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signs
of Presence,
Love &
More

Poetry of the Unification Movement

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Love &
More

Poetry of the Unification Movement

Unification Theological Seminary • Barrytown, New York 12507

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Contents

ix *Foreword*

Part One □ You Ask Me Why I'm Here

- 3 *You Ask Me Why I'm Here* / Sara Mazumdar
- 4 *The Lord's Stallion* / John Thompson
- 4 *Sisters* / Alice Hellerstein
- 8 *What Is a Good Christian?* / Sara Mazumdar
- 5 *There's a House in the Distance* / Janet Cook
- 6 *What Good Is a Belief?* / Sara Mazumdar
- 10 *Hands* / Robert Hall
- 11 *Sustaining* / Stephen Hicks
- 12 *These Eyes Have Changed* / Michael Bradley
- 12 *The World Seemed Good and Warm* / Felice Hart
- 14 *Japanese Couple* / Tyler Hendricks
- 14 *Spring Rain* / Ramona Josh
- 15 *Of America (Save My Country)* / Sara Mazumdar
- 18 *It's Not So Much* / Janet Cook

Part Two □ A World in Need of Love

- 21 *It's Saturday* / Janet Cook
- 22 *On the Ladder* / Lloyd Howell
- 22 *The Servant* / Robin Kuhl
- 23 *Yesterday* / Janet Cook
- 24 *Halloween, 1976* / Mark Anderson
- 24 *Name: Man* / Carolyn Nelson

- 25 *Armageddon* / Ramona Josh
- 25 *On Finding a Small Kitten* / Sara Mazumdar
- 28 *The Ogden Rescue Mission* / Lloyd Howell
- 29 *Everyday* / Janet Cook
- 29 *Ambassador to France* / Frank Bisher
- 31 *I Am the Child* / Janet Cook
- 31 *To Janis Joplin, et. al.* / Robert Selle
- 32 *The Angry Pumpkin* / Lloyd Howell
- 33 *Sunflower* / Ye-Jin Moon
- 34 *The Porch Life* / Leslie Weiss
- 35 *We Are the Lord's Paint* / John Lowen
- 37 *Oh, Father* / Janet Cook

Part Three To Find the Ancient Road

- 41 *All Roads Lead to Rome* / Carolyn Nelson
- 42 *Pilgrim* / Gerry Servito
- 43 *Light* / Frank Bisher
- 43 *The Advent* / Ramona Josh
- 44 *Father's Rock* / Leona Eagle Eye
- 45 *Even I Get There* / Adri de Groot
- 45 *Look Today* / David Bruner
- 46 *Sprouting from His Desire* / Anonymous
- 47 *Not of this Earth* / Adri de Groot

Part Four Signs of Presence, Love, and More

- 51 *The Traveler* / Cynthia R. Bergman
- 52 *Hymn of Jesus* / Graham Brodie
- 52 *The Air Was Bright* / Sara Mazumdar

53 *Sisters* / Cynthia R. Bergman

54 *My Mother* / Ye-Jin Moon

55 *1200 Hands Clapping* / Barbara Ten Wolde

55 *After Yankee Stadium* / Alistair Farrant

56 *Washington Monument* / Alistair Farrant

57 *A Sign of Presence and Love and More* / Bob Schmitt

59 *God Speaks* / Michael Breedlove

59 *Dear Son* / Jim Stephens

60 *Do You Need Me* / Leona Eagle Eye

61 *A Revelation*

Part Five □ So Comes the Son

65 *Aha-Lani-Sha (Love-Sunshine-Navajo)* / David Bruner

66 *Roly-poly* / Alex Colvin

67 *We All Know the Lovely Signs* / Frank Bisher

67 *The Sun* / Constantine Tsirpanlis

67 *The Flower* / Alice Hellerstein

68 *Matins* / Carolyn Nelson

69 *Awakening* / Ramona Josh

70 *Flowing from God's Eyes* / Barbara Burrowes

70 *So Comes the Son* / Alice Hellerstein

Part Six □ We Learn His Heart

73 *Night-Prayer* / Thea Jaschok

74 *Oh Father* / Mark P. Wells

74 *If You Aren't in Me (Si no estás en mí)* / Isabel Málaga

75 *When I Erase My Errors (Cuando Borre mis Errores)* / Isabel Málaga

76 *Prayer Hour* / Robert McCauley

77 *New Horizons* / James Hammond Robinson

78 *In the Darkest Moments* / Ramona Josh

78 *Talc* / James Hammond Robinson

79 *Evening Meeting* / Karen Miller

80 *Good Morning, Heavenly Father!* / Zenichiro Hayashi

82 *Much Wisdom Is Yet to be Added Unto Us* / Adri de Groot

83 *We Learn His Heart* / Sara Mazumdar

Part Seven □ Images of Apocalypse

87 *The Dancing Ladies* / Carolyn Nelson

88 *Harebell* / David Grabot

89 *On the Closing of the Day* / Kathleen Tyman

90 *Colorado River* / Robert Selle

91 *On a Breezy Morning* / Ye-Jin Moon

92 *Mother Earth* / Elizabeth Reid

93 *Song of the Sunset* / Donna McMillan

93 *Electric Storm* / Kathleen Tyman

94 *On a Summer Morning* / Ye-Jin Moon

94 *Experience* / Adri de Groot

96 *Harvest* / Frank Bisher

96 *A Man Has to Come Out of His Cave* / Felice Hart

97 *Sunday in South Carolina* / David Clark

98 *Image of Apocalypse* / Leslie Weiss

99 *The Mood of the Third Blessing* / Adri de Groot

100 *The Heart of the Wood* / David Hanna

101 *In This Land* / Judy Sullivan

103 *O Busan* / Genie Kagawa

104 *All My Friends* / Sara Mazumdar

106 *Korean Winter in San Bernardino* / Launi Wuermly

107 *Thank God We're Living in the Days* / John Lowen

Part Eight □ Flower's Teardrop

Haiku

111 *O Wonderful Christ!* / Takeshi Ito

111 *In Morning Twilight* / Takeshi Ito

111 *Season of Harvest* / Takeshi Ito

112 *Pebble* / Alice Hellerstein

112 *Orange Sun Runs Up* / Ramona Josh

112 *I Feel Most Certain* / Sara Mazumdar

112 *Sun Passes Through Clouds* / Sara Mazumdar

112 *Hot Baked Sands Starring* / Sara Mazumdar

112 *Twigs Snap in Dry Days* / Frank Bisher

112 *Fragile Flowers Dance* / Frank Bisher

113 *Graceful Woman's Hand* / Frank Bisher

113 *Letter to the Son* / Frank Bisher

Uta

113 *Dawn's New Grace of the Father* / Takeshi Ito

113 *The Grace of God Overflows* / Takeshi Ito

113 *I, Too, a Novice in Love* / Takeshi Ito

113 *It Seems that God's Spring Will Come* / Takeshi Ito

114 *In a Boat on the River* / Takeshi Ito

114 *Rejoice! Spring Has Surely Come* / Takeshi Ito

114 *Love* / Lori Amundson

114 *Heart* / Lori Amundson

114 *Comfort* / Lori Amundson

Foreword

Signs of Presence, Love and More: Poetry of the Unification Movement is the result of a year-long project by Unification Theological Seminary students. In September, 1976, letters were sent out to Unification Church centers across America and to foreign missionaries requesting poetry for this anthology. By January 15, 1977, the final deadline for submissions, over 2000 poems had been received.

The present work contains 117 poems of those submitted for consideration. Poems were selected on their own merits and as they reflect the heart and spirit of the Unification Movement. They are organized into eight basic sections which are intended to represent the general flow of the *Divine Principle*.

Part One: YOU ASK ME WHY I'M HERE? on the one hand expresses the poets' restless discontent with themselves and a world that doesn't always live up to their best expectations. On the other hand, hope for better things has never abandoned them. Hence the poems are like electric storms flashing challenge to personal and collective faith.

Part Two: A WORLD IN NEED OF LOVE tells of broken dreams, childhoods, and lives; personal pain, false words, and prisons of the soul. A poignant story of the difficulties we, as human beings, have had in encountering God and understanding one another.

Part Three: TO FIND THE ANCIENT ROAD looks backward in order to look forward again. Men and women pulling themselves up by their bootstraps. Their footsteps in search of communion with God. A messianic age, a cosmic spring to come.

Part Four: SIGNS OF PRESENCE, LOVE AND MORE are just that—signs that

God is at last truly present to envelop you with all the varied manifestations of love. Poems that speak of the father, mother, son and daughter and the world from God's perspective.

Part Five: SO COMES THE SON describes resurrection and the feelings of rebirth and joy it brings to both body and soul. Faith has reemerged, and lives have been transformed.

Part Six: WE LEARN HIS HEART makes us aware of the long struggle to know God. A call to repentance and prayer as well as joy.

Part Seven: IMAGES OF APOCALYPSE is a tribute to a world built with vision and love. Nature is seen in its glory. Mankind works together side by side. Earth and heaven merge into one, but not without men and women exercising responsibility in work, labor and sweat!

Part Eight: FLOWER'S TEARDROP is a collection of short poems in popular Japanese genres. Life reflected in a dewdrop!

This book would not exist without the help of a host of individuals. First, we would like to thank the many church members who contributed their poetry. In particular, we wish to thank Rita Kolody for her generous help in typing the manuscript; Jack Toren, Robert Davis, Franz Zurawski, Hitoshi Nagai, and Paul Olivier for the photography; Walter Gottesman and Pier Angelo Beltrami for their helpful suggestions on the book's format; and Janet Cook for collecting hundreds of poems by New York church members and sending them to the Seminary. Thanks also go to Nancy Neiland, Cynthia Shea, and Bonnie Blair for their assistance in reaching both foreign missionaries and church members across America. Finally, we extend our deep thanks to Mr. David S.C. Kim, President of the Unification Theological Seminary, for his encouragement and his support of this anthology.

It is our sincere hope that these poems reflect the spirit of the Unification Movement and it's founder, Reverend Sun Myung Moon.

General Editors: Frank Bisher
Michael Mickler

Associate Editors: Robert McCauley
Bob Schmitt

Barrytown, N. Y.
July 1, 1977

SIGNS OF PRESENCE, LOVE AND MORE



Part One

YOU ASK ME WHY I'M HERE

You Ask Me Why I'm Here

You ask me why I'm here—
I'll tell you.
Even if I wasn't sad at a death
and stunned by human misery,
Even if I weren't an idealist,
and believed everybody should be happy,
Even if I could turn my back on poverty,
and ignore injustice,
Even if I didn't care about other peoples,
and the welfare of other countries,
Even if I could find satisfaction
in my own small world,
Even if I liked everyone, and feared none,
and could make others happy,
Even if there were no hatred,
no strife, no wars,
Even if I had never felt the agony of wonder
and had never seen doubt,
Even if I were a King with empires,
or a beggar with none,
Even if I knew the secrets of life
and all my dreams came true,
Even if my family were all I have hoped for,
and life was full of promise—

Even if all these things were true,
I would still be here.
And I would still love the principles
I hold so dear,
And trust others with my life,
And give all I have in me to give,
And seek to serve as best I can.

Sara Mazumdar

The Lord's Stallion

I want to be the Lord's stallion
Thick and broad and sinewed,
And of milky mane,
Sun's fire caught and flashing
In my dancing eyes
And hooves as sharp and shiny
As obsidian!

I want to feel upon my neck
The firm direction of His arms
And feel my tensing flanks
Beneath the pressure of His thigh,
He gives His shout,
I jump
My flesh is condensed energy!
We spirit forward
Through the endless sky!

