whore,
The sentence fletched with thorns that stung my spine.
I followed her through rows of phlox before
That word bored itching in my brain. Define
The user of a hoe! But that could not
Explain the rancid-seasoned tone that fell
Like well-aimed spittle on my father's hot
Hearthstones. Unfitting with her bouquet smell.
I later learned the meaning of the slur,
Through tears watched twitching sun explode with lies,
Then wicked moons formed coins, men's grins and her;
Encraged I did make her and
Long coils of rage knew not what to despise.
My rage coiled searching searching
My childhood, white phlox petals, all my prayers:
Quicksilver dropped on knife-edged granite stairs.

Rage coiled, not knowing what I should despise

At the Great Auk Inn on the jut of a town,
The old salts toast the warlock winds,
Then tell their tales of love and sails
And watch the birds dive down.

There's a pair of portraits over the bar;
They stare at hers and talk of him.
The frames are carved from the Petrel's spar,
Her binnacle brass on the rims.

His name was Jason Wesley Woods;
He owned a sailing ship.
He ran her tight and always fast,
Her hold packed full of goods.

His name was soft like a sleeping surf,
But his will was anchor strong.
And Maureen McCrae was afraid of him,
Knew his thoughts when he looked too long.

She fled but he caught and kissed her well.
"I've vowed to be rich," he said,
"I'll ply every port from here to hell
But I must have you in my bed.

"You'll meet half the world on your wedding trip,
You'll know a new feel in your feet.
You'll learn to see with your ears and your nails
As you lean from the Petrel's rails.

"Her teakwood is smooth and her ribs are sound
And she's soaked with a salt-spice smell.
We'll take you and wake you to things unbelieved
By folks who are chained to the ground.

"I'll teach you to handle both her and the crew,
To respond to the wings of the sea.
With rhythm as heathen, caresses as light;
I'll teach you to love only me."

Perfumed spindrift pervaded her head,
His images, promises, touch.
The heat of his flesh was against her cheek;
She caught herself hearing too much.

She wrenched from his arms and tried to unspell
Them both, harshly chastened her heart.
For her mind was as fixed as a buoy bell
Long before a boy hastened her heart.

stare

She forced her/ back where a wave came to break,
For this was no boy, but a man—
As tall and as sure as his Petrel's masts;
She was swamped like a skiff in his wake.

"Oh, mariner, cast off fast from this shore,
Go back to your brine-bitch love.
Your pale ocean eyes and your nimbus hair
I'd never be willing to share.

"Take your ripe words far away from here,
She owns you brain and beard.
Why, even the taste of your kiss concurs
Your thoughts at the wheel are hers!"

He laughed, "The ocean's part god, part nymph,
Most scornful of mortal blades
Who waste their sighing fantasies
On any but live young maids."

She frowned so he said, "It's my livelihood!
There's much to both love and hate.
Whatever I am is completely yours;
I'll be a dependable mate."

But rigid she stood and he raised her chin.
"Still jealous of the main?" he smiled.
"Of course. If not lover then bastard son.
And you'll never forsake your kin.

"How many heads have you beguiled with your
Pirate's mouth and mahogany chest?"
"Far fewer than you with the lift of your
Lip and the up-tilt of your breast!"

"Oh, sailor, go follow the farthest tern,
My father invented your creed.
He lured my mother out there where she died.
I know all about your breed.

"And sister, mistress, mother, myth,
She'll claim you quarry yet.
She'll pull you down to her altar rocks
Where skulls like yours are set.

"With sequin flash and colored beads
She'll weave your mossy shroud,
And blazon your bones with turtle dung
And crown your love with weeds.

"What can you give me but cold and storm,
My face full of freezing rain,
And a heaving house and a rolling bunk
For my swelling belly of pain?

"You talk about flowers and gems down deep,
All mine if I'll be your bride.
It's slimy sand and chains of kelp,
Shell-cuts on my shins in the tide.

"You offer spume,hardtack and rust,
A drunken lamp,a creaking floor,
The hidden claws of the coral reef,
And a green eternal door.

cont.

"You'd bring me ~~a~~ squid and a stillborn child
With your nets and your sails to mend;
Serpent horizons of swallowed stars,
But my cage would never bend.

"Your frothy gifts have the stink of bait
Too long in the trough in the sun.
The hook is plain, I see the price,
Good Captain, I can wait.

"I'll wait for a man with bags of seed
For the sureness of the earth.
Where salt from sweat and not from spray
Weighs up a good man's worth."

And Maureen McCrae stayed long on the beach
With fringes of foam round her knees,
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Like it was when canvas was king.
The years wash back if you close your eyes
And listen to figureheads sing.

The old sea dogs gaze out at the bay
Each dusk when the water looks brown,
Then tell their tales of love and sails
And watch the birds dive down.

I THINK OF CLIFF

I think of Cliff when lightning splits
A pine astride this ridge then hits
The thicket wall still rolling fire.
Brush flares, hisses rain, puffs a spire
Of smoke, a claim. It rarely quits
With that, but smolders in the pits
Of limbs and sticks till all my wits
Are stoked, that after I retire

I think of Cliff.

One or more times each year this blitz
Re-scars my woods. I search for bits
Of green around charred wounds, then liar-
Like, hail life as something to desire.
All winter when all likeness fits,

I think of Cliff.

TORERO

Savage incarnadine dawn came before Santos slept.

Day of the corrida!

A dark mountain sprouting red and yellow flowers and
Reverberating thunder waited behind his lids.

He must strike lightning into a certain crater
Between the ridges before thunder passed him through.

Early to the ^{rites} ritual of preparation, steeped in the vow
To avenge his brother Miguel. Early and long before the Virgin.
^{Candles & the}

Hot laughter with his comrades, fear encased in embroidery,
Superstition buried in colors of scorn.

He had even looked at his bulls and learned

One was kin to the hooking, horn-wise

Monster that routed Miguel's soul with ^a splintered bayonet.

