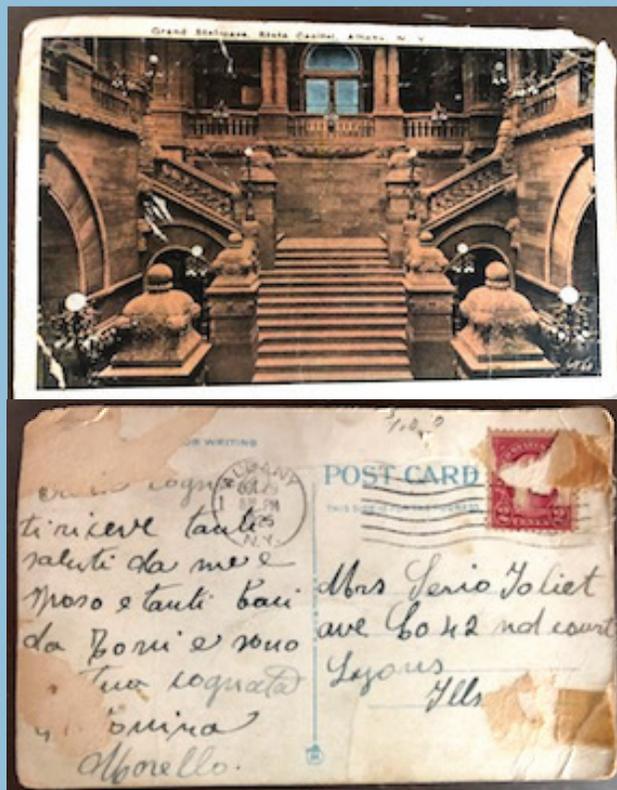


# otata 36

December, 2018



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December, 2018

**otata 36**

(December, 2018)

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## TOKONOMA

I dressed and went down to the water's edge. I walked quickly. I was gay, as if I had escaped from a danger or sin. My indiscreet desire of that morning to pry into and know the future before it was born suddenly appeared to me a sacrilege.

I remembered one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree, just as the butterfly was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited a while, but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes, faster than life. The case opened, the butterfly started slowly crawling out and I shall never forget my horror when I saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them.

Bending over it, I tried to help it with my breath. In vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently and the unfolding of the wings should be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late. My breath had forced the butterfly to appear, all crumpled, before its time. It struggled desperately and, a few seconds later, died in the palm of my hand.

That little body is, I do believe, the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realize today that it is a mortal sin to violate the great laws of nature. We should not hurry, we should not be impatient, but we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm.

I sat on a rock to absorb this New Year's thought. Ah, if only that little butterfly could always flutter before me to show me the way.

— Nikos Kazantzakis, *Zorba the Greek*  
Carl Wildman, trans.

*vincent tripi*

the no season

Haiku have no season. No permanent place in nature. They are a medium. A measureless means by which we accommodate ourselves to each season's various and unpredictable influences.

To accommodate truly is to go beyond reason, beyond abstraction, beyond complexity and problem-solving. There are things we can't control. Hold. Nothing fixed. A worthy subject for the poet writing haiku.