John Thompson

Sisters

You are my sisters,
I hardly know your faces,
And I certainly don't know your names
Though I've heard them once or twice
When I've talked with one of you.
But you are my sisters.

You are my sisters,
Our lives began thousands of miles apart.
Our first words were spoken in different languages,
(And even now we have few words in common)
But I understand you well enough to know
You are my sisters.

You are my sisters,
We love the same God.
The same love gave us hope,
We are truly sisters.

Alice Hellerstein

There's a House in the Distance

there's a house in the distance—
i can see the light
through the trees
heavy with snow on their branches.

there's a man in the distance, too—
coming closer
hour by hour—
and He's calling out,
guiding me . . .
reassuring me . . .

i'm just a child,
loving with a little heart,
running with little footprints,
reaching with little fingers;
sometimes so bold—
sometimes a bit frightened
when i chance to trip in ruts
and chuckholes along the way.

i'm getting stronger, though,
and growing taller
the days lead me on—
just seeing His smile

and hearing His voice
seem to melt the icicles,
and calm the biting wind
that dries my damp and wrinkled cheeks.

i feel Him extending His arms
to draw me in,
and i begin to realize
that finding God

is like coming home.

janet cook

What Good Is a Belief?

What good is a belief?
It's as good as your life.

Are you happy? Can you
live the way you want to?
What do you believe?
Does your belief give you a better life?

Don't be fooled—truth may
not be pleasant—just like
medicine—it may sting.
Hear ideas that are powerful
enough to transform a nation.
But don't listen unless
you can bear the message of truth.

What good is a belief?
It's as good as your life.

A good belief should give you hope—
A good belief should bring you closer
to your fellow man—
it should help you face times of sorrow—
and it should help you face yourself.

People have fought wars over beliefs,
Men have killed other men for their ideas.
Some was done for the greater good of all.
Some wars have only caused suffering
because they were for the cause of one man alone.

Hatred is easy.
Love is more difficult.
He who can love his enemy,
he it is who will win.

A good belief sometimes
causes pain—because
all is not good in the world.

But a good belief—like a
trusted friend, will be
there in the end.

A good belief is sometimes
painful—because it causes a
wound in the callousness of
complacency.

Sara Mazumdar

What Is A Good Christian?

Is it going to church every Sunday?
 Is it saying your prayers before every meal?
 Is it knowing your minister and knowing that he knows you?
 What constitutes a GOOD Christian?
 As many denominations as there are, that is the minimum number of answers.
 Probably there are as many answers as there are people—
 three and a half billion?

One day I was sitting by the window, thinking.
 An elderly lady walked by “Turn off your sprinkler
 I have to get by—and you call yourselves Christians!
 Hurry up, I’ll miss my bus!”
 She could have walked around, maybe? Or taken another street.
 But she didn’t. And Christian to her meant not letting the water
 touch the sidewalk.

Our neighbor says, “You’re a nice bunch of kids—
 If you’d just pick up the garbage around there—.”
 (He reports us to the city if it doesn’t meet his standard.)
 A Christian to him means keeping your lawn trimmed and your garbage gone.
 (Does it mean picking up your neighbor’s garbage if you don’t like it?)

If you see a nice lawn,
 Have you found a Christian?
 I met a man once with a beautiful lawn.
 He insisted I must step back off his property onto the sidewalk.
 (Maybe he meant the street. I think I got a little too close.)
 I tried to tell him that it was really God’s property, and He had
 given this man dominion. Did he know God’s Will so well?
 He not only didn’t listen to me, but was ready to strike me if I didn’t leave.
 (For a moment I contemplated staying—to see what would happen.)
 A Christian to him meant leaving him alone.

A man once gave us a donation—to help spread the goodness, I’m sure.
 He must have felt there was something good about us.
 But later he changed his mind. I found out when the check came back from the bank.

I called him and we had a wonderful talk. We agreed on everything except that the Savior would be seen standing in the air. To him a Christian is Jesus coming on the clouds. (I wonder if he still thought I was good?)

“Do this, and you will live,” says Jesus as He tells about the good Samaritan. There are some who refuse to talk to me when they find out who I represent. To them a Christian is blocking out those who don’t agree with you.

I can’t remember the face, but I can remember the response—
“I’m not interested. I’m Catholic.” That, of course, explains everything!

“And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him, ‘What is written in the law? How do you read?’ And he answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You have answered right; do this and you will live.’ ” (Luke 10:23-28)

I wonder what he really meant?

I wonder who is the Christian to him?

I wonder what he would have done—

- if he were the lady walking by? or if he were sitting in the window when she passed?
- if he were our neighbor? or if he had more garbage than the neighbor liked?
- if he were the man with the nice lawn? or if he had been in my shoes?
- if he were the man who gave the donation? or if he were the one who called to find out why the man changed his mind?
- if he were the one who disagrees with me so much? or if he were the one blocked out?
- if he were Catholic?

I wonder what he would have done?

Actually,

I wonder if he would be a Good Christian?

Hands

Hands . . .
Creative hands,
making houses, churches
making sounds—music entrancing to the ear
music that lifts the soul and takes it to—
planes of beauty, calm and rest . . .
making hands, moulding hands
shaping a rough image into
a thing of beauty
to be admired.

Hands . . .
a mother's hands . . .
Hands that cradle a new-born child and fondle his
 hair as she gazes intently in his eyes.
Mother's hands reaching and touching
Son's hands
hoping that those hands will make and not mar,
 help and not hinder,
 create and not destroy,
 create life and not murder;
a hand of friendship, not that of foe,
Hands that bring joy in song and dance,
 to touch the golden flowers
 to feel the beauty of the earth.
Hands to help a brother
 to show the way
 to show direction by example
Hands—
 fingers working together in harmony
 bringing free flow of movement
 beauty of working together
 for one purpose.

Hands . . .

God's Hands

creating in His own image . . . man
to bring God's Family on the earth,
hands of God reaching out
through thousands of years

Hopeful Hands

Pleading Hands

Longing Hands

Expecting Hands

Loving Hands

Parental Hands

Beloved Hands

God's Hands

reaching out to man today . . .

Robert Hall

Sustaining

Just what I wanted
Yet so difficult.
Sometimes like a can
Getting kicked
Who cares about the pain?
I just want to make progress.

Stephen Hicks

These Eyes Have Changed

These eyes have changed
 They've really changed
 They're much different than before
 before they were clouded and filled with sludge
 but now they're clear and filled with love
 they've become mirrors to my soul
 windows for my lord
 these ears have changed
 they've really changed
 they're much different than before
 they used to be filled with
 jackhammers commercials dirty words and rock and roll
 now they're filled with the words of my lord
 since I became a receiver for my lord
 my mouth has changed
 it's really changed
 it's much different than before
 it used to be filled with
 slogans and jingles soap operas and all kinds of static
 but now it's become a mouthpiece for my lord
 my life has changed
 it's really changed
 since I came to know my lord.

Michael Bradley

The World Seemed Good and Warm

the world seemed good and warm,
 and we played our games
 in the damp, salty air;
 ran our circles,
 talked of our freedom
 to do all that we wished,
 spoke of our insight

into all that exists, and life flowed on
in a slow, liquid way.

then
one day
unexpectedly
I somehow dove out of myself
into a different air
not nearly so damp
not nearly so dark—
but ablaze with light,
and I gazed upon
what seemed to be
a dampened cheek
of an immense and splendid Face,
a Face I'd never seen . . .
but somehow more familiar than my own—
as if mine were but an image
cast from this cosmic countenance,
the Face behind all faces.

and I saw where I had been,
a place that now seemed strange:
a slowly-running
teardrop . . .
a teardrop among many
streaming down the Face,
flowing together
in tiny rivulets,
oblivious of their origin:
eyes as deep as the sky
as full as the ocean
as warm as the sun—
eyes that once I saw
I could not turn away . . .

but begin to scale the cheek
to reach the eyes of Life,
while tears poured from my own.

Japanese Couple

We are a Japanese couple, on a narrow path,
 Down a moonlit canyon, with a stream below us.
 As hard as life has been,
 With many years in the Western nation,
 Nothing can end the Father's love,
 Embracing us this evening as we make our way,
 Man and wife,
 Down the narrow path
 to our home.

Tyler Hendricks

Spring Rain

Everyone likes the spring rain,
 but who likes to stand
 beneath a swollen sky in winter?
 What lowly spider
 does not scurry to find a place to hide
 When dew turns to flood on his grassy home?
 Inside my house
 I watch
 I cannot feel the reality of coldness
 sitting near the radiator.
 Someone comes to my door.
 Please buy a flower, his heart said.
 My eyes danced on the petals
 of red and white carnations.

What heat his presence brought.
 I forgot the rain
 and stood watching
 as flowers bloomed on every doorstep.

I watched
 as my Father's love
 was rained upon by winter torrents
 only to spend itself to make the children smile.
I forgot the rain
 and ran after Him.
I wanted to go home.

Ramona Josh

Of America (Save My Country)

The drums beating
 the throb of guitar
I never knew I could love her
 music so much.
Every note, every word of the song
 felt like drops of rain
 in a sun-baked place.
I may be the child of a rich man,
 but I'm a poor man now.
 And I scramble for every morsel.
Just one drop, how precious.

I remember her streets and alleys,
 her cities
 —the lights
 —the hamburger places
 —the bars
 —the old houses with bright colors
 —and loud music.
 —the churches, the good ones, the bad ones.
 —the highways, the dotted lines, the truck stops.
And I remember her people
 Each one my brother, each one my sister.

New York, Louisville, San Francisco
My God! My God!
Save my country
Let it be free
Let it be a light of hope to the world.

The things you have, my brothers and sisters,
the things you take for granted,
 everyday—
belong only to the rich
 here in other places.
You have oil for your stoves,
You have buses traveling half empty,
You have rice and flour, milk
You have freedom
You have the blessing of God.
Can't the kingdom start with you?

Go to your colleges
 Where you can think, and feel and act
 as you choose,
And beg them to become educated enough
 to teach those
 who have no books,
 no pencils, no paper,
sometimes no eyes, no hands
 no feet
 and no home.

Go to your churches
 the ones full of fire,
And ask them to pray to God
 to stop hatred between
 Hindus and Muslims
 that causes not one family,
 but many families
 to be slaughtered.

Go to your factories, with their
safety regulations;
let them become inspired
to show others how to work
so that truckloads of people
won't die on the road,
or in homes that collapse.

Go to the wealthy,
Tell them there are people—
thousands, millions—
who would consider it a fortune
to have one dollar a day.
Ask them if they couldn't
spare that much.

No, my brothers, no, my sisters,
You are the ones who have the blessing—
Save my country
You have the knowledge, you have greatness,
Don't let it be corrupted.

It's your country.
It's my country.
It's our world.