Last notes of La Virgen de la Macarena flared out of trumpets,
Eddied into his heated head, followed by shrill corkscrews

Pulling the cuadrillas into the circle, ~~outlined with stocks~~ ^{of eyes}.

^{into its round eyes.} ~~Its stocks~~ A thousand prisms on His shoulders

^{with a blinding glow.} Ignited. Something ^{the} high breeze, perhaps, pitched to cornets—

^{like a high breeze} Hissed his name through clamped jaws.

The two flashing semaphores flanking him

Marching jagglis
Were silent, fierce-smiling aficionado-faces.

His name wound back in the bell of a horn or the wind's ~~mouth~~ ^{teeth}.
The musicians played with too much pathos at times;
It was better when they blasted, ponderous and bawdy,
Like pompous heralds of Caesar.

The other guys mtn cried.
"Dios, we have a gale," growled an assistant,

"We will have to drown the capes!"

"Please, Santos, do not work so close,"

His banderillero pleaded, "do not get ^{the} bulls' blood

On your belly. It is enough you are here."

~~the good of the fighting bull were in his favor.~~
~~Layers of eyes probed Santos' pores. "They must be given~~
~~something special~~ ^{A Remembrance to Miguel}
~~Their money's worth today," he answered.~~

the
His hearing blocked olés, hoofs

Pulverizing sand, sounds of the watered cape.

His bull was a giant, an armed freight train.

Santos heard only wind instruments, then the racking thrust

Of his will arcing across the ring, entering the pic,

Bracing it against ^{the} man's temptation to twist

And steal the good of his bull. And finally he heard

The blessing, the God-lonely bugle

Retiring the picadors, trailing the man-animal cry

Of all who ~~ever~~ lived awhile in the center of the centrifuge.

He placed his own banderillas, planted them close,

Claimed only shallow blood and flesh enough to hold. Each

Pair blossomed in thunder, clung to the windy ridge. The

Centrifuge roared, the pitch climbed.

He took the sword and muleta for a pase de la muerte,
Began the last act, the faena, ~~that~~
Wind snatched the cardinal cloth, exposed his hiding.
But this toro promised greatness. Waited. Shared.
Santos designed a new pass. Then ~~the naturals~~, slow ballet
Of cerise wing, silver pivot, brown muscle,
Turning, winding. The wind held its breath, (gasped), puffed
Short gusts between ~~each~~ ^{an} ~~series~~. Again
Santos heard his name. The beast smeared by,
Redding his spangles, honing his senses on horn,
Stench, bone-rattling sideswipe.
And the bovine voice of another avenger.

Seven years of bulls only Santos spoke,
His fluent muleta commanding the charges, punishing
The pale-hearted, persuading the valiant ones of their chances
at length ~~as~~
To paint their points. Then telling them when to bow their heads
for the offering, the ritual communion.
And offer the spot for benediction.

Veronicas ago Santos would have laughed. Or branded it
A trick of weariness or aire. Did Miguel's bull
Call his name? Does the final Toro tell Torero?

He spat dust out of his mouth. He must not
Succumb to overawe. This was the toro de bandera,
Every true bullfighter hoped for--measuring the man,
Measuring his rage, keeping his courage and his art
To the end. The matador could not do less.

Torero
Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

Nostrils and eyes streaming grit, Santos sculpted

The short cape, made it vault, caress, made it flow.

~~Razor blade~~ signs shredded off arena walls. Santos

Defied the blowing, the brass song in his brain.

Perfect parones, spinning. People-thunder. Pase de pecho.

~~Perfect~~ Bull dancer and Minotaur and Greek tapestries.

Time raced, stumbled, coiled. Santos sighted down his sword.

A bull to take recibiendo—the ultimate tribute and risk—

Waiting like a figurine, committed to that stand, waiting

For the deified charge to sink the espada,

Holding down the triangle head with serge on a stick,

Leading it past his sledging chest, trying to remember

The kill would be for Miguel.

The cloth swung forward, beckoned.

The bull came. Santos leaned in over the horn with a name cry,

Rescued his lungs by a sequin's breadth.

A flawless execution except

Steel and bone collided. The blade bowed and sprang

Out of its hot sheath, out of crazed thunder.

Santos refused to heed his wrist, advice to descabelllo,

Retrieved his sword, cursing.

The centrifuge screamed and silenced unheard; the air churned

Rabioso. He made himself calm in his bowl of sweat and whiplash chill.

"We will have total perfection, eh, Diablo?"

A bugle in his head, an aviso.

Torero
Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

Sun-flashes along the edge of the estoque, rolling images
In his eyes, icons of the Virgin, faces of his brother,
The bull his brother. He profiled very close and started in fast.
A bright swatch of last Sunday's poster of Miguel
Spiraled toward the matador's face.
Triumphant horn raised and arced from life to death.
Santos heard the wind, heard them fall, heard time unhinge.

Rev. Jan 14, 74

TORERO

Savage Incarnadine dawn came before Santos slept.

Day of the corrida!

A dark mountain sprouting red and yellow flowers, and
Reverberating thunder waited behind his lids. He must
Strike lightning into a certain crater between
The ridges before thunder passed him through.

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To avenge his brother Miguel. Early and long bent before
The Virgin). Hot laughter with his comrades, fear encased
In embroidery, superstition buried in colors of scorn.
He had even looked at his bulls and learned
One was kin to the hooking, horn-wise
Router of Miguel's soul with splintered bayonet.

Last notes of La Virgen de la Macarena flared out of trumpets,
Eddied into his heated head, followed by shrill corkscrews
Pulling the cuadrillas into the circle monster,
Into its round eyes. A thousand prisms on his shoulders
Ignited. Something—high breeze, perhaps, pitched to the cornets,
~~Revolving~~ ~~Revolving~~ Missed his name through clamped jaws.—
The two flashing semaphores flanking him
Were silent, fierce-smiling their aficionado faces.
His name wound back in the bell of a horn or the wind's mouth.

The musicians played with too much pathos ~~today~~^{at times}.

It was better when they blasted, ponderous & bawdy,
Like pompous heralds of Caesar.