almost december  
a leaf on the maple  
falls when it will

up  
&  
down  
as  
it  
pleases  
elevator  
fly

*nov. 2018*

# *Giuliana Ravaglia*

*ancora l'alba:  
silenzio degli occhi stanchi*

still the dawn:  
silence of tired eyes

*primi passi:  
la valigia del nonno sullo scaffale*

first steps:  
grandpa's suitcase on the shelf

*nuvole e luce:  
nell'acqua lenta un sentiero di sassi*

clouds and light:  
in the slow water a path of stones

*foglie d'autunno:  
un cartoccio di luci senza dimora*

autumn leaves:  
a bag of homeless lights

*riverbero d'oro sulle foglie del pioppo:  
solo parole*

gold poplar leaves reverberate:  
only words

*sciarpa rossa:*  
*il calore di mamma così vicino*

red scarf:  
mom's warmth so close

*sole di sabbia :*  
*nella luce soffusa il biancospino*

sand sun:  
in the soft light the hawthorn

*foglie d'autunno:*  
*i tuoi pensieri farfalle*

autumn leaves:  
your thoughts butterflies

*sedia vuota:*  
*un blues all'imbrunire*

empty chair:  
a blues at dusk

*aironi bianchi:*  
*profuma il cielo di crisantemi*

white herons:  
the sky smells of mums

*rosa d'autunno:*  
*l'erba si fa sentiero*

autumn rose:  
grass becomes a path

*nebbie leggere  
nel tepore del bosco resina e luce*

light mists  
in the warmth of the forest, resin and light

*chiare stelle:  
cascata di lucciole fra i rampicanti*

clear stars:  
cascade of fireflies among the creepers

*rosso d'autunno:*  
*il canto delle sue mani*

autumn red:  
the song of his hands

*mite novembre:*  
*sulla gonna leggera una farfalla*

mild november:  
a butterfly on the light skirt

## *Patrick Sweeney*

an ax from the Jomon  
something to grip  
when clocks stop

Choshi Falls...  
running the back of my hand  
over fern moss

the long time no c of victor borge

*Emperador* tracks in the snow  
impossible to back up or go forward  
in his war

bat chirps in my clavicles  
the eleven year olds  
roll their eyes

oh, garden slug  
tho' I washed the salt from my hands  
I continue to look back

gelnite of red maple...  
to be hung upside down  
without a run in her stockings

a leap into the hunchbacked darkness  
Catholic amulets  
crack my teeth

grasping the calloused hand of God  
the girl named Parousia  
walks to school

before dropping them  
in the Goodwill box  
scent of my dead mother's clothes

deep winter...  
oh, scarecrow  
rest your arms

The illiterate years:  
spitting between  
the gap in my teeth

buttonholing strangers  
to tell all about  
my dead albatross

Studying the dagger-toothed pike  
she says I'm just another  
Henry Bemis

*Elmedin Kadric*

FOUR EYES

as of  
ten is

let the  
rein fall

BORN

foam-  
feast  
down  
back-  
ache

stars  
know

glow  
coins

snow  
drops

I finger-wagging

SNOW

I know I  
know I  
know

nothing but  
there it is

further widens the gap

deliberately occasionable

projectile

calliopsis

in  
habit  
ants

turns out  
to be  
it

patience  
a wooden stile  
in the electric fence

SOUND

the sense  
I make

of the  
gravel

road

making  
an example

out of you  
a poem

*Caroline Skanne*

aspen leaves  
the storyteller  
in me

autumn  
an acorn cupule  
with rain

the cormorant  
shakes off  
some river

dawn  
a field of dew  
for now

windswept willow  
finally a place  
to sing

cold stone steps still warm tea bowl

paddock stile  
she stops to pick  
a buttercup

summer breeze  
one hand  
on her straw hat  
dappled light

i follow a hoverfly  
into green

hogweed umbel  
the spider secures  
—its line

autumnal equinox  
climbing the mountain  
together

moonlit river  
by now we know  
how it feels

going deeper  
into the moment  
a bee's shadow

rain pattern  
humming something  
ancient

## *Sheila Murphy*

Overgaard was lovely lace beneath  
the sky's young face repeating  
its eternity to washed space  
between violets and minerals  
untraced, the broken stalled  
stovetops confirmed  
smoothness woods and  
glowing lines of kindling  
to the tune of semiotic  
staves a mile from obligation  
trading wind for purity  
of diamonds near the cloister  
of the Eleanor the bread and blunder  
speech of thought and motion  
holding ground until the homonyms  
went quiet echoing their last

## ON PAUSE

Noon grows back like tissue still obedient to code in fibers of successive recollections. As flesh and blood relapses into a routine. The motion sensor aspirates until no weather outside selves seems palpable. Infallible momentum strikes a chord and population numbers spawn the act of chance as the design of leaves that color and come down to shift the earth into a host of new beginnings.

Sample size, the simple act of being seen beyond the seen

I want to  
Kiss your light

## Now

I watch her lose the word for vinegar. The clothes are clean. A glow about the yard, soft morning after yet another morning. All the world is speech without vocabulary. I hear her reach across to touch a thing she seeks. I say a name. The walls, pure white, or close. And that rectangular window, very like the painting. With the sound of hurt, from reach, as sleep that does not come. How can I paint the closeness now? How do the sounds ascend to where we were and who we are again?

## NORTHERLY

She minimized her way toward  
the cusp of lottery and satisfice.  
All daylight lofty sinecure showed  
damage after loss confined to tentative  
restraint from altar cloths and silver water  
shattering the unmasked safety of a toss-up  
between brazen haste and stall.  
Now warm ventures shrill beneath  
salt light and body chemistry aligned  
with white waved flags mean  
one chapter or another has elapsed  
to memory unlatched until the craft  
weighs heavily on land before we cross.

*John Levy*

POSTCARD TO VASSILIS ZAMBARAS

Dear Vazzer,

Do you know if the dwarf who  
came to our house in the village  
with narcissus (narcissi) is still  
alive? I imagine she'd be  
in her mid- to late 70s. She just  
came to mind, how she kept returning  
after I bought that first bunch.