Sara Mazumdar

It's Not So Much

it's not so much
that we have been blessed
with the mountains
who stand day after day
only to bring us joy—
 but that we have been given
 the strength
 for climbing them;
not so much
the challenge itself
that makes life

unique—
 but that we have been given
 the insight for understanding it,
 the courage for undertaking it,
 and the perseverance for attaining
 the win;

it's not so much
that we have the chance
of blending our lives into One
and building a beautiful future—
 but that we have been given
 the gift
 of a love— strong enough—
 to lead us
 to risk everything
 to make it in the end.

janet cook



Part Two

A WORLD IN NEED OF LOVE

it's Saturday . . .
and they throw crackers
from a brown paper sack
to pigeons in the park.
the flock is many
and they fight among themselves
for the crumbs in the grass—
just inches from my feet—
trusting . . .

i watched him walk
on three-year-old legs
to see the birds.
his mama waited on the sidewalk
as he started running—
his little arms reaching out
so bravely
to greet them—
trusting . . .
ten, nine, eight, seven feet—
he was almost there—
when someone blew up the bag
and popped it
for a joke.

the birds were gone in a moment,
fleeing as for their very lives;
and the people laughed and laughed . . .
but no one noticed
the tiny smile disappear
as the tears started to fall.

someone once trusted
a snake
in another park,
and now we all—
as children—
find ourselves
reaching out to find trust.

on the ladder

high on the 12 foot ladder
your neck out on a limb
a gust of wind—
the branches sway
ladder rocks
and amidst the bobbing spheres
you look down
visualizing catastrophe
shrugging your shoulders
reaching for another apple

lloyd howell

The Servant

The servant brought her a magic key
To open the gates of liberty.
She was flattered that he should come so far.
The key became a prison bar.

Robin Kuhl

yesterday
i spoke empty words
to strangers
in crowded subway stations.

i walked straight
with proud steps
and a hard heart;
seldom seeing any seagulls
or rainbows
or sunrises on Saturday
mornings.

yesterday
i cried to God
in a brick church
on 14th street
for a reason to go home
again . . .

today i opened child-like eyes
and innocently peered
from a window seat
at trust and truth
and love;
and knew that
God was not so far away—
only just beyond
my selfishness,
and grown-up ways
of living
yesterdays . . .

only just beyond
the white picket fence,
calling me . . .

janet cook

Halloween, 1976

Longing eyes glance from behind crazy masks.
 Tiny figures run to and fro like moths from light—
 lonely little urchins compete for love and attention.

Who can take care of these lost ones?
 Broken glass—littered empty lots—cars honking,
 I will long remember this place of fear and loneliness.
 It is soon to be only a sad memory in God's heart.

Mark Anderson

Name: Man

A very soft sadness
 came whispering today
 a tuneless humming mumble
 centered around a note
 that cannot be found
 except maybe . . .
 in the whining of the wind
 crying like a human child
 in the dark.

The rose I kept
 in a vase on my desk
 to remind me
 that the summer and I
 are only temporarily separated,
 not forever lost to each other,
 wilted.

Tears cannot name
 this lost sadness
 except, maybe
 "Father,—why hast-thou-forsaken—me."

Carolyn Nelson

Armageddon

They took my joy
 sifted it
 under a microscope eye
 and called God a chemical
 in my cell
 and offered to remove it
 so I could live normally.

Ramona Josh

On Finding A Small Kitten

One tiny helpless creature
 Wandering alone on the road.
 Why should I have bent over
 to pick it up?
 It was early morning, still dark,
 the street was wet from the last rain,
 And it seemed to come running
 Straight to me from nowhere.

Now she lies sleeping,
 curled, confident, full, and trusting.
 It is I who am wandering now.
 Over and over life,
 Sometimes running,
 sometimes sauntering,
 sometimes quivering as the kitten was
 when I picked her up this morning.

Can the ache be stopped by such a
 tiny creature?
 Can doors open simply by bending over
 to pick up a stray kitten—

doors that before were bolted shut—
impenetrable by any means?
By so simple an action
those doors will open?

If that is so,
what is our life, this life that we live?
Kings might tell you it is
a mighty empire.
An artist might tell you it is
the satisfaction of the feelings
finally expressed and communicated
to someone.
A skier might say
it's the wind and the snow
and the power of gliding down
a mountainside
A minister might say
"It's God—
You must trust and love
God."

But this small kitten
doesn't know God—
or skiing, or art
or empires.
But there is something
satisfying to hold it
to watch it eat—
to laugh when she falls over.

The kitten was running
because she lost her home.
When a mother loses her child
she becomes desperate—
not when the child is held safely
next to her.

When a father has no child
he wonders why he has worked so hard—
not when he anticipates
giving everything to his son.

The skier looks for a mountain
when he's in the valley.
A king searches for his subjects
when he has none.
An artist looks for his brushes
when he has something to tell.

I suppose it is fulfilling
your desire
that stops the questions.
But what happens
when a skier-King
meets an artist-minister?
Can they ever fit into
each other's lives—
The King looking for subjects,
The Minister looking for a congregation?

Or what happens if your desire is for ice,
And you're half a day from electricity
in the tropics.
Or if your desire is
the Kingdom of Heaven,
and You're only half a heart
there?

Sara Mazumdar

The Ogden Rescue Mission

7 pm service

fill out form:

name, address,

soc. sec. number,

Christ accepted _____

bean stew served outa bottomless pot

talk of potata pickers comin' ta town

stumpjumpin won't tell ya nothin'

Idaho farmers

mention of the first bum kernal

that avalanched a life

toward this narrow valley

the struggle back up

without boots

reaching for a hand

the lord's anybody's

the arms too short

the slide back down

into this life of borrowed pajamas

milk expired

freedom gone stale

theorizing as to which alley

& from whose hand

your next close shave is coming

9 o'clock pillow acquaintance

6 o'clock rise & cough

into the alcohol fog

of concrete pasture

empty belly sermon

lloyd howell

everyday
 i see them . . .
 staring at silent reflections
 in dirty store windows;
 or counting cracks in sidewalks,
 as they stumble down
 smokey city streets . . .

they walk with one shadow
 searching for answers
 in the lonely faces of
 passing strangers—
 silently screaming into a world
 of echoes . . .

i see them . . .
 and long to lead them to a place
 brimming with hopeful tomorrows,
 where someone cares . . .

i see them . . .
 and through my eyes,
 Father cries . . .

janet cook

Ambassador to France

I'm too far gone for that.
 Call a taxi!
 "Can you take me to the Rue de Arnelles?"
 What a cab driver!
 I only want peace and quiet.
 "Watch that child!"

"What!
 Five francs!
 I'll walk next time!"
 See the stars shower

On the patrons
Of Louis' Café,
The light shimmer
On that lady
In blue,
And the drunk scatter pigeons.
"Fling your hat
On the fountain, old man.
That's the spirit!"

No! I must go back—
To that lady in blue
Sitting all alone!
She's there!
"Well, hello Madam.
How are you?
I saw your star shine
Your eyes glitter
And your heart dance on the floor.
Do you always attract a partner that way?"
"Two coffees please,
And Pariser Schnitzel for the both of us!"

"Did you see the opera?
Yes, they were marvelous!
It's set then,
We'll ski tomorrow at nine.
Bring a warm winter coat
For we go to the Alps!"

I'm too far gone for that.
Call a taxi!
"Can you take me to the Rue de Arnelles?"
What a cab driver!
I only want peace and quiet.
Watch that man!

I am the child
 swinging in an empty
 playground . . .
 I am the poor man
 with wrinkled cheeks,
 who sits on a wooden parkbench,
 waiting with breadcrusts
 for stray pigeons . . .
 I'm the lone seagull
 winging slowly
 over a polluted Hudson,
 and the hot afternoon sun
 aching to break through
 the dark, threatening clouds . . .
 Homeless,
 I scream silently
 to those whose hearts
 are shut
 behind heavy wooden doors—
 bolted with apathy and coldness . . .

I am the Father
 who searches—
 crying . . .

janet cook

To Janis Joplin, et.al.

I think you have a spirit sprung from frenzy, Janis;
 Your brain is a kiln, your laughter volcanic,
 Ringing, room-filling, like brass bells or clanging iron,
 Splash of hot confidence and sparks of delight.

Get up, Janis, restless star! How you crave to nova!
 To swim in magma of ecstasy. Your eyes
 Glisten in anticipation. You find—yes, you find
 Unlimited Elohim in a needle!

Janis, furnace of yearning! burning bush of nerves!
Mad for heavens of splendid incandescence,
Exploding your quivering heart into shining gas
That flees into echoing darkness, lunging . . .

You burn hotly, Janis, like an Eniwetok day,
Capillaries of nerves bursting, and straining
To ensnare a Something. And your rollicking, rasping
Song heaps aimless branches on your desert blaze.

But your eyes, O Janis, sitting in the quiet dusk,
Between song and carouse, they are tremulous,
They are lonely, darkly afraid, as a desert dusk!
How I long to comfort you, O restless one!

Robert Selle

The Angry Pumpkin

had had a bruising childhood
the soft spots of which
he refused to let harden into scars
so all day long the juices flowed
like tears
and when last I saw him
he was drying up
totally unprepared for Halloween

lloyd howell

Sunflower

You are a flower too coy
To look others in the eyes!

Like the sesame seeds wrapped in a sheath,
So much is buried deep in your heart!
But only a piteous, dispirited soul
Dwells in your eyes,
Though they burn like live coal.

Under a tiny lamp hanging from the branch of yesternight,
Things of which you prated have already
Vanished like the dream of a rainbow!

Should the wind have carried your message, though
It would still be riding a magic carpet of cloud...

But—
In the end, in the end,
All things are, of a sudden,
Thrown up, lumpy, withered and broken!

Over the crest of a mountain yonder,
The glowing sun, chugging along and struggling, slowly descends.
Alas, summer's drawing to a close...

Ye-Jin Moon, tr. from Korean by Dr. Hae Soo Pyun

The Porch Life

Orange shades
and perfume
in a starry dusk,
night billows in
at the seams.
What light
inside the house
beams
on the black shape
of flowers?
Wide pillow cushion
sittings,
matted screens and
lemonades
of pink and green
array the petals
of a twilight
time, unfolding
on the fringe
of human hope.

I want
the porch life,
sitting—there
beyond the frontier border
of despair,
annexed
to some new growth
within the
growing darkness,
the pregnant house
behind and held
within the silent
zones gone by.

What desire
drapes the hillside homes,
trestles for some
sequence still unknown,
like perfume
held within
a nighttime
rose?

Leslie Weiss

We Are the Lord's Paint

We are the Lord's paint,
His masterpiece we ain't.
We did not turn out like He planned it;
'Cause before the paint could dry
Tears were in His eyes,
His masterpiece lay there in pieces.

Now who can recall,
When the painting fell from the wall,
And God had no home for His love.

Yes, we're the Lord's shattered frame,
but the painter is not to blame;

God's love is give and take,
And this is man's mistake—
Thinking the Lord a tyrant, just a ruler.

God needs man
for His master plan,
and man must accept his role.

But man has been known to object
to being God's object,
yet God's sole objective is love.

Independence isn't freedom, it's the blues.
Man is happiest being used.
Let the Lord use you, and He will make you great.

God does His work through man
and he who lends his hand,
He showers with gifts in abundance.

He's our Father and Subject.
We're His children and objects.
He throws and we catch.

Now what greater joy, than to catch God's pass
or be His reflecting glass.
We make visible God's inner heart.

Yes, we are the Lord's paint,
His masterpiece we ain't.
We did not turn out like He planned it.

'Cause before the paint could dry
tears were in His eyes,
His masterpiece lay there in pieces.

Now who will embrace defeat
with the painting still incomplete;
the final brush stroke is man's heart.