"Dios, we have a gale," growled an assistant,

"We ~~will~~ have to drown the capes!"

"Please, Santos, do not work so close,"

His banderillero pleaded, "do not get bulls' blood
on your belly." It is enough you are here."

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Their money's worth today," he answered.

His hearing stopped olés, hoofs

Pulverizing sand, sounds of the watered cape.

His bull was ~~dead~~, a giant, an armed freight train.

Santos heard only wind instruments, then the racking thrust

of his will transmitting ~~care~~^{opening} across the ring,
entering ~~leaving~~^{against} the mon's temptation to taunt & steal
into the pic, finally the God-lonely bugle ~~the good of his bull~~,
Retiring the picadors, playing the man-animal mean
Of all who ever lived awhile in the center ~~of~~^{cry} the centrifuge

He placed his own banderillas, planted them close,

Claimed only shallow blood & flesh enough to hold.

Cork hair blossomed in thunder, Clung to the windy ridge
The centrifuge roared, the pitch climbed.

He took the sword & muleta, ^{for} A pase de la muerte,

~~Bufo~~ The last act began, the faena.

Wind snatched the cardinal cloth, exposed his hiding.

But this toro promised greatness. Waited, Shared.

Santos designed a new pass, ^{perfected his} Next the naturals, slow ballet

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 Santos designed a new pass, ~~Next the naturals,~~ Slow ballet
 Of ~~cerise wing~~, silver pivot, ~~brown~~ muscle, turning,
 Winding. The wind held its breath, gasped
 Short gusts between each series. Again
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 Redding his spangles, honing his senses on horn,
 Stench, bone-rattling sideswipe.
 And the bovine voice of another avenger.
 For seven years of bulls only Santos spoke, his fluent muleta
 Commanding the charges, punishing the pale-hearted,
~~inviting~~ Persuading the valiant ones of their chances
 To paint their points. Telling them when / to bow their heads
 And offer the benediction spot. Veronicas ago
 Santos would have laughed. Or branded it a trick
 Of weariness or aire. Did Miguel's bull
 Call his name? Does the final Toro tell it?
 He spat dust out of his mouth. He must not
 Succumb to overawe of the toro de bandera ~~On~~ ^{on} ~~the~~ morning
 Every true bullfighter bred in his hopes, measuring ~~them~~, ^{a man}
 His courage ~~in~~, his art, measuring his own rage
 To the end. The matador could ~~not~~ do less.
 Nostrils and eyes streaming grit, Santos sculpted
 The short cape, made it vault, caress, made it flow.
 Coca-Cola signs shredded off arena walls. Santos defied
 The blowing, the brass song in his brain.
 Perfect parones, spinning, People-thunder. Pase de pecho,

Perfect. Bull dancer and minotaur from Greek tapestries.

Time raced, stumbled, coiled. Santos sighted down his sword:

A bull to take recibiendo--ultimate tribute and risk--

Waiting like a figurine, committed to that stand, waiting

For the deified charge to sink the espada,

Holding down the ^{plancha} triangle mass with serge on a stick,

Leading the gross headdress past his sledging chest,

Trying to remember the kill must be for Miguel.

The cloth swung forward, beckoned.

The bull came. Santos leaned ~~in~~ over the horn with a name cry,

Rescued his lungs by a sequin. Perfect execution except

~~Bone and steel collided.~~ ^{with fire,} The blade bent and sprang

Out of its hot sheath, out of crazed thunder. The bull stood.

~~Santos refused to heed his wrist, advice to descabelllo,~~
^{less of no date}
~~Santos~~ Retrieved his sword, cursing.

The centrifuge screamed and silenced unheard; the air churned

~~Rabioso. The bull turned toward his voice, "Come Diablo,~~

~~We must finish as we began."~~ Santos made himself calm

In his bowl of sweat and whiplash chill. "Come, Diablo!"

~~Santos profiled slowly,~~ A bugle in his head, an aviso,

Sun-flashes along the edge of the estocque, rolling images

In his eyes, icons of the Virgin, ~~face of his brother,~~

~~Coch curved to pierce his target.~~ The bull his brother. He profiled very close and went into his target.

~~wild scrap~~ A red snatch of last Sunday's poster of Miguel

~~toward~~ showing slabs of fat, the

Spiraled into the matador's face.

The targets coursed together. Triumphant horn raised and arced from death to death.

Santos heard the huge wind, heard them fall, heard time unhinge.

~~an espada~~

~~the face of man and muscle~~

~~he bashed his head beyond~~

~~the line in each from~~

~~Man had drawn to pierce their targets~~

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

A BALLAD FOR JASON AND MAUREEN

Glenna Holloway

At the Great Auk Inn on a jut of town,
The old salts toast the warlock winds
Then tell their tales of love and sails
And watch the birds dive down.

There's a pair of portraits over the bar;
They stare at hers and talk of him.
Their frames are carved from the Petrel's spar,
Her binnacle brass on the rims.

His name was Jason Wesley Woods;
He owned a sailing ship.
He ran her tight and always fast,
Her hold packed full of goods.

His name was soft like a sleeping surf,
But his will was anchor strong.
And Maureen McCrae was afraid of him,
Knew his thoughts when he looked too long.

She fled but he caught and kissed her well.
"I've vowed to be rich," he said.
"I'll ply every port from here to hell,
But I must have you in my bed."

"You'll meet half the world on your wedding trip,
You'll know a new feel in your feet.

You'll learn to see with your ears and your nails
As you lean from the Petrel's rails.

"Her teakwood is smooth and her ribs are sound
And she's soaked with a salt-spice smell.

We'll take you and wake you to things unbelieved
By folks who are chained to the ground.

"I'll teach you to handle both her and the crew,
To respond to the wings of the sea
With rhythm as heathen, caresses as light;
I'll teach you to love only me."

Perfumed spindrift pervaded her head,
His images, promises, touch.
The heat of his flesh was against her cheek;
She caught herself hearing too much.