TORSOS IN THE MANNEQUIN FACTORY  
(for Cherie Hunter Day)

Do they wait for clothes, for  
our eyes, do they wait, do they  
wait for other mannequins

to wait  
with? At first  
grouped together do they wait

for arms, heads, legs, these  
torsos gathered in a flock, a labor, a  
sunder, a swarm, a streak, a cast, a stand,

a bloat, a gam, a shiver, a shadow, a  
pod, a team, a charm, a parade,  
an army, a family.

(for Adam Rosenkranz)

What is it  
about ar

that places it  
in both

near  
and far?

Near's  
bigger

and far  
sounds

further.  
In erase

ar is  
reversed.

## INHERITANCE

here's  
what  
the  
flower

left

in  
its  
will

*Joseph Salvatore Aversano*

THE SHAPED  
IDOL &  
COSMOGONY

slowed into  
a solid more  
stone than god

while the stars  
sped overhead

having sparked  
from the split  
stone dark

## MARINE BIOLOGY

our study begins  
(if the nature  
of everything is as  
Thales says of water)

if the fish  
we've been tracking

turn into  
the sea

## MT SIPYLUS

disappearing  
into the  
camouflage

of the mountain  
air

## GPS'LESS

where you are  
on the steppe  
is a matter  
of how

the hills  
fold how the  
light hits how  
the wild

flowers

## BEHOLD

the cornea's  
curve of  
this world

# *Corrado Aiello*

*metà autunno —  
il dono inatteso  
di note blu*

mid-autumn  
the unexpected gift —  
blue notes

*tèma di Tarabas...*  
*il verde più profondo*  
*di questi boschi*

Tarabas theme...  
the deepest green  
of these woods

*motivi antichi*  
*... foglie vanno avanti e indietro*  
*avanti e indietro*

ancient tunes  
... leaves going to and fro  
to and fro

# *Maria Concetta Conti*

*Nebbia  
il sogno dei migranti  
in cartolina*

mist  
migrants' dream  
in a postcard

*Freddo*  
*una poesia*  
*prima della tua partenza*

cold  
a poem  
before your leaving

*autunno*  
*Il magico profumo*  
*del cambiamento*

autumn  
the magic smell  
of change

*profumo di minestra  
la neve si confonde  
con la luna*

smell of the soup  
snow mingles  
with the moon

## *Sonam Chhoki*

### FACETS OF LOVE

holding dew  
wind-torn petals of the musk rose  
I hardly know if this love for you  
is joy or torment

last day of the year  
the twilit distance of roads  
how far I have moved from you  
how far from you I have stayed

even conjuring you into poetry  
this voice inside me:  
am I impersonating your whole memory  
with the detritus of my wretchedness

## THE KEEPER OF THE DREAM BAR-DO

in the quiet before dawn  
as the embers of stars fade  
the dishevelled goddess visits me  
singing of the portal between worlds

falling asleep to the drone of rain  
I drift in the boom of cataracts  
with fevered lips she plays her flute  
and waits for me at the precipice

## THIS DESIRE TO GIVE MEANING

New year prayer flags on the ridge  
is it the Wind Horse  
that rouses a musk deer  
out of the lichen shadows of the forest

so when you stand  
on the prayer flag-wreathed pass  
at sunrise over Gang-khar Püen-Sum  
remember I too was here

[Note: *Gang-khar Püen-Sum*, the “White Peak of three Brothers” lies on the Tibet-Bhutan border. It is the highest range in Bhutan.

## HOW TO QUIET A QUERULOUS MIND

perfect tracks of clouds at dusk  
with what unwitting dissonance  
flock after flock of ravens  
crisscross the darkening sky

I have yet to learn  
the elementary grammar of solitude  
abandoning the Leonid showers  
in the numbing damp before first light

## LAST THOUGHTS

deepening violet dusk  
erases the outline of the peaks  
is it not through its absence  
we realise the worth of what has been lost

the waxing moon backlights  
lineaments of larches on the ridge  
how slight my life has been  
what little trace of it I leave