John Lowen

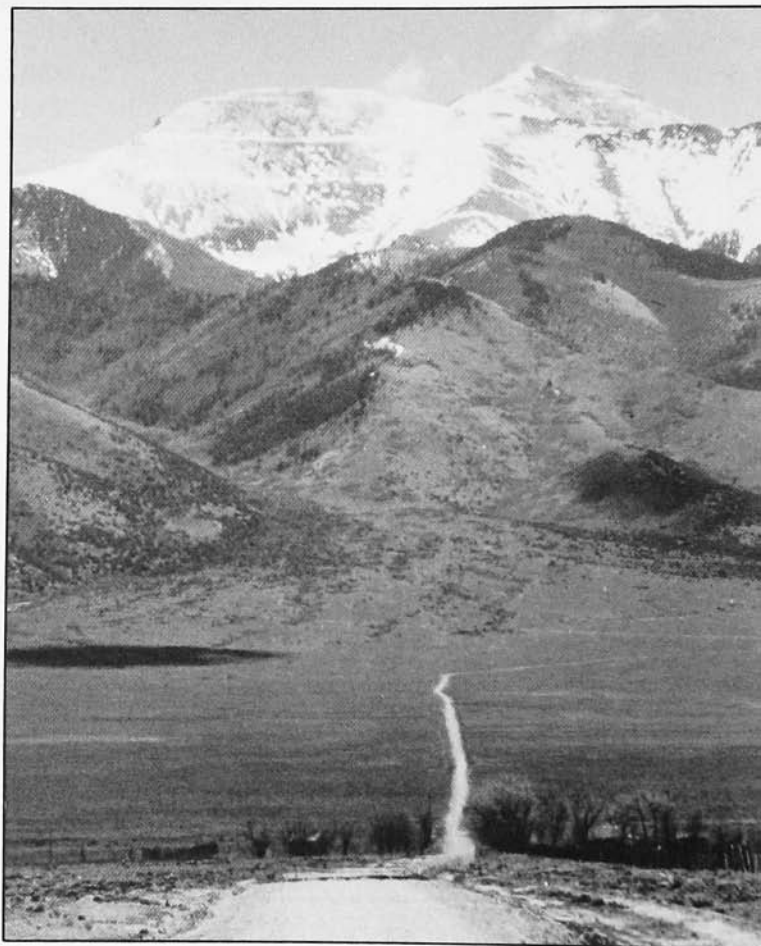
Oh, Father . . .
so long You have hovered
overhead—
just waiting
for a chance to share
Your heart with me . . .

and i make You wait
so many years—
so many lonely nights.

now i make You wait
so many times again.
unwilling to bear Your pain;
pretending i am too weak;
i ignore the tears
i know are falling
at my feet
from Your eyes—
You are so close.

Oh, Father . . .

janet cook



Part Three

TO FIND THE ANCIENT ROAD

All Roads Lead to Rome

Fleeting darkness,
Fleeting night,
Wandering, wandering
For God-sent light.
Asking in dark alleys,
Down dark streets,
Do you know,
Do you know, anyone,
Where the people meet?

Subtle smiles
That tell of God
Are all that I've heard.
Fleeting dark smiles
Promising a mystery
Having no words.
Lying cold
In dark night winter,
Afraid of growing old,
I see them quietly smiling,
Neither distant nor cold.

Shadow smiles
Full of might,
Wandering, wandering
For God-sent light.
Asking in dark alleys,
Down dark streets,
Do you know,
Do you know, anyone,
Where the people meet?

Sunshine people,
Moonlight ones,
Where have all our people gone?
We seek them,

Must find them,
 To find the ancient road;
 For this world leaves us not a prayer
 To find our way home alone.

Fleeting days,
 Fleeting light,
 Wandering, wandering
 For God-sent light.
 Asking in dark alleys,
 Do you know,
 Do you know, anyone,
 Where the people meet?

Carolyn Nelson

Pilgrim

Pilgrim on the silver waters,
 Seeking for the Tree of Life,
 Every footstep is a prayer,
 That might be received tonight!

In your eyes are tales of travels,
 Darker roads to distant stars,
 But to learn the simple secret,
 Do we need to go so far?

We are held, and we are guided,
 By the One who goes before,
 Taking on the burden for us,
 Shedding tears we never know.

Pilgrim on the silver waters,
 Seeking for the Tree of Life,
 Every footstep is a prayer,
 That must be received
 Tonight!

Gerry Servito

Light

A man comes
 Stands as tall as an evergreen
 Weathers the seasons with a lark's tongue
 Survives the playful, ignorant
 Carvings on the bark.
 Outlasts the fire in a thick rind
 And finally is seen standing alone,
 Majestic, fathering the crop of the newly planted.

Frank Bisher

The Advent

A sun,
 alive in light,
 flies with wings extended,
 sweeping the expanse.
 A breeze,
 drawn from the rhythmic movement
 of feather rays,
 blows across my face
 and through the reeds and grasses
 And as it passes
 a great song arises.
 My ears delight
 in the cosmic symphony
 And drawn up in heaven's happiness
 I come, arms filled with flowers,
 one for every hour
 love has claimed.
 And in this sweeping song
 I hear a voice proclaiming,
 "The Lord is coming."

Ramona Josh

Father's Rock

I saw its splendor in the winter
 when ice glazed its beauty
 upon its tender face and snow of cold water of ice.
 But the sun still shone its laugh and
 Stars danced in dreams and the spirit still
 stood in joy.

Somewhere there awaits a spring
 when fish jump and toads croak and
 trees of leaves sway a sway
 Rushing trees and wishing seas and
 there the Rock stands waiting.

They wait to bow like a graceful
 swan in water and air and
 as children waddle like ducks trying
 to copy the way

Father smiles in splendor,
 How silent a rock can
 shout

“The Lord's a coming!”

But tears come forth
 Because they can't
 prefill

They wait for spring
 when birds of dreams
 come true

and unity stands before hate
 Love ways open
 like blossoms of trees

When Father's Rock waits for Spring
 waits

waits

waits

For Spring

Leona Eagle Eye

Even I Get There

Rejoice you impure in heart
for your time of personal controversy has arrived
for your unpleasant struggle to start
but do not curse your blessing

You are also under his eschatology
against your own unfree will
but you are apt to willfully reject
ignorant of what really happens to you

A few cursings and swearings
will be considered as not heard
for love has taken control of you
a crying heart waits only for your response

Finally tears will appear upon
your once stone cold face
for you to finally see who you are
truly you

Impossible task of thanksgiving
it doesn't matter
for forgiveness is greater than words or deeds

Adri de Groot

look today
in the night
to
that concave shell
which covers the earth and we know as the sky
if there were not
so many clouds
we know

the sky would be populated
 with a million twinkling
 shiny points each
 guarding us
 reaching out to say
 there is light
 if you but see
 there is truth
 if you but wait
 and are patient
 for with the dawn
 all the light you will need
 or can stand
 will be brought forth

look today

david bruner

Sprouting from His Desire

Fire raced across the sky tonight,
 All creation gave a mighty shout.
 Men, women, their families
 Raised their heads,
 Their hands,
 And embraced as the news came.

Groanings,
 Of rocks, streams, and wood flowers,
 Heard throughout the centuries,
 Came no more.

Visions of loveliness,
 Shimmering and aromatic,
 Sifted down
 Through the petals, the waters and pebbles,
 Nurturing creation
 With the sweet milk of new life.

And then,
Sprouting from His desire,
The two trees.

Anonymous

Not of This Earth

Out of certain shortcomings
can only grow certain truths
inhabitants of this earth
why aren't you more careful

Out of your darkness
light cannot be born
this mud
cannot offer clean pearls

even though wise words were spoken
your ears were already destroyed
and you said you saved yourself
by just killing it

one came smiling
offering you new hope
your children's children are also to live

looking backwards
you developed your hearts
but true depth is not in the underneath
rather should you turn your faces up
forward is the man
with a new heart grounded in your Unknown

Yet it is a miracle that
some
are here among his . . .
this is no hope for you
and yet it tremendously is

This truth is born
out of something different
he prays you will . . .

isn't it enough for you
to have read this?

Adri de Groot



Part Four

SIGNS OF PRESENCE, LOVE AND MORE

The Traveler

His coat was softly colored blue,
the road brown beneath his feet.

“Where have you been?”
I asked the traveler,
“and perhaps you could sit awhile?”

I pondered the aroma
of his aged and dusty clothing,
and its fragrance enchanted me;
Inviting him in to drink, I thought
of Jesus,

“and going for such a long way
has tired you not?”

I fixed my gaze to the elements of
his character,
and his smile answered quickly,
then faded back into the lines and
paths of his journey which were left
etched deep and warm within his face.

As he spoke, he drank the glass
of wine I had offered him.
His voice was weathered and its rasping
added flavor to his story.

When he had finished all he had meant
to say, he leaned his chair back against
the yellow wall and drank another glass.

And I too had sat and drank
a living wine, a sweet and seasoned spirit.

His coat was softly colored blue,
the road brown beneath his feet.

Cynthia R. Bergman

Hymn of Jesus

Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.
Render unto God what is God's.
Here is the due I give to Caesar.
I am the due I give to God.

Blow that flame of life a little higher.
Give yourselves to God and be consumed.
I have come to cast on earth a fire.
Who will lose himself to be the fuel?

Graham Brodie

The Air Was Bright

The air was bright—
Shining sun swept the golden field
Leaning back against a tree—my Beloved
smiled—
Surely, this is heaven.

With eyes that danced
and fire in his heart, he inquired
as to how I'd been—
If it had taken all eternity
I felt he would have
listened to me.
How is it, he, who has so much,
can love me
who has so little?

I wanted to say good things,
 to give him hope, and confidence;
 I wanted to be the opposite
 of all those who hurt him
 before.
 But I couldn't find words,
 so I just said, "Fine."
 And smiled.

Sara Mazumdar

Sisters

The day was long upon the hill,
 And their laughter hung within the wind.
 White butterfly danced above their heads
 And love was between them.
 Colors, green and blue, gold,
 The great quilt of counterpanes
 Mother's hands had sewn,
 They spread beneath the white birch tree.
 Crackers and milk became a royal banquet
 For two noble Queens whose Kings were away,
 Building kingdoms in lands beside the sea.
 And there came two guests to dine with the meadow queens,
 Sir Robin and His Royal Highness, Sir Bluejay.
 The Meadow Kingdom had never seen such a banquet for
 such a pair:
 So wonderful and beautiful, these Queens.
 The crackers and milk were finished soon,
 And the eldest, whose hair was darker,
 Remembered the time of day; and she,
 Remembering her mother's ways, beckoned the younger
 To lay her head down upon her lap,
 And together they sang softly, quietly, still softer yet
 Until the meadow was silent from their laughter,
 And except for a small breeze the Meadow Kingdom slept.

Soon the afternoon had gone,
 And in the beginnings of the evening, they awoke.

Small sighs of satisfaction rose between them;
 They began to move again,
 And the lightness in their hearts brought forth laughter
 For the day was spent in patient meadow waiting
 To greet their Father's returning from the land beside
 the sea.

From the tree to the end of the meadow lane
 They could now see their Father coming.
 Their hearts were filled with wonder,
 And the eldest took the younger's hand.
 They went running, running, down the meadow lane.
 White butterflies danced alongside them,
 Golden flowers bowed as they went
 running
 running
 to greet their Father.
 The day was long upon the hill,
 And their laughter hung within the wind.
 Their Father's arms embraced them
 And love was full between them.

Cynthia R. Bergman

My Mother

My Mother, she brings many presents of love
 night after night, like Santa Claus,
 Always she is busy but she comes to my room every
 night.

Sometimes, she scolds me then we cry together
 I love my mother most in the world. Her
 beautiful heart which is like the clear sky can't be
 compared with anything.

She seems to want to care for every person
 She is more beautiful than any flower.
 Her heart opens everybody's heart to the
 beautiful and joyful world.

It can't but touch everybody's heart:
 I wish to live in her heart forever and eternally.
 "My Mother" will be the words I love the most.

1200 Hands Clapping

1200 hands clapping—all around me—
 like jungle rains on the tin roof;
 filled with God's love
 God's tears—
 God's joy.
 Waters gathering—shining faces—
 pure and swelling the rivers.
 The End at last bursts open;
 the flood cannot be turned back!