She wrenched from his arms and tried to unspell
Them both, harshly chastened her heart.
For her mind was as fixed as a buoy bell
Long before a boy hastened her heart.

She forced her stare back where a wave came to break,
For this was no boy but a man—
As tall and as sure as his Petrel's masts;
She was swamped like a skiff in his wake.

"Oh, mariner, cast off fast from this shore,
Go back to your brine-bitch love.

Your pale ocean eyes and your nimbus hair
I'd never be willing to share.

"Take your ripe words far away from here,
She owns you brain and beard.
Why, even the taste of your kiss concurs
Your thoughts at the wheel are hers!"

He laughed, "The ocean's part god, part nymph,
Most scornful of mortal blades
Who waste their sighing fantasies
On any but live young maids."

She frowned so he said, "It's my livelihood!
There's much to both love and hate.
Whatever I am is completely yours;
I'll be a dependable mate."

But rigid she stood and he raised her chin.
"Still jealous of the main?" he smiled.
"Of course. If not lover then bastard son.
And you'll never forsake your kin.

"How many heads have you beguiled with your
Pirate's mouth and mahogany chest?"
"Far fewer than you with the lift of your
Lip and the up-tilt of your breast!"

"Oh sailor, go follow the farthest tern,
My father invented your creed.
He lured my mother out there where she died.
I know all about your breed.

"And sister, mistress, mother, myth,
She'll claim you quarry yet.
She'll pull you down to her altar rocks
Where skulls like yours are set.

"With sequin flash and colored beads
She'll weave your mossy shroud,
And blazon your bones with turtle dung
And crown your love with weeds.

"What can you give me but cold and storm,
My face full of stinging rain,
And a heaving house and a rolling bunk
For my swelling belly of pain?

"You talk about flowers and gems down deep,
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It's slimy sand and chains of kelp,
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CATWALK

My voice and substance suspended
Against the wall in the tabby's gaze:
Secret lenses of Alice's looking glass eye-level, unguarded
For an instant— Always I knew if I moved with dark quick as light
I could descend one of those twin tunnels when they opened
To receive the lamp going out. The passage vibrated,
Still warm with the last wild leap from the fruit cellar to my book shelf.
Tiny sparks flared, died deeper in mazes of mist and whisper
Of small things hiding in selected crevices. My trackless step
Swirled soft smells of fennel, toadflax and humus.
Ahead the main shafts converged, a vaulted corridor of tree veins,
Leaf-shine, sun-stain. Joy was magneto rhythm, intense probing prongs;
A trophy room glowed with grasshoppers, shrews, bright wings
Spread content in perennial preservation. Convolutions
Of shapes and sounds changed and flowed on a warp of night,
Approaching, receding, times nine, a vector of velvet slanted south.
Green was a flavor and all other eyes a strong scent. Motion
Was a prolonged spring, a dive that never reached water, reversed upward
At will. There were spare moons and extra summers, adventures
Still wrapped in fur and yards of strange cord.
Deeper was slow cryptic drumming, growing,
A great patterned flash of gilt and ebony, a weaving of vines
And scorched grass resisting shadow. Then
A sly stir in a chamber beyond, another door, a brink,
A river noise, a rush of olive. At my feet a beetle—
No, a scarab jewel! And I left without crossing the Nile.

SYLVIA PLATH, 1932—1963

Her glittering mind, swarming bee-box temporary: such
Ableness to support vast barbaric confusions and illuminations
Between God/good/bad.
Not able to bear its own harsh, winged weight.
And not willing to bear.

Unwinding a wake of sparks
from horse's hoofs or maybe unicorn's,
Trimming her wick always Charon-close
to joyous fuel's drench, still
Knowing blaze laps, fire-free stretches upward,
wind-branching, rocket-showering
Fire enough to fry the pit demon, the sheet-
Covered trees, the scalpel-carved moon. Almost
Fire enough to flame-harden living into
Giving up only enough blood to write it on
A well and wisely worn scroll of flesh.

AND I REMEMBERED DR. SCHWEITZER
(A Memorial)

It was September 4th. The last letter
From Lambarene came that morning. He was still
On my mind as the mountains withdrew behind late afternoon smoke.

Then something
Burrowed in my bangs, tangled, made me shiver,
Some alien crawling thing!
Revulsion raced down my arms, tingled my fingers,
Switched on electrical networks in my spine.
My hand tore through my hair,
Brought out a tiny broken form—
Green silk wings, finer than royal trousseau lace—
And the eyes—minute garnets holding light like magnets.
Even now they would glow until they crumbled. I longed
To plant them like pomegranite seeds, to reweave
The iridescent loops. The west rumbled, wet leaves
And falling sun spilled down.
My palm filled
With hot vivid garnet tears from all the creature's kind.
And mingled in for something maybe kin
Were mine.

TRIHEDRONESS

You've seen her looking from under
Lashes long enough to blow in the wind—
Wanton's eyes, wild and avid as a black colt's.
Stranger's eyes, cool and hot as a puma's.
Weighing, always waiting—
When the lids raise again
She is gone.

You've seen her eyes transmit hope—
Blue-green tapestries of deep velvet understanding,
Reflex lenses of compassion, unblinking,
Clear of dream-haze.

A wink. That fast. Once more
Only rapport with the vagrant sea.

You know I share the eyes with her and her.
One I would keep chained in the cellar.
One I would keep in the sun.
Both are prisoners of me.

"WHEN EVERYTHING THAT TICKED HAS STOPPED" . . . Emily Dickinson

This stark cubicle stays closed,
No green grows; only the walls
Are tender. Your prodding finger knows—
But found no entry,
No valve for compressed dark to drain.

The machinery is jammed with black.
One only who could repair my brain
Suffocated in the crumbled cell block
Of my soul.

This cold crucible stays filled:
Refined slag, a purity of dross—
Your hopeful hands bruise
And now they smell of losing.
On your way home, gather all
The dying anodynes from my old garden.