## *Rosa Maria Di Salvatore*

*foglia di cavolo —  
il lungo viaggio  
di una lumaca*

cabbage leaf —  
the long journey  
of a snail

*petali di rosa  
la sua lettera d'addio*

rose petals —  
his farewell letter

*mattino freddo —  
un bambino fa le capriole*

cold morning —  
a child does somersaults

*gusci di noce —  
la pelle raggrinzita  
di mia nonna*

nutshells —  
my grandma's  
wrinkled skin

*giorni più brevi —  
la sua lunga lettera  
sotto il cuscino*

shorter days —  
his long letter  
under my pillow

*Jeannie Martin*

## A BOSTON CHRISTMAS

When asked about  
Christmas the men  
in the homeless shelter  
fidgeted and paused  
finally one of them

mentioned the  
Christmas tree on  
The Boston Common  
how it was the  
best this year

others talked  
about the  
decorations  
at City Hall and  
the Prudential Center

but the tree  
kept coming up,  
the tree brought  
all the way from  
Nova Scotia

with its broad  
expanse of green  
rising above

the street  
and the shoppers

pointing to the  
sky where a few  
stars might be  
seen in the  
dark night

warm bodies  
of light  
filled with a  
thousand secrets  
shining out there  
alone.

*Guliz Mutlu*

thinking by the lake year's end

fall ... never really here  
new moon I'm billion year old carbon  
the animal taking gravel road  
bed sheets dead son's heartbeats  
wildfire ... witnessing firsthand  
soft earth doggie detective sniffing in  
winter sunset sitting in a classroom  
dandelions a few bare in the snowfield  
sour cherry unusual hour for peddlers  
white owl orchestrating long night  
family diner a couple and another one  
old hoarfrost early in the novel  
tin roofs making heard the rainbow  
myth weaving the pine needles closely flower  
swimming cow pet friendly restaurants  
spring mud as a child in my room  
another color rice powder or cotton flower  
lacy cotton snowflakes lost on me  
dusk iris soap bubbles  
clouds mini homeworks  
stone garden each raindrop another color  
neroli the hiker a bride  
autumn leaves the hired workman's different coats  
a tree falls laying down on the leaves  
cold water ironing the linens with arias  
autumn sun persimmon coversthe child's face

sudden snow staff giving stoves  
be the smile drawing at children's faces the sun  
winter gardening the lumber we chopped away  
dressing cold mountain tops patchy parsley  
remaining snow hot water bottle half empty  
calm hour the calloused other foot  
wallowing horse the lower clouds swirling around  
dating sponge fossils first of spring  
the eggshells the war sung by children  
spring breeze the extraordinary flight of dandelions  
starry night the hiker's moonstone  
instead of dropping dew elsewhere  
daffodils the snow vase melting down  
not knowing the sun goes down yellow stone  
country map so I hear you're hiking  
in the woods in silence we hear a tree falling  
drying persimmon watching the sun trace shadows  
planting my feet on earth  
forest dawn the fawn shading disappearing  
deep water the river lasting into its source  
rainbow whole lotta blossom  
elm shadows temporarily disappearing  
desert fire lighting up the unsolved alphabet  
let it snow handwritten on the wall  
mystery solved octopus cloud and sailor child  
wee hours nothing more nothing less  
bigger requests more cold after the storm  
pitch dark pretending not to be at home  
poppy the quality of mercy  
winter moon a pregnant woman shot  
grasshoppers misgendered by children  
saffron harvest many wars in her voice  
a long breeze after a bee...fiction anyway  
spring chill listening to the musn'ts  
spring chill a symptom not the illness  
sleet the hangovers going  
hiking trail touching memories  
blossom haze they have kids they say

*Brad Bennett*

canyon river  
everything shapes  
a nest

high altitude  
wildflowers stretch  
for the bees

pond still no punctuation

# *Alegria Imperial*

## THE SENSES

sense of taste  
on Homo sapiens' lips  
sweet anthers power-pregnant

smell to beasts like men  
lilacs spurt pale indigo  
a dye that reeks of weakness

distanced eye  
heels of the Lady's Slippers  
a godhead's point-and-forefingers

midnight storm  
prowling my past  
it's only fear washing into wounds

stripped of moons  
winter dawn the tail end  
of my rumoured fate

## FIGURING OUT A MAN

plaiting shawl fringes  
how does Aurora figure for a man?

caught in his throat  
are sighs louder than squalls?

orange breast skimming birch tips  
if fallen on ground is it a he?