600 voices lifting as one—in prayer—
 like Niagara waters: white, falling,
 thundering;
 filled with God's power
 God's determination
 God's victory.

Waters rushing—excitement gathering—
 filling, brimming the ocean:
 “The waters that cover the seas.”
 Thank you, oh Father!
 Thank you!

Barbara Ten Wolde

After Yankee Stadium

A proclamation was made
 But two days past
 That we were resolved at last
 To build our home on solid stone
 With our own bare hands
 And all who partook
 From the greatest to the least
 Would be free to shelter
 Beneath our roof when the rain comes
 Yes and even when the sun is too hot!

For one word we hold above all
 The price we are glad to pay for our desire
 —Unification—
 Stands free.
 Or simply put:
 —One World Under God—

Alistair Farrant

Washington Monument

Meet us at!
 So they did, didn't they, in their hundreds of thousands!

And now a dream fulfilled
 Is once more
 But a dream
 A memory
 Of joy

The songs were sung
 The dances were danced
 The prayers were prayed
 The Word was given
 And those who stayed
 Saw fireworks from heaven

So many faces in the crowd
 Old young black white yellow red
 Who could dare say "God is d . . ."

Through it all there you stood noble needle
 We give you much thanks
 And offer you a blessing
 Of eternal merit.

Alistair Farrant

“A Sign of Presence and Love and More”*

Golden leaves have always touched me
As a sign, a sign of Presence, and love, and more.
What of this life, I ask, and what of my death?

In my mother’s dark, warm womb
I didn’t particularly care to move out,
And certainly didn’t know what was to greet me outside!

Yet, here I am, and the golden leaves touch me—
Signs of Presence, and love, and more.

Your precious eyes touch me, Melinda,
Though their color escapes me;
For, in them, too, are signs, greater signs
Of Presence, and love, and more.

What a womb we’re in, Melinda,
And what’s to greet us outside!

I didn’t relish my birth—’twas a rugged journey
From womb to outside.
And fresh into my new world, I was amazed
At the lights and strange sounds that greeted me.

Can I go back inside?—I surely wondered!
But, then, my mother, whom I’d never really seen,
Touched me, and loved me, and caressed my closed eyes
With feather-light fingers,
And throughout my little being
I felt her love fill me endlessly
As I nuzzled her bosom.

Her heart sent pulses of Presence through my diminutive soul,
And her bosom fed me
’Till I slept within her arms.

We await a second birth, the whole bunch of us, Melinda.
The stars and heavens embrace us
And urge us to be born
Yet another time.

Our Mother must be anxious to deliver us
And to fill our souls with her Presence!

Can we go back!—We may surely wonder.
But, I have a feeling, now that I recall my beginnings,
That our Mother will be waiting
To touch us, and to caress our newborn eyes
With her feather-light fingers—the fingers that have caressed the Ages
With Love.

Yes, Melinda, golden leaves have always touched me
And reminded me of love and more.
But, your precious eyes reveal a golden dawn
That touches my heart
Like no leaves could ever aspire to do,
And tell me of Eternity, and Love, and More.

Bob Schmitt

*Composed on November 29, 1976, in Washington, D.C., to Melinda Durrell, age 15, of Alexandria, Virginia, who is dying of brain cancer. The *Washington Star* was reporting about her and showed photos of her with her family and alone.

God Speaks

Open your eyes and see Me.
Open your eyes and listen to Me.
For I am Love
Eternal, unchanging subject.

Wherever you go, I am,
And wherever you stay, I am,
For I am everywhere
Wholly present.

Even to the utmost particle of matter
My being resides within you;
Do not deny Me for I am jealous
Of that which I am a part.

I am not possessive,
You may have all of My infiniteness.

Michael Breedlove

Dear Son

I love you, my son,
More than you'll ever understand.
I've watched you grow each moment,
Seeing what a great man you'll become.
I've given up many things for you,
But you've more than paid me back with one of your smiles.
You've disappointed me and hurt me when I saw you hurting
yourself.
You've surprised me and pleased me.
You'll never know how special you are to me.
But now that you've grown to be a man,
You can give birth to your own son,
And you'll understand why I love you.

Jim Stephens

Do You Need Me

Do you need Me

I am there.

You cannot see Me: yet I am the light you see by.

You cannot hear Me: yet I speak through your voice.

You cannot feel Me; yet I am the power at work
in your hand.

I am at work though you do not
recognize My works.

I am not strange visions, I am not mysterious.
Only in Absolute Stillness, beyond self,
can you know Me as I am.

And then but as a feeling & a faith, I am
there.

Yet I hear, yet I answer.

When you need Me, I am there.

Even in your Fears, I am there.

Even in your Pains, I am there.

I am. You & You are in me;

Only in your mind are there midsts of "yours & mine"

Yet it is only with your mind you

can know and experience Me.

Empty your heart of empty fears.

When you get yourself out of the
way, I am there.

You can of yourself do nothing, but I
can do all. I am in all.

Though you may not see the good,
the good is there.

I am there because I have to be. I am
there.

Only in Me does the world go forward.

I am the law in which the movement of the Stars &
the growth of living cells
are found.

I am the Love that is the law's
Fulfilling.

I am Assurance.

I am Peace.

I am Oneness.

Leona Eagle Eye

A Revelation

Why must I wait for you to come to Me?
Why don't you let Me come with you? Is it
that you can't visualize Me sitting in your chair
or your car, sharing your table and your thoughts,
interested in your daily existence?

Is My place in your life to be relegated to
brief visits everyday or so? That is not enough
for Me. I hope it is not enough for you.

Above all else is your willingness I seek.
It is not that you should bring to Me that which
is you, but that you actively express desire to
leave behind all that is not of Me. I would not
have you arrive here as empty shells, waiting
to be filled with whatever I see fit. You have
been created once, and it is only the superfluous
trappings which need to be removed.

Approach not in emptiness but in nakedness.
The self you seek to protect is infinitely more
beautiful than the ugliness with which you hide it.
Your coverings serve only to keep out the light and
heat, not to keep them in as you suspect.

You speak of ridding yourself of your ego.
Is not your ego yourself? I would not have you
without wit or feeling. On the contrary, My desire
is to have you dedicate all your thought and love
to Me. I would assume that you seek union not
merely to please Me, but to please yourself as well.
Love seeks a return on its investment, or it could
not exist. Do you realize you question My wisdom
when you speak of your unworthiness? If I didn't
think you worthy you would not be where you are.
You are not capable of judging your own worth, and
it is not flattering to Me to have you constantly test
My judgement.

I want and need your individuality. Without
your unique personality, the universe would
not be complete. This self which is peculiarly
you finds its counterpart in Me. It is the excess
which is an abomination to Me.

Must you have it otherwise?



Part Five

SO COMES THE SON

Aha-Lani-Sha
(Love-Sunshine-Navajo)

aha-lani-sha
aha-lani-sha
love sunshine in Your smile
after a rain
through the clouds fresh You came
reaching forth Your finger
of light
stretching earthward
upon the dawn
You touched my heart
my life was blond

david bruner

Roly-poly

A power in the atmosphere
That drives away the clouds of fear—
They'll melt or burn or disappear.
Electrostatic syncopation,
(All my demons on vacation!)
Prods me as I stroll along
To sing the world a freedom song.

Ah la la la la la
Ah tis fine to feel so holy
Watch the world go roly-poly,
Twitching, switching, zinging, swinging
To the rhythm of my singing.

Tail wagging dogs advancing,
Freckled, smiling, children dancing,
Ants are breaking ranks and prancing
Round and square and helter-skelter,
Moles emerging from their shelter!
Trees upon their trunks are beating!
Bees in unison repeating
In strange tongues my song of greeting.

Ah la la la la la
Ah tis fine to feel so holy,
Watch the world go roly-poly,
Twitching, switching, zinging, swinging
To the rhythm of my singing.

Alex Colvin

We All Know the Lovely Signs

We all know the lovely signs—
Butterfly on a rose in the catholic dawn
Fragrant aromas in every bridal chamber
And little lambs herded by one strong shepherd.

We often live under the dark signs—
Lightning in parched trees, rocking ocean
Long night beset with strange dreams
And cats stalking Cinderella's slippers.

So we take the middle road
Sandals and street shoes light on calloused feet
Courage on our left, heart on our right
And hope before us all the way!

Frank Bisher

The Sun

When I gaze upon
the brilliant sun
I don't lower my eyes.
I don't fear its glorious
fiery light,
for, within my heart,
a thousand suns rise.

Constantine Tsirpanlis

The Flower

You gave me a flower.
I didn't know what to do with it,
So I held it between hot damp
little-girl hands,
And it wilted away.

You gave me a flower.
 I promised to treasure it forever.
 So I pressed it between the pages of an
 old book,
 And there it browned.

You gave me a flower.
 I thanked you politely
 And placed it in a vase on the mantle
 For everyone to see,
 But you didn't look at it.

You gave me a flower.
 I caught your eye,
 and we laughed.
 I thanked you,
 Then put it in a juice glass on my dresser
 Where it was special to me
 Because it was for me,
 and then you smiled.

Alice Hellerstein

Matins

A beautiful morning is dawning
 A bright new day has begun,
 and the birds are up and singing
 Beautiful morning welcome.

Sing a song for the morning,
 Oh sing a song for the sun!
 Roses have strewn the nighted sky
 In the path of the rising sun.

Sweet summer days are dawning
 Warm summer days are dawning
 Warm summer days have begun.

And the morning breeze
Barely touches the trees,
As the trees gently sway
Welcome bright day.

Arise little children
Arise with the sun—
Come dance in an age fresh begun.

Carolyn Nelson

Awakening

The sun walks over the horizon
like a silent priest
swinging incense that hovers over the lakes
and nestles in the valleys.

The sweet smell of life
comes to tap me on the shoulder.
My sleepy body resists,
and pouring from the heart
it enters my breath and taps on the doors
of my heart.

“Wake up,” whispers the chanting inside.
Like a flower my feelings unfold
spiraling outward
until my eyes blossom like the petal
of a rose,
and my body dances in rhythm
with my breath.

Ramona Josh

Flowing from God's Eyes

Flowing from God's mountain top, come purifying waters,
 Crystal clear alive with truth,
 Cleansing the crude debased inherited sin,
 Purifying waters.

Flowing from our Father God, come revitalising energy,
 Powerful, thorough life-giving, electrifying,
 Giving life to dead cells,
 Revitalising energy.

O Father God, copious tears now flow from me,
 Purifying waters cleanse my sin,
 Revitalising energy gives me true life,
 Where death once dwelled, dawning within me,
 Is a love of compassion, faith is my fortress,
 I claim you . . . my Father.

Barbara Burrowes

So Comes the Son

Gently stirring the air,
 Lifting the heaviness of the day—
 So comes the breeze.

Melting the grayness of winter hours,
 Warming and reviving the earth—
 So comes the sun.

Loving me as I was born to be loved—
 Loving me as I was born to be—
 Loving me as I was born—
 Loving me as I was—
 Loving me—
 Loving—
 So comes the Son.

Alice Hellerstein



Part Six

WE LEARN HIS HEART

Night-Prayer

Oh God,
the golden light of the moon
warms up the earth,

the burned earth
the cold earth
the parched earth

dried up like Your children
who, far away from You
soaked her with their blood

men against men
men against nature
men against God

thousands of years the same tragedy
thousands of years the same suffering
thousands of years the same hopelessness

thousands of years the same golden shining moon
beautifies, comforts and revitalizes,
eternally reflecting the sun.