THE SOCIETY BLURB SAID "TYCOON ENTERTAINS JR. EXEC & SOUTHERN BRIDE"

Gold shouldered, satsuma-sheen pasted on my mouth,
A roll of wit under my tongue, I confront smiling lies
In crystal & silver, haloed with his gimmicked colored rays,
His paternal/satyr beaming. You programmed me so
I fill my dialogue balloons like prescriptions &
Send them up, open my sequined centerfold, fan warm Chanel,
Try not to gag on escargot.

Pious dimples & cloven hoofs, frail-foiled with wife & wares,
He wants me to know how he loves classical music, how fluent
his French.

We sit orchestrated, smoke-haired, blue-toothed. The napkins
Fluoresce. You & she sit silent, gone dark. His.
His voice collides with my mind like sticky stucco, his
Expensive scent is an affront to greenness.

Oh, to be back with peach groves & my old upright Steinway—
Barefoot on the back porch cleaning bream—watching
My father's hands at the potter's wheel through a spray of scales—
Turning to bubbles of contrived light
Bouncing on your boss & me while you are dusk.

He asks me to call him Andrew & surrounds my hand with money clips
I am being shaped on a wheel not even by you. Coiling. Spinning.
Turning me toward a dim martini sun.

Will you light up if I tell him to go to hell? Will
Your eyes come on if I brandy my cockles & hackles &
Wind into his design?

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EXORCISM

My mother would have muttered a certain chant all day.
Sickly sun plunged pale shafts into the soil, sucking it
Dry, giving no warmth, only taking, leaving a swath
Of cold-parched earthworms and rock/clay crumbs without
Energy to unite. The first wind pried the shutters,
Crashed the lamps, spilling all the oil far from my green firewood.
Discordant whispers, slaps of chill, wavy scent of animals.
Half of me gathered wolfsbane, half swallowed a drugstore ball of
sleep,
Then centered under the blanket my mother wove and dyed
Her mystic patterns in.

Awakened by blackness, darker than sleep, heavier.
Than night, I tried to surface, swim up through it
Like a cave fish looking inside its head for its lost eyes.
Night pushed up from the world's old graves, smelling
Of the world's old sins. A wolf night, diseased and howling,
A night to grow everything old. I lit a candle and went
To the crazed mirror where Pluto's breath waited to finish my tiny
flame.

Morpheus fled; his bottle was empty. Pluto ruled rising, smoking and
Sinking bottomless. The charred moon reversed, floating me in
vertigo,
Revealing a death's head like she always said. Dripping

Ice sweat. Wolf sweat. Grave sweat. Black was frozen
Violence and violation. Black stained walls, seeped into drawers
To lie in wait forever. Trackless black where the wolf walked,
Bearded reeking black, silhouette of hills not there, of beasts
Clanning moonward, necks fletched like arrows.

I said my mother's secret name; her part of me
Clutched the aconite, scattered it over the bed,
Rose like ether and tried to pass the speed of light.
Deep in my crypt I groped for the incantations, stumbled and skidded
Over roots my father planted. Some trailing tendril snagged.

Dead weed essence opened the flue; friction made a spark.
Still sneezing, I relit the candle, snatched up the wolfsbane
For a funeral pyre, crowned with homemade lamp tables.

Leftover night was stilt-legged shadows on a hearthlit stage,
The usual cast with known names. Tomorrow
I would move back to town and go to work at the Co-op
Making amulets for tourists.

I went to the mirror to see if I was gray.

BIRTHDAY AT THE STATE FAIR

From a distance

The mineral display hostess made him remember
Water colors and fine paper from England he used to "borrow"
From his mother. They didn't make the kind anymore.

He sidled along booths blinking back Day-Glo,
Examining dried corn, frowning down his hurry,
Handling when he dared, asking the bearded man about bees
Which triggered a recirculating pump filling him with more
About bees than he wanted. Feeling on command
Their warmth through the glass, he nodded on cue,
Shuffled sawdust. Someone else came, a drone. He
Escaped as the hairy pump turned.

He drifted toward her between jewel walls of jams and jellies—
She was leaving! But she moved back through amber, her wavy
Effigy passed into magenta, paused, fused with shadows,
Then emerged above the jar rim. He straightened,
Ambled carefully into her shine. Her voice was cerulean,
Highlighting crystal formation for Boy Scouts, making
Smooth small waterfalls over the glistening spikes in her palm.
He pried doors in his head that trapped him so often,
Pretended to turn his back on one; it popped open as he hoped.
He cleared his throat: "Say, that looks like calcite."

cont.

She smiled right on him, viridian eyes, soft green wash;
Her blue fountain upheld him. The boys so slowly moved on.
He must see to it she understood he was not some clod,
He knew things, he was polished like her obsidian, he offered
His thoughts on geodes waiting eons to be opened,
He talked of earth, edged toward philosophy.
She called him poetic, rich blue ran over him like ointment.
He stuttered a little, rummaged for a witticism,
Drew his lip over the tooth vacancy. Presently
He would pun about her fossils and tell her he was 83 today
And she would not believe it, but first there was so much
To say about life and other people were coming

"LIKE A PANTHER IN THE GLOVE" . . . Emily Dickinson

"Always gentle, mindful of others,"
said now of my neighbor in psalter tones amid
furred sibilance of whispers and carnation overkill
thick enough to make her bier.
Covetous of her earned esteem,
my dual anger blurts: Is this worth living and dying for?
This maudlin mumbling mass?
Their sentiment a sentence!
At that, what charity can ever honey their tongues
with me? Pious pap pasted
on mobile lips once mine are cosmetically closed—
what right have they to my name in their warm mouths!

Maybe she wasn't always wonderful. Or maybe
she ran on low amperage—never knowing how it is
to operate on your own hot crossed circuitry,
splicing with scorched fingers your own frayed
smoking wires. Or maybe she
did it all and knew it well
under insulation of infinite grace.

I will make myself her monument.

URBAN UNDER

Bridges above me—giant warps over river,
roads, tracks, the arteries of my childhood.
Creeks were my veins, else
I would have become cracked clay
long before the sun smothered.