Thea Jaschok

Oh Father

Forgive my ignorance
of Your courage,
Forgive my ignorance
of Your wisdom,
Forgive my ignorance
of Your suffering,
You pioneered a path.

A path of sacrifice . . .
for me and those like me.
You still give
of these qualities:
Even though You see
my ignorance of them
Forgive this ignorance
of Your patience.
In my blindness and selfishness
I did not see, could not see,
their true value.
I see clearer now,
I want to love.

Mark P. Wells

If You Aren't In Me (Si no estás en mí)

If You aren't in me
I don't feel life.
You are like the water
that calms my thirst,
like the light of day
that illuminates my life;
if You aren't in me

I don't feel life.
Loving others,
I feel I'm loving You;
prayer is my strength,
and my faith, eternal hope.
If You aren't in me
I don't feel life.

Isabel Málaga

When I Erase My Errors (Cuando Borre mis Errores)

When the misfortune of others
isn't in me happiness, but sadness,
when the hatred between men
isn't in me satisfaction, but my pain,
when the injustice done
isn't in me tranquility, but weeping,
when for my evil action
I erase one by one my errors
and feel my soul repentful,
I shall look for consolation in prayer.

Isabel Málaga

Prayer Hour

It was a rich day
And I remembered my prayer hour
And how I did not think of my life.

The rain poured down hard
and the slurring wind
Tapped against the silver window
As my prayer softly pondered
The scene of Christ's suffering.
How the world has forgotten Him—
God's only begotten son,

And how my prayer crescendoed
Through the sacred room
As I saw the sad, liquid eyes
Of my Savior Lord.

The once pressing rain subsided,
As my prayer moaned with subtle joy
To know God's grief.

It was a rich day
And I remembered my prayer hour
And how I did not think of my life.

Robert McCauley

New Horizons

I can see over the ridge
 a new life, a new direction, a new determination.
The closer I come to it
 the brighter the old one becomes.
The fonder the memories become
The less I see of the new
And I become lost in the maze of the past.

I suffer, like mankind, from hindsight and reluctance
 to act on vision and foresight.
“It can’t be trusted.”
“It hasn’t been done yet,
 so how do we know what lies beyond the past;
 it might destroy us.”
Hindsight is safer, it seems.

But those New Horizons torture me.
They’re There.
Always.
I wasted my life skittering back and forth.
But They’re There, Always.
Always haunting, taunting.

No rest.
They won’t come to me.
Chained to the ball of the past,
 I can’t go to them.
The light on the other side of the ridge
 is bright and warm.
And the sound of confident speech is very pleasant.

James Hammond Robinson

In the darkest moments
 when it seems that I will be crushed,
 I imagine myself
 floating as a cloud,
 very silently
 watching the sky.
 No one else is near—
 only God and I are looking
 into each other's eyes.
 We come closer,
 drawn together in love.
 The sun, moon and stars
 disappear.

I see nothing
 except my Father,
 and I race the wind
 to His open arms.

Ramona Josh

Talc

I've been ground into a pale powder.
 The wind is not strong,
 yet it's strong enough
 to keep me from collapsing
 into a soft pale pile
 on the floor.
 I'm spread thinly through
 the air of the room,
 barely perceivable as
 a cloud of dust.
 Evil walks right through me.
 I bide my time and
 tie my wounds
 and prepare to move forward,
 again.

James Hammond Robinson

Evening Meeting

We see you standing there,
smiling in shyness,
an expectant question in your eyes.

Who gave you the strength to lead us?

We have been thinking of ourselves today.
Our situation, our goals,
Our mission, our responsibility,
our problems.
You have been thinking about us:
how to teach us Father's heart,
how to show us Father's way.

How many tears did you cry
behind closed doors
before coming to meet us here?
But now smiling shyly,
You ask us about our day.

And so we tell you:
our deeds, our thought, our feelings,
all our experiences of this day.
But we have no words
to answer the deeper question
in your eyes.

Who gave you the strength to love us?

We never suspected at all
how near God was to us
at evening meeting tonight.

Karen Miller

Good Morning, Heavenly Father!

Good morning, Heavenly Father, I offer thanks that You gave me this new day.

Today I will greet Heavenly Father and Nature with all of my love.

The sun and the clouds, mountains and rivers, trees, grass, and all the flowers, everything is so beautiful. All of creation expresses part of my nature.

I love the dawn. It breaks night's darkness and lights the way.
The sky is very deep and clear blue, an expression of purity.
Mountains never move. They show us unchangeable determination.
The Trees are great because they grow obediently day by day.
Rocks are valuable because they are so hard. They represent strong will and faith.

And birds sing God's cheerful message to our ears.

I love the dark because it brings out the stars, and the stars give us hope.
The rain quenches the earth and brings back life. I love the rain because it cleanses my sin and makes me pure.

I love the wind because God is there speaking to me.

Because I am a microcosm of the cosmos I can understand that all of these things are an expression of God's love to me.

I pledge in return I will love God. I will offer to God my prayer, my love, my power, and my everything.

I love the young people because they have the power to believe in the future.

I love old people, they have years of experience and much wisdom, but nobody listens. I'll ask.

I love rich people because I can see God's blessing behind them.

I love poor people because they long for the ideal world.

I like businessmen because they are trying to take responsibility for this world.

I like housewives because they sacrifice themselves entirely for their families.

I appreciate arrogant people because in them I can see my sin.
If I don't meet them, I also become arrogant.

I appreciate egoistic, selfish people because I understand
how hard I am to God.

Everyone is to increase my love and make me pure.
Today my enemy, tomorrow my friend, my brother and sister.
Through this I can understand God's love to me.

I am a slave of good habits.
If I am sad, I will sing a song. If I am glad, I will
offer thanks to God.
If I want to judge, I will bite my tongue.
When I have a complaint, I will repeat, "I offer thanks to God."
When I am worrying about myself, I will repeat,
"I don't need to worry about myself because Heavenly Father
takes responsibility for me."
I don't have any words of "can't" and "impossible"
because they make my heart hard. There is nothing I can't do
because I do it with Heavenly Father.
Today is the last day, and I want to make today the best day.
I will do tomorrow's things today.
When I speak in a small voice, I will repeat,
"I'll speak up with a big voice."
When I am struggling, I will repeat,
"Heavenly Father, you are right, but you suffered a long time
all alone. Now I appreciate suffering with you together."

I will study everything because I can respond to anyone as
an actor or actress studies rejection, anger, laughter, smiling,
suspicion, seriousness, and doubt. The people's eyes are round,
square, big, small. The people's mouths are flat, round,
big, small, many kinds of mouths.
To research the people is the first action in order to
understand people, to love, to unite.
It will make me great.
I will work together with Heavenly Father;
I have confidence and I never give up,
I have confidence and I never give up,
I have confidence and I never give up.

Much Wisdom Is Yet to be Added Unto Us

How could I retain
those splendid words
which came out
so mightily after I had
overcome myself

There was darkness
and I was afraid
for no connection could be found
no one was there
and yet I felt surrounded

And I cried out to the One still unknown
even when my talk was familiar
that did not help to bring closeness
yet (oh how I hated my ugly selfishness)
He was there comforting me
I tried to kick my surroundings away
they had suddenly become my enemies
I cried out for tears
for my eyes were too dry
my talk too artificial

Then He must have come
for suddenly the world changed
and I could walk back over it
nature had paved beauty under my feet
carrying me lightly to my destiny

No paper was there, only enough to write
“Much wisdom is yet to be added unto us”

Adri de Groot

We Learn His Heart

A group of flowers reached out to me
And told me of the special-ness of God.
My heart throbbed as I saw Him there
The delicate lavender wound round with green.
They seemed to say, "I love you."

Why have I been so blind before?
Oh, yes, I loved the flowers before—
But never felt like this!

And God was there in a face
The eyes were hurt, but loving
I felt His heart so strong as I reached out.
I cannot wash that memory from my heart.

It's happened before—and it was fleeting.
But this is not the peak—the sweep
As you become forgiven, or when you are loved unexpectedly
This is the road—not the peak—I am inside.

God was there as I talked with one I love
There was a newness and meaning to his features.
I could not but stare—and search God's heart,
And love Him more for the beauty of His creation.

I want to gently caress the whole of the earth
And my heart is full to bursting—
The air is vibrant and moves with His love
Everything calls out to me, "I Am Here."

I want to hold this moment forever—
That is the promise He gave.
You mean, there is more to come?
It's hard to believe love could be more than now.

I feel like a young lover, with God and I.
My feet dance as I walk my daily chores.

He seems to be wooing me, and I delightedly
giggle—and run to Him.

The bigness of His heart I know from stories past,
Of His thousands of years of searching for man
But now it seems part of Him—His infinite self
A part of His face, I can touch, and love.

I belong to Him, and He to me
Because I am free, and He is He.

Sara Mazumdar



Part Seven

IMAGES OF APOCALYPSE

The Dancing Ladies

Strung were the crepes of red and gold,
Laid was the carpet green.
The breathy music of autumn was playing
when first the ladies were seen.
Hidden in summer's valleys they were;
And at summer's end they came
All dancing in the sunlight
In pairs and threes.
All dressed the same,
Twirling and parting and back again.
Nimbly did they dance,
Gliding-floating-jumping-twirling.
Not one would rest or stand,
But all joined in merriment.
White gowns dancing wildly all
Until wearied, but trying still to dance
They began to fall;
And even the wild exultations,
The furious music, did not die
But struck the feet of the autumn leaves
To dance and fall by the ladies' sides.
Never have I seen such dancing,
Surely not again
Until snowflakes are falling,
Caught and swirled by winter wind.

Carolyn Nelson

Harebell*

The surf's lashing cruelty,
spurred by the wave foaming wind,
seems only to tickle the granite
and caress the motley lichens,
despite its ogre rantings
and army-like battering cadence.

The ferocity of the lake
is felt all along the mute shore,
but anguish can't penetrate
the crevasses of columnar rock
as long as the zany harebell,
perched on a mere thread of a stem,
can shake its violet head in laughter.

Howl as it might, the wind
cannot stupefy the lithe dancer
with the sun drinking blossom—
tripping and whirling in mime,
tenuously attached to scant soil
deep in the age wrinkles of rock.

Rage rankles in the surf's heart
as it pounds, like a giant's fists;
the wind at its flank prying,
but not loosening the tight root
of such a loose fluid laughter,
doffing petal ends in mirth.

*Harebell—a well-known perennial wild flower found in the mountains of Pennsylvania, the Sierra Nevada, and the Rockies. Its wiry, erect stem plays a large part in its resilience.

Laughter conquers the vengeance
of storm waging water and wind,
the sun spotlighting the herd
amid the lichen fan club.
As lissome as a trapeze artist,
the wiry harebell in dance.

David Grabot

On the Closing of the Day

The evening is coming. The light is turning, quietly slipping from the brightness of afternoon into the gentle grey-blue which will eventually catapult into blackness. Every day the light performs its graceful finale, often unnoticed in this towering city whose buildings obscure the more spectacular performance of the setting sun. I notice, though, and most of all I love this turning-time between day and night.

This evening, a silent rain is falling. Brief flashes of subdued lightning accent the otherwise soft sensation of fading day. Across a background of shifting clouds a single seagull wanders, dipping towards the river, and then rising again to meet the falling sun. The Hudson responds in rippling waves to the drumming of the rain upon her, the dancing of the rain into the river's open heart.

Even in New York these subtle dreams daily are performed. There is no city strong enough in its cold impersonality to completely obscure this world's inherent beauty. Searching eyes can detect Creation's beautiful, plaintive, lonely song beneath the troubled voices of the city. This song alone brings comfort to my inner heart.

Kathleen Tyman

Colorado River

There the dark gash lay, like a brooding animal,
A long salamander or legged centipede.
There it lay, tensely poised as if to strike,
Though like an undulate spine of dark bone
Bristling with processes and filled with unknown nerve.

But it was far worse than this! for science's lens
Can halter a beast or a bone. But this huge gash,
This ancient crack in the crystalline earth,
Cradled an unknown Water, a River,
Washing, washing along its bottom in darkness,

Dark, rushing as the wind, seminal, spiritual,
Pouring in mystery. This seamy thing was deep
As the sea, and dark, nestling this rushing
thing in its womb. So, Powell* was compelled
To probe the abyss, this intestine of the earth.

The seminal stream bore him briskly in his boat
of Courage and Determine, whisking him throughout
A thousand miles of fear and mystery
Which became, through his magical sextant,
Waterfalls, flinging their foam into the sunlight,

Deer and boars descending the Escalante gorge,
Columbine and white pine mounting the high canyon,
Sandstones, heaping huge sheet on sheet, the earth's skin,
Crowned by the red-gold Salton Basin sand;
Fossils, summing up God's gospel of creation!

Robert Selle

*John Wesley Powell (1834-1902)—American geologist and ethnologist who explored the canyons of the Green and Colorado Rivers by boat in 1869.

On a Breezy Morning

Morning—
 Mist ballets
 In between tree trunks.

Flow, cosmic flow—
 There's je ne sais quoi*
 Stirring but intangible
 In a morning.

Sobbing—
 Thin as a silk thread,
 Loud as an uncontrollable blubbering.

Gentle breeze
 Undulating the waves—like fish scales.

Blubbering of rustling leaves whirrs
 Around the rim of my ears.

Rippling waves on the water
 Dashing against one another,
 Breaking into flame-like foams—
 On a morn,
 Flowing,
 Dashing against . . .

Now—
 Morning ballets
 In between waves of flowing air.

Ye-Jin Moon, tr. from Korean by Dr. Hae Soo Pyun

*Je ne sais quoi—"I don't know what," French literary expression of the nineteenth century.

Mother Earth

Giving all creation the right to be proud,
 And living in humiliation herself,
 Still she forgets herself when a seed falls,
 and bears the weight of the world on her back.
 Carries the cities, the streets, the houses,
 Feeds the ever-endless population, lives the pain of the plow,
 of bulldozer and dynamite,
 And when a forest is laid low in humiliation by fire,
 It is the earth, the mud itself, which begins again, to
 rebuild, to encourage,
 And to strengthen.
 Truly the earth is a mother.

Even man! In the beginning of time,
 You were born of the earth, now raised by the earth, and
 to earth in the end you shall return.
 Perhaps it is true that we have turned upon the earth,
 As a teen-ager rebels, and leaves home, slams the door.
 And the earth awaits for her dearest child,
 Man himself,
 To grow up, to return;
 Reassuring the younger children, and the plants in the window,
 "Yes, he'll be home soon."
 And smiling sadly but patiently to herself . . .
 Like in the movies, or in life itself,
 She allows no room for doubt; that he will come is certain . . .
 And his sheets have been washed, and his plate at dinner
 set . . .

Elizabeth Reid

Song of the Sunset

Summer evening spreading out
 Before me; behind me
 Fireflies flashing,
 Sparkles of Heaven sudden appearing.

Green trees fade into silhouette,
 A sky, blue, surrenders and lets
 The colors of evening conquer its clouds
 And spill their blood in crimson shrouds
 Of sunset glory,
 Evening victory.

Donna McMillan

Electric Storm

The night is so alive!
 How can I sleep?
 An hour ago my eyes were weary,
 My mind a little slow and bleary,
 Thinking it would welcome soon the peaceful state of sleep;
 But suddenly the weighty heat that so oppressed the day was broken,
 As if at a signal all of Heaven's doors were opened
 To release this mighty shower.
 I don't know why, at this hour,
 Such spectacular drama should be boldly begun,
 Seeing that most everyone who might have wished to watch has gone to bed.
 (God, why not send electric storms as matinees instead?)
 Anyway, I am most grateful
 That this night found me still wakeful
 To appreciate the splendor of this firework display,
 And the bright percussive thunder, strength so masterfully portrayed!
 Before such artistry,
 How can sleep come to me?

Kathleen Tyman

On a Summer Morning

As night breathes, rhythmically and ceaselessly,
Murky mist settles down on the grass.

Dewdrops, racing and skidding
Over the runway of grass leaves,
Yawn, lazily stretching their arms, tired.
Night has been too fleeting, too brief.

Slowly and with tender care,
The finger of rosy dawn
Lifts the curtain of night mist;
The chirping of early birds
Is carried away by the whispering winds—far and near.

The fragrance of flowers
Rudely assails the nostrils like burning incense.

On a summer morn
When all things yawn lazily,
I would love to become a busy butterfly!
Smiles on my lips,
I would love to wake up the misty morning
By pouring a bucketful of cold water
Over her sleepy head!

Ye-Jin Moon, tr. from Korean by Dr. Hae Soo Pyun

Experience

a late springtime
or was it early summer
somewhere in 1971
when it gets dark after ten

there's a thunderstorm
but not much rain
I like it
and ride my bike

to go study organ
in a new church
of a mental asylum
four miles away

I love the thunder
it's bold and masculine
and the lightning
it gives pleasant shocks

I ride through the woods
along the moors
and arrive from village to town
with many pleasant greens

suddenly I feel
the bushes are speaking to me
those reborn renewed
by mother thunderstorm

pleasant contagiousness
I catch their new life
and feel one with all:
flowers trees bushes
the whole world

indescribable happiness
feeling of cosmic purpose
God
I play for hours
unstoppable inspiration

Adri de Groot

Harvest

Tasks await us at the harvest door.
 The land laid fallow is now fat
 As our men stream out in the September sun.
 We look for more this year than last
 And hope to warm the cold, hard winter in our chest.
 I prayed all seasons God would lend
 A helping hand, tend our character and heart,
 Give us the tools we need, shelter, food,
 And sweat to bleed the sultry sun.
 Still the children wait on empty table,
 Do their chores, and play as if the stars were theirs.
 But moments come when their questions wring
 A tear from my own eye, while father learns
 The task of harvest is waiting at the door.

Frank Bisher

A Man Has to Come Out of His Cave

A man has to come out of his cave
 and walk in the sun.
 Cold, damp places are for snakes.
 Only they that crawl and slither
 live beneath rocks that protect,
 under soil that covers and hides
 and keeps out the air.

A man needs the air.
 He needs room to find himself
 to be himself
 to be a man.
 He needs the road
 to learn the feel of his legs
 working beneath him.
 He needs the wind
 to learn what opposition is
 to be able to face it
 to find that not all goes his way.

He needs the sky
 to show him what he has to reach for,
 to paint the boundlessness—
 that which he must jump for
 leap and jump
 and try to hurdle.

And the sea . . .
 with the same rhythm
 as that which moves within his veins;
 with the rhythm
 that is his own life.
 It has to move—or else die.
 To look at the breaking waves is to know
 what it is to live.

To walk into the sun
 with the wind in your face,
 to know that the sky
 though too deep to measure
 is waiting there always,
 to feel the rhythm of the sea
 within yourself—
 this is to be alive
 to be a man . . .
 and rejoice in the honor of it.

Felice Hart

Sunday in South Carolina

Snow speckled mountain fields
 rushing clouds of softly swirling snow crystal;
 Little stone houses puffing
 Silver-grey wood smoke;
 Happy smiling man cooking our dinner
 in a rusty old diner;
 Nets of wire fence,
 a tin roof red barn;
 Hazy figured hawk in swirling, bitter clouds.

Laughing voices slipping down
snow covered slopes on empty
cardboard boxes,
splashing cold and wet;
singing warm together.

Thank you our loving Father.

David Clark

Image of Apocalypse

If I could melt, and be the sea,
I'd love you in the reverie
of tides, that free the dying fire;
for evening blues bold orange day,
and lights within the water stay.

If I could dance, and be the wind,
I'd love you in the promised end,
when spring is born in autumn's bed,
and green emerges out of gray.

If I could sing, and be the song
of the hummingbird or green frog,
I'd love you in the thrumming rhythm,
ever-changing, never-ending,
bending colors into white

And I would die, and be the night
to love you in the silver light
and fragrance of amethyst,
where time sifts into crystal rest.

Leslie Weiss

The Mood of the Third Blessing

In the night it was
I stepped out of the train
that same ancient feeling came over me
the moon was leaving
a blueish light over the snowy mountains
how I desired to remain at that station
and watch the sunrise over the river
how happy my heart was
during this bright mood of night
I almost did not want to leave

For a car I didn't call
I walked it all the way
while talking to myself and God
this road
so fresh, greeting me
with trees, flowers and butterflies
so it felt even when it was winter
actually the branches were frozen
the morning sun leaving a crystal brightness in them
on the snow covered fields a glitter

Now I could feel like a man
at one with this robust and yet so gentle nature
the bold coldness amidst the humble snowflakes
that had covered earth's image
and had changed its appearance into a fairy tale land
yet I and it were so real
happiness filled my heart
knowing that even greater beauties
were being prepared for me

Perfection was only a few steps away
yet
I carefully walked over the slippery road

The Heart of the Wood

The farmer has to burn the harvest,
Rot has set in at the root
But guaranteed some fresh green shoots
Shall spring before the summer's out—
Promise of such fine and fruitful corn
Has turned to grass
Short time passing gone to seed,

As for the love of God
There came a winter everlasting
or so it must have seemed

Burn out my worldly heart,
And even though a thread of good is left
It shall be woven in the body of your love
To come to strength and beauty
by your grace.
If I should turn my face away and hide my sin
Where would be my gratitude for him
Who gave so freely from his life?
He knows me by the hell that I have passed through
And knows for me things far more wholesome
And more glorious, than I could ever dream.

Before the wild twig, broken stem and faceless,
Is set for grafting to the tree,
Do you not lay it with its wounded end in water,
Lest it should perish?
And for time it seems as though no life will show again
Behind the frail and paling leaves,
But as soon as it is bound and held,
Cut into the very side,
As was the body of our Lord,
A pure and cleansing flow of life
shall slowly spring from the sap,
And it shall penetrate the heart of the wood

From that garden so long ago,
Where two trees stood,
At last a pure and cleansing flow of life
Can come,
To the heart of the wild wood.

David Hanna

In This Land

In this land,
There is no
"Before dawn."

Too clever, these people.
Don't try to outguess
Or to beat them to
sunrise,

As soon
As the rose
on the skyline
flows

They'll be there,
Not just watching
But running and shouting.

I come,
In the morning
To share their beginning

(A father,
I feel,
must wake first
and sleep last.)

But always one brown
Round
and energy-surging
smile is awaiting,

A stare for a stranger,
a question,
“What’s kept you?”

No, I cannot beat them
But if they are waiting
Then let me at least

Wash my face
and go greet them—

Oh, Father,
I pray
Let me not meet them
Empty!

I see they’re awake
’Cause they never were sleeping.

The night
That oppressed them
They could not abide.

Fitful and angry
And restlessly stirring
They’ve come to the morning
With hope in their eyes.

My Father,
The sunrise
Now makes each face
Golden.

They watch me,
Expectant,
And silence new falls.

Fork words from my lips
And my hands fill with blessings,
For dawn’s of their making,
The Truth is their call.