My origins were up there in a brick bungalow
once atop that burrowing segment of superway.
The new tunnel, breechloaded with cars,
blasts a volley of steel over the bow of my small boat.

Beyond me—an oil barge, weaving up river
like a disease-bearing snail, its slimy wake above the sludge
where my slow fever thinks the bones of my old home lie.
Their rotting cries flow weak beneath the weft of the city.

LEGACY FROM THE RESEARCH LABORATORY

If all my calculations are correct
my horologium will stop late this p.m.
No more nights to haul my entirety up the ladder to inhale dust
on top of tomes, mine the only prints to claim those
heights since my old professor's.

(Having once arrested such an enemy, I am driven
to manacle others, and now my demon,
As destructive as any virus, has come again with the fuel bill.
Unpaid, he is evicting me, shutting my shop.)

There is not time to isolate the mutant entity
I suspect lies daily on the slide disguised as something simple—
My life's goal—

to expose it to world attack, to create and unlock doors, to stand on raised portals like a Messiah and run lightning down the corridors of science. I would deal with the devil to do it. But the dream diffused in fumes of something else unfathomed, while my colleagues labeled me "loner", "prima donna", "bastard".

cont.

It will soon be midnight and even the devil is disinterested.
I walk away from my cells, from magnification and atomic rhythms
to culture my notebook in starlight.

What do I know of poetry? Yet the sure minute hand
allows for nothing else. My molecules must restructure
to pass through ancient doors. Now is distilled.

Now is vitro-essence of failure,
despite leaving the fugitive fewer places to hide.
And earth will be no better for an 11th. hour poem.

The centrifuge slows. Too bad my other theories were not
as flawless as this forte for human horology. I regret arguing
so much with God—it closed all the cloudy and crazed crystal siphons.
And my tuneless lyric nears the maudlin maundering of senility
but I am not old. My mind persists on something about a valley.

It is all too bad. Unless—

That one! That wire-drawn pupil who speaks other languages,
who one day challenged the god-smith, and turning close by
in the color of discovery, battle-damaged and open for a moment,
gave me a glimpse of the bright burning edge of a demon I know.
To that damned and holy host, that one pupil,
I leave all I have:

The cold shine of my keys,
and my one poem.

DRIED ARRANGEMENT

All those long cattails of longing,
Sprung up in the soft marsh places
Of my inlands:
You picked them green and strung them upside down
To desiccate in your cellar
Along with laurel leaves and strawflowers.
Now and then you show me the stiff brown bouquet
On your altar.
Hung up on the hard harsh places
Of my island,
I cling to rock ridges that scar my eyes, and cannot even
Weep among the weeds of my desire.

DRAGON BOAT RIDE

Unpracticed,

I knew better than to board a strange beast
In a strange land. Like an unridden stallion wading,
Wanting only to be rid of me, the creature
Recoiled when unhitched, the red prow reared, bucked,
And spurted forward after the river.

Flaming comb and hackles trailing fragments of sun,
My unbroken mount ignored the clumsy extensions of my arms,
Aimed its reptile head at the curve of rumpled sheen
And beyond! to a trough of froth and roar where its cries
Of freedom from myth mingled with battle-thunder of rocks and water.
It shook with conviction, dipped its fangs
Into spume once tasted, never forgotten, and filled itself
With all the magic it was heir to. Shivering its new song
Into my dead arms and open mouth, swaying me with
How it knew the path around the boulders, it claimed me
Fully, no longer a rigid, rueful barnacle
On a foreign monster.

I, a pale spike on its spiny back, a small muscle of its wings,
Listed in harmony into the next curve where the river unclenched,
Sailed shinily erect onto fast under-running olive silk,
Content to chase whatever the secret current chased,
Waving at the watching world,
Waking the top water with our gilded tail.

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

Despite title, this is a fall poem

THE SOUND OF SUMMER IS

unheard with your ears full of sea,
salt on your lips, surf your only horizon.
Surfacing, you silently track powdered ivory
on your way up to granite-speared clouds and
noiseless smoky shades of firs.
Ears full of heat, mind full of sun, you
in your grass-stained shirt never hear
summer until it packs to go, pulls out
of a twig that breaks instead of bending,
leaves petals and leaves dressed for the tropics
untended—to falter and fall crackling
like kindling.
You hear summer, harried, hurried, complaining,
when it makes a last lightning check
of secret closets, vacating the place
for the demanding new tenant bringing
epidemics of gray and tons of luggage.

Glenna Holloway

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epidemics of gray and tons of luggage.

FURNITURE SHIPMENT FROM FORMOSA

The heavy rough sawn crate—
Three hundred twenty-one pounds
on the bill of lading from the Mikagesan Maru out of Keelung.
An unoriental collage of crowbars, hammers, splintered
flying wood, the groan of nails forced from their pits. The East
came nearer. Pads of plastic foam, corrugated cardboard
like peasant roofs, excelsior (or maybe the phoenix's nest)
swathes of pulp paper and red cord. A sudden avalanche
of dried cedar beans bared a fat in-curved leg
of teak, a new scent. A dragon's eye shone
darkly amid shadow-shapes slashed with gold.
Peering from depths of the Han Dynasty, it pierced
the final layer by its own dint; its body coiled
and clung to drawers and doors, enormous impatience
slipping the ties of dozens of oblique-eyed Liliputians.
Then through a paper fissure on the side,
a trick of light on hand-rubbed lacquer—the phoenix wing
was a battle axe: General Kuan Kung, pursuing his vow
to liberate the mainland, adjusted his armor and headdress,
turned and vanished behind seven hundred years. Only
beast and bird burst free, flaming orbs
clutched in claws, scales glittering blackly,
and shook off the last dust of island China.

THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

Glenna Holloway

Fujiyama

Haunting as haiku in pastel mist paintings.

Three weeks I waited for live audience with its majesty,
fastening my fortunes to cedars, hiking the Hakone hills
while bright ferries slid the lake below.