O Busan,*

THE KING OF SORROW

Looked out onto your deserted ocean waves
 Where exiled and shackled dreams
 Pounded the docks, where he poured out
 His toil with sweat and blood.
 Only his heart of hope challenged
 The groaning barge ropes.
 The pier, your coarse wooden altars of Faith,
 Sustain the triumph for all ages,
 Earned by the zealous labor of his
 Strained, longing heart
 For Jerusalem fulfilled.

O Busan,

THE KING OF PAIN

Found no shelter for his solitary heart
 From deadening cold and surging rain.
 Aching loneliness followed your mountain roads
 And rough valleys to his hollow broken hut.
 Tense daggers of betrayal did not obscure
 His passionate heart of expectation.
 Your shabby hill became a fervent altar of Truth,
 Outpouring with the Divine Word of God,
 Shattering the death wish of
 Your wilderness, for his Victory
 And the glory of Jerusalem.

*Busan—a Korean spelling for Pusan, the major port city on the southeast tip of Korea. During the first years of the Korean war, it was the temporary capital of the Republic of Korea.

O Busan,
THE KING OF TEARS

Dashed his burdened figure
 Upon the soaked slabs of flat rocks
 Wet from his swelling grief and distress.
 His trembling heart resounded
 Throughout the quaking mountain heights.
 Weeping hostage of constricted visions,
 His anguished sighs clung to the chill of night.
 The victim bore offering on your stony altars of Love
 To purify the black gloom of ages,
 Elevating the eternal fire of Divine Love
 In the revival of Jerusalem.

Genie Kagawa

All My Friends

How can I possibly be lonely?
 All I need do is look beside me—
 there are moles who enter my doors
 and scurry here and there.
 Sometimes they even find my bed attractive.
 How nice to have such good friends.

And on the walls are innumerable moths.
 They are so patient. They alight and sit for hours.
 I'm sure they must be praying with me.

And the corners of the room are the homes of many
 nameless creatures.
 Occasionally some larger variety appears.
 They love my clothes so much. It's really
 a pleasure to have such admirers.

There are several families of lizards.
So entertaining are they! There is no height
too great for them to climb. Their walk is so
funny to see—more like a waddle. They
used to frighten me, but now I've learned
they are truly dependable creatures.
No night passes without their appearance.

And of course I couldn't forget the most
ambitious of all my friends—the flies
and mosquitos.
Sometimes they bring all their friends, families
and relatives. They have so much to do. I
never see them still for a minute—except
when they see me. They are so fond of me,
They stop everything else to be close to me.

There is one more variety of friend who comes
and likes the center so much he immediately
builds his home—wonderful cottony-lacey
home all over. He just can't bear to leave.
And sometimes I find him, or her, I'm not
sure which, so startled by things I say
he is suspended in mid-air. Such
depth of heart! There are those who can't
even listen to my words. But not this one!

Truly I am fortunate to have so many friends
with such dedication and tenderness toward me.
God must have given me friends to learn from.

Sara Mazumdar

Korean Winter in San Bernardino

The sunshine comes dancing
into my dusty window;
lightly pouring through mountainside trees,
it dots the ground melting the dew.
The sun rides low on the crest of the ridge
in the morning,
while the jewels of the east sparkle
in my mind.

Air is crisp and crunchy cold.
The sunshine seems eternal,
but it only shines here in the morning.
For the rest of the day
I'm in the shade,
longing for the morning to come again
To watch the sun dance
Through mystic mountainside trees,
thinking of oriental springtime.

Early breeze awakens—
The boughs of hillside beauty
cast mystical silhouettes upon my pane.
I love Korean winters so much,
with silver chimes of coming new life
That swiftly will surpass
today's dreams of tomorrow.
The sun is shining for you and me.

Launi Wuermly

Thank God We're Living in the Days

I jumped out of bed this morning,
and the floor was talking to my feet.
I drank the same water, from the same old spout,
But, oh, how it tasted sweet.
And then I saw, where I thought it all ends,
that's really where it all begins.
Thank God, thank Father, we're living in the days,
the Days of all Things.

Then I caught me a squirrel
that was dying to be caught.
And then I let the little rascal get away.
But you know he came running back
and he brought his little friend to play.
How sweet it is, even the bark is blessed
And the blowing wind finds no sin.
Thank God we're living in the days,
The Days of all Things.

I met the worms, and the kangaroos too,
and the molecules whispered in my ear.
They said, "Now you scientists will know the truth
cause you won't conquer us with fear."
And now we go to college, at the school
known as Universe U.
Taught by the fish, and stars above,
We study in God's living room.
And we're all so glad to be praising the name
of the maker of sky, sun and moon.
In these days when we shout his praise
even the birds join in singing the tune;
And we all thank God, for these very days,
These days that we're living in.
We all thank God, and praise our Father
For the Days of all Things.



Part Eight

FLOWER'S TEARDROP

Haiku*

O wonderful Christ!
My lifeless, defiled body
Is resurrected!

•

In morning twilight,
In the rising morning sun,
Saints pray Thy kingdom.

•

Season of harvest
Has come! Spread quickly the word
of eternal God!

Takeshi Ito, tr. from Japanese by Tim Elder and Frank Bisher

*Haiku—Japanese verse form having its origin in the fourteenth century courtly “renga” genre, a hundred verse poem written to a lord or lady. Each verse was called an “uta.” Poets began taking the first part of the uta and let it stand as an independent poem, entitled “haikai” and eventually “haiku.” The traditional haiku has three lines of seventeen syllables, broken down into a 5:7:5 pattern. Traditionally, haiku should end in a concrete noun or emotional exclamation and should contain one word suggesting one of the four seasons in which the poem is set.

Pebble

I, a crystal stone,
 Opened my eyes to the light
 And answered rainbows.

Alice Hellerstein

Orange sun runs up
 To the face of a mountain,
 Peeling back the day.

Ramona Josh

I feel most certain
 God must leave when we argue,
 Just taking a stroll.

•

Sun passes through clouds
 Is it a bit of rain there—
 or flower's teardrop?

•

Hot baked sands starrng—
 Parched dry by long hours of sun
 Even sun moves slow.

Sara Mazumdar

Twigs snap in dry days
 A walk in solitude's light—
 Love distant but near.

•

Fragile flowers dance—
 The hummingbird in hot hour
 Loves honey out—

•

Graceful woman's hand
 Warms the man's in season—
 Sign of a flower.

•

Letter to the son
 In a faraway country,
 May you find a home.

Frank Bisher

Uta*

Dawn's new grace of the Father,
 Which I praise eternally,
 Is found at point of leaving
 For God's large country
 Envisioned in dreams.

•

The grace of God overflows
 With life on river's surface,
 Reflecting the blinding light
 Of His potent sun
 On winter's passing . . .

•

I, too, a novice in love,
 Set out on the long distance
 Of my Lord's stone-weary road,
 Salvific teaching
 Spreading through the land.

•

It seems that God's spring will come
 To the disordered earth, too.

*'Uta,' also known as the 'tanka,' has remained the basis of practically all Japanese poetry from the eighth century to the present day. An 'Uta' literally means a Japanese short poem. The 'Uta' has five lines of thirty-one syllables, broken down into the following pattern: 5, 7, 5, 7, 7.

In a boat on the river,
 The sight of soft snow
 Melting as it falls.

•

Rejoice! Spring has surely come
 To an unfulfilled lover,
 Nourished by holy heaven
 And love beyond words
 From hands in the heart.

•

Your words are fragrance of life,
 Your words are pure spring water.
 Pure water from heaven shines
 Through my life-giving
 Lord of heaven's spring.

Takeshi Ito, tr. from Japanese by Tim Elder and Frank Bisher

The following poems of a Japanese style in which the first line is one abstract word, the second line two words, the third line three words, and the fourth line one concrete word.

Love
 From Father:
 Flowers on mountain's
 Peak.

•

Heart,
 Almost broken,
 Grew stronger climbing
 Mountain.

•

Comfort
 Came too,
 Quiet as the
 Moon.

Lori Amundson

Index

- Advent, The, 43
After Yankee Stadium, 55
Aha-Lani-Sha (Love-Sunshine-Navajo), 65
Air Was Bright, The, 52
All My Friends, 104
All Roads Lead to Rome, 41
Ambassador to France, 26
Angry Pumpkin, The, 32
Armageddon, 25
Awakening, 69
- Colorado River, 90
Comfort, 114
- Dancing Ladies, The, 87
Dawn's New Grace of the Father, 113
Dear Son, 59
Do You Need Me, 60
- Electric Storm, 93
Even I Get There, 45
Evening Meeting, 79
Everyday, 29
Experience, 94
- Father's Rock, 44
Flower, The, 67
Flowing from God's Eyes, 70
Fragile Flowers Dance, 112
- God Speaks, 59
- Good Morning, Heavenly Father!, 80
Graceful Woman's Hand, 113
Grace of God Overflows, The, 113
- Haiku, 101
Halloween, 1976, 24
Hands, 10
Harebell, 88
Harvest, 96
Heart, 114
Heart of the Wood, The, 100
Hot Baked Sands Starring, 112
Hymn of Jesus, 52
- I Am the Child, 31
I Feel Most Certain, 112
If You Aren't in Me (Si no estás en mí), 74
Image of Apocalypse, 98
In Morning Twilight, 111
In the Darkest Moments, 78
In This Land, 101
I, too, a Novice in Love, 113
It Seems that God's Spring Will Come, 113
It's Not So Much, 18
It's Saturday, 21
- Japanese Couple, 14
- Korean Winter in San Bernardino, 106
- Letter to the Son, 113

- Light, 43
 Look Today, 45
 Lord's Stallion, The, 4
 Love, 114

 Man Has to Come Out of His Cave, A, 96
 Matins, 65
 Mood of the Third Blessing, The, 99
 Mother Earth, 92
 Much Wisdom Is Yet to be Added
 Unto Us, 82
 My Mother, 54

 Name: Man, 24
 New Horizons, 77
 Night-Prayer, 73
 Not of This Earth, 47

 O Busan, 103
 Of America (Save My Country), 15
 Ogden Rescue Mission, The, 28
 Oh, Father, 37
 Oh Father, 74
 On a Breezy Morning, 91
 On a Summer Morning, 94
 On Finding a Small Kitten, 25
 On the Closing of the Day, 89
 On the Ladder, 22
 Orange Sun Runs Up, 112
 O Wonderful Christ!, 111

 Pebble, 112
 Pilgrim, 42
 Porch Life, The, 34
 Prayer Hour, 76

 Rejoice! Spring Has Surely Come, 114
 Revelation, A, 61
 Roly-poly, 66

 Season of Harvest, 111
 Servant, The, 22
 "Sign of Presence and Love and More, A," 57
 Sisters, 4
 Sisters, 53
 So Comes the Son, 70
 Song of the Sunset, 93
 Spring Rain, 14
 Sprouting from His Desire, 46
 Sun, The, 67
 Sunday in South Carolina, 97
 Sunflower, 33
 Sun Passes Through Clouds, 112
 Sustaining, 11

 Talc, 78
 Thank God We're Living in the Days, 107
 There's a House in the Distance, 5
 These Eyes Have Changed, 12
 To Janis Joplin, et. al., 31
 Traveler, The, 51
 1200 Hands Clapping, 55
 Twigs Snap in Dry Days, 112

 Uta, 103

 Washington Monument, 56
 We All Know the Lovely Signs, 67
 We Are the Lord's Paint, 35
 We Learn His Heart, 83
 What Good Is a Belief?, 6
 What Is a Good Christian?, 8
 When I Erase My Errors
 (Cuando Borre mis Errores), 75
 World Seemed Good and Warm, The, 12

 Yesterday, 23
 You Ask Me Why I'm Here, 3
 Your Words Are Fragrance of Life, 114

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