Once, struggling up Fuji's flanks I had touched it
like truth, held it hugely.

Unidentifiable.

A Shinto wind urged me back, beyond shadow slants,
out of the ignorance of intimacy. But now
the mountain sat in supreme privacy like a fat shogun
enshrined in smoke from a billion cencers,
unmoved by my petitions,
contemplating old crucibles beneath his throne,
considering a show of power, screening his conclusions
from earth eyes.

I had to leave. Then flying home, off the starboard wing—
a Bodhisattva!

pedestaled on ermine and lapis, Helios-haloed,
capped and caped in white lotus. Fujiyama.

Electing to stay this side of heaven, giving a glimpse
inside the meaning of light. Forcing shut earth eyes.

BAOBAB TREE

Morning:

The inkblot against the sun
Erupted like a geyser into the shaggy sky.
Zigzag in slow motion
A black quill
Returned to matted branches of calligraphy.
Berserk roots that grew bark and
Aspired to heaven
Lurched upward to await the twilight embrace
Of winged partners who won.

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

I submitted this over a year ago and someone there liked it well enough to comment. I've been working on it ever since.

RUWENZORI!
Glenna Holloway

Some still say "Dark Continent"—unenlightened strangers
Who read one page—strangers who land and leave and
Never need to shield their eyes.

I have seen the dripping corridors of gnarled green weaving,
Forever dayless, faces and feet in shades of night,
Pits and cages of custom, gray bags of storm low over lion
And python. And I have seen black magic and the ancient
Cult of the Leopard Men— places where ignorance is pure
And evil is still innocent.

Down in the grass you know nothing of light,
Not even in ~~the~~ savage sudden daybreak on the veldt.
To know it, to believe it, you must climb.

Out of compost and liana. Into temple veiling. Above you—
They are there— The Mountains of the Moon!
Continental beacons headdressed in Ptolemaic pylons and pyramids,
Great glistening giants of ice and silica and glossy lakes.

Ruwenzori—The Mountains of the Moon!

Polar-cold unsculpted obelisks that fell from a lunar range,
Equator-hot uncut crystal domes that heaved up
Whole from Hades, defying Pluto's spewing funnels.
Frosted deserts and frozen dunes,
Altars of alabaster, secured, sacred, beyond
Marble moats arc-lit with scimitars of sun.
Wet-shiny skin of the guides reflects the unblinding blow.
None can remember dark.

THE BEST THING MY FATHER DID WAS LIE

People, all the pretty people lie so well and tell
truth like amateurs in little threadbare theaters—
It all comes out damp and gray, slurred and slurried,
going away and coming back.

Where do you dig for truth? Out on the parallax,
deep in the center or in the middle? There's a difference—
One is this fence I'm on; the pickets
are cut and dried, alternating black and white, scratching
fact sore, but not much truth.

People climb here out of context
to reach boughs of that ancient tree.

But wormy to the core, the whole crop, and my father said
conqueror worms were final ONLY truth.

He polished his lies like jewels, wore one
in each eye and a ruby in his tongue. His skull rattled
with those in storage for special events and Sunday.
He mined the world for his rough stock
mine polished was dull beside.

We inlaid his coffin with favorites, the rest
he willed to me, never to go with fence-climbing,
fruit-picking clothes. I keep them here, see?
Worms have started on the box but the gems are still
beautiful and whole. I planned to sit here

The Best Thing My Father Did Was Lie

until all were devoured, but it won't happen.
Worms tried to bite the big ruby,
sprung their jaws and died. Only harder stones
can make dust of these. Or some marvelous ray.

Until unequivocal then, the beasts will eat,
the jewels will glitter, each its own irrelevance,
and I am tired of watching.

All the truth ore is down there in either sludge.
This quasi-I must jump off one of these sides
and grope
for nothing absolute.

If only some almost holy wind would push.

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

ON ENCOUNTERING

Glenna Holloway

I always have to brace to look in his eyes;
I'm never quite ready.

They look too much back, they hurt,
They wrestle mine to the ground.

What do you say to eyes that
Watched Pompeii crash under boiling mud,
Saw the Roman Empire flattened to pages of paper tongue,
Witnessed the fall of bombs, axes, heads, dynasties,
And the obscenities of Golgatha?
What do you say to eyes that still
Hold tears for you?

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

ONLY SAND

Glenna Holloway

When I was eighteen I believed John Donne:
"No man is an island, entire of itself..." But he
was wrong. I wept and the water didn't rise,
bled and it didn't redden my neighbor's beach. I
grew up, shrank down, and became an island. I
wrote a play without parts, played a song
without notes. No man's death
diminishes me because I am not involved in man-
kind. Soundproof fog surrounds me
securing my secession. Why, Preacher,
would I send to know anything? I rubbed night
in my eyes, then polarized the currents and tides
of my See away from my placid thighs. And
here I sink and die.
And no bell tolls.
None knows.

REFLECTIONS OF A SEASHORE WEEKEND THIRTY YEARS PAST

No matter now if that day that nine-year-old
Had taken off hot anonymity and gone ignoring
To the ocean's feet, felt wind and foam,
Played with sand and periwinkles. Instead
He tested his artless camouflage, untrusted in water;
He ran back to his parents' room where
Other children's winged joy attacked walls and windows,
Where he wished his flaw were deafness, invisible, unstrange—
Or worse—from which eyes swerve,
Quick-blessed look-away and let-alone— anything
To keep their curiosity and distaste from surfacing like sweat,
Dripping down on him, lodging lye in his pores.

No matter now that he owns the old hotel, the beach,
Some of the people— a man leached out inside a man:
One in patented laminate, coated with success. The other,
Unwhole and unholly, no one has yet seen.

G. Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

REFLECTIONS OF A SEASHORE WEEKEND TWENTY YEARS PAST
Glenn Holloway

Unwilling even then to serve their sticky eyes,
Normal them perched high on the hotel veranda, peering down
Like dark buzzards at his differentness, making ~~their~~ buzzard sounds,
Snatching him up with grainy tongues to volley him like a hare hide
Between them—then on to those on the beach
Sharing sameness, secure in naked nonentity enough
^{for} To peel him with ill-cloaked questions and unskilled pointing.
No matter now if that day, that nine-year-old
Had taken off hot anonymity and gone ignoring
To the ocean's feet, felt wind and foam,
Played with sand and periwinkles. Instead he clutched camouflage ^{his} ~~wise~~
~~And~~ ran back to his parents' room where other children's
Winged joy attacked walls and windows,
Where he wished for deafness, invisible, unstrange—
Or worse—from which eyes swerve
Quick blessed look-away and let-alone— anything
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No matter now that he owns the old hotel, *the beach*,
A man leached out inside a man—
One of patented laminate, coated with success. The other,
Unwhole and unholy, no one has yet seen.

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

RONDEAU FOR TRANSITION

by Glenna Holloway

A girl will cry when boys pull hair,
Will run to mother and declare
That boys are mean and nevermore
Will she allow them through her door.
Years later they all gather there.
Soon one gets in to meet her dare,
Becomes a mute beneath her glare.
"I never met a bigger bore,"
A girl will cry.
Another comes, stakes out a chair,
And makes her wonder what to wear
As dreams and brand new worries pour
Through portals never used before.
When love becomes her greatest care
A girl will cry.

Glenна Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

BAND PRACTICE
Glenна Holloway

Drum your fingers to static, watch the leaders:

smoke-eyed, star-eyed,
hot-eyed, misty-eyed,
in huge halls swaying
to something-for-everyone lyrics
anyone could have written in flats,
snagging any handy pumphandle for
yea-yea choruses. Folk-rock op-
portunity racking up the people
always clapping for a new rhythm,
clasping anything that changes key,
even chants by professional virgins
pouring out pander songs.

Listen, acid-rocked, candy-rocked, rooked citizen-swinger,

whoever leads the magic combo,
sheep-shuffler, shibboleth-dancer,
tunes coiled deep in the horns
won't change. Watch the big sound
break decibels, shatter eyeballs
while your hearing trickles
down the slot where echos go,
hung-beat in your brain, afterbeat
in your bones, and clap, damn you,
but come on hard with your hulking
homemade drum and your own sure tempo!

Mrs. R. W. Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

FOUR THOUGHTS IN TANKA

by Glenna Holloway

An empathic soul
May thrum to avant-garde or
Aged corn—but hums most
Satisfyingly to a
Tenuous balance of both.

Watching star-wake through
Night-eyes of glass is reading
Cosmic poetry
While it is being written
By ancients on scrubbed blackboards.

Every round of rain
Is primed and loaded with an
Embryonic leaf,
And each storm may be sifted
For air-borne genes of heaven.

If you snare a piece
Of spring or Eos-tinted
Shreds to weave a word,
You overheard the first Muse
Rehearsing hymns for the sun.

Glenna Holloway
1028 Apple Lane
Lombard, Ill. 60148

DON'T EVER COME WHEN I CALL

Glenna Holloway

Forsake day

Wrap yourself in night and turn to me

You must choose

Night doesn't plunge and cling smiling-brittle
between us I can push night aside or
slide through its loose perfume I can't
cross streaming moats of hot-icy brilliance.

Shaded and packaged, illumination is still
the betrayer Even here we won't escape diluting
feelers of light Blind I can smell it feel
it hear it know its frequency like a pulse
The destroyer impales us on vivid points: you in
your narrow layer I cannot enter, mine the end
product of lightyears of ugliness you should not
Forget we almost met I see too well
my hand would sludge your whiteness

Now That the Devil Is Passé...

I, IGNOTUM PER IGNOTIUS

Diabolus is overthrown and dead. My kingdom is secure.
Truth is my favorite emissary, and pious pulpits.
Hail! to strong young minds with ripe walls;
I have no need of sophists, atheists, and false prophets.
I was born from the wick of an atom, the womb of woman,
in labor for centuries of science and civilization.
I had a hundred native sires whose sometimes-names
are scant recalled—Odin, Ares, Thor—
(few would recognize the rest or care about
the hymeneal hieroglyphics of my conception) they all merged
into a traveling salesman-god who never dreamed
his wedding and rape of Mortal Mind would bear
anything but vitriol and violence, a misbegotten ogre-heir
without a crown. And my father went his way,
sure of his throne and amnesty of Belial's reign.

In my prenatal wisdom I had my mother destroy
my paternal parent, the bumbling satrap,
still strutting with a naked sword and drinking blood—
no match for her battering ram of reason and religion.
No matter that convulsive cults still worship
his now-and-then ghosts; the masses perform the old rituals
for me!

Homage! Human sacrifice! On a scale so grand
the devil almost died of envy before I poisoned him.

Globe-guardians, pew-sitters, pedants and law-squatters,
all custodians of humanity shout me noble names
as iridescently I rise, my huge
monolithic ideal pointing up to heaven.

Aimed at heaven.

Ah, the righteous rationale, the Gnostic good, the savior
syndrome!

Satan merely quoted scripture to his ends; I
write it! Burn it into liturgy, purge the prayers,
torch their spirits with the flames of dedication.
Addiction follows quickly as you see.

They shall have magic and machines, citadels
in Draco's outback. They shall have miracles and medicine
and solutions for death, bastions beneath earth's privy.
Let them find out life, let them make it, let them have it,
but never discover what they have.

I will lend them power, I will feed them with it;
I wear the wreaths of honor, sing the odes of simple service.
I wash myself in love and pass the drippings,
those sweetened cups of drugs.

In God's name, the pose is priceless,
In God's name they worship me!

With Lucifer gone, who will suspect?

Some even think God dead.

Yet, I have them gazing upward, I show
the holy colors and the visions they look for and the signs--
Who will notice the road paved with slowly sinking assets?
Who will guess the compass point is magnetized and mesmerized
and time is just another tyrant idol?

Yes, I have challenged God--
Who lets man fight His duels.
And man is such a fool...