## ALPHABET IN THE TREES

a crackle of joints from the confessional  
... abstinence Friday

simian cries ...  
I recognize the alphabet in the trees

the shape of silence  
once in a while ... dead poets sing

### DEEPER IN DOUBT

blossoms over the tree doctor examines my womb  
in nakedness...the willow tree deeper in doubt  
by the pulse you can tell if a mollusk is a lie

### LEFT FOR THE WIND ...

fallen skies sopped in a tangle of wild sedge  
cut up phrases woven into a wasp nest  
midnight's rage coddled by the storm drain pipe  
darkness decoding nail scratching-s in the eaves  
a leaf singed in sun blast crackling amid shadows

RECONFIGURING  
IF THAT NIGHT COMES AGAIN

*(will it be...)*  
on desert stillness  
lamb eyes on a Child's cheeks  
a Star's piercing shafts  
*(likely the same)*  
a gentled flock coating the ground  
the shepherds' mottled hands cupped for night dew  
the mother's breath a mist  
*(sense of truth)*  
a donkey braying from the myrrh-scented hay  
gold glinting between sleep and dreams  
the swaying wisps of frankincense

*(or will it be...)*  
on sky cracks far off  
hurtling open vowels spewing hurts  
an ire-driven snapping king  
*(dripping vitriol)*  
fear-coated tongue brandishing  
word-swords but where's the manger  
in baffling infinity?

in buff dunes burrows  
and lopsided mountain hips  
*(perhaps)*  
swept in bursts of rancour  
roaring off smeuse-d hedge-walls  
*(maybe)*  
buried with wounds  
cankered from hollow praises  
*(probably)*

still I was told  
*(that night will come again)*  
flailing wing tips  
a wind-brushed sky flung open  
humming in cotton-soft air  
*(a smile)*  
the sphere balanced as it rolls  
on the Child's upraised hand  
darkness shorn of weight  
draped with piercing shafts  
*(the Star's)*

*Mark Young*

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO'S THE ENIGMA OF THE HOUR

enigma  
of the  
quarter past  
the hour

horo  
logical  
clock  
et  
science

arches,  
turns on a  
shapely angle  
& walks  
two four  
words

Sad Dada  
Spam Filter

a gaudy  
image of  
A. Gaudi  
Franco-  
phile

## CATNIPPED

He often  
talked to the  
cat, thought  
nothing of it

until one after-  
noon when, after  
some cursory  
chitchat about

the weather, she  
asked him for  
either a course  
of hormone re-

placement therapy  
or a karaoke machine  
or, preferably, both  
so that she could

properly celebrate  
some previously  
undocumented  
feline festival.  
old friends burn dim

Using recycled materials wherever possible, classical Greek philosophy, conceived far earlier than the world itself, provides the

necessary impetus for revolution. Not only that, the process is self monitoring, & turns off automatically. Exhaust fumes lingering

in the air are the only drawback. They leave a touch of cold philosophy, a knife perhaps, which we shall afterwards carefully avoid.

## TROPICAL DICHOTOMY

If it wasn't the middle of winter I would describe this as a perfect autumn day. A bit of chill in the wind that comes up the highway from the south; but the sky cloudless, blue. Leaves fall & cover the road.

If it wasn't the middle of winter this would be a perfect spring day. Still some chill in the wind coming up from the south, but the warmth sufficient to bring the flowers up. The azaleas in blossom, different shades of red except for the new white plant near the front door which is a compact corona of white. Fresh shoots on the citrus, & the ants already sabotaging the flowers.

## THE FIRST TAPA POEM

At an immeasurable  
nanosecond which  
passed a moment ago,

this was a pure white  
page of highclass paper  
that unmarked marked

the beginning of a note-  
book bound in tapa cloth.  
A template, not yet a

palimpsest, now scarred  
& marred by that first  
downward / of the A.

*Ingrid Bruck*

first baby teeth  
hesitant green  
under snow

## *William Scott Galasso*

March visit  
with old friends...  
little did we know

synagogue walls  
citizens extract  
a swastika

hunting  
for the exit door  
just in case

## *Eufemia Griffo*

*nebbia autunnale  
il luccichio delle stelle  
svanisce nel nulla*

autumn fog  
the stars' glittering lost  
in that void

*lungo inverno  
la neve cade ancora  
su ogni foglia*

long winter  
the snow still falls  
on every leaf

*luna errante  
ancora l'eco  
di una canzone d'amore*

wandering moon  
still the echo  
of a love song

*luna d'inverno  
la forma argentata  
di un fiocco di neve*

winter moon  
the silvered shape  
of a snowflake

*brughiera d'autunno  
il canto d'addio  
di una poiana*

autumn moorlands  
the farewell song  
of a buzzard

# *Alessandra Delle Frate*

summer festival —  
fresh watermelon on the table

smell of moss —  
mushrooms and dried leaves  
in my basket

purple dawn —  
gentians among the rocks

## *Anna Maris*

### *DAGBROTT*

*dagbrott  
det öppna såret*

*jordens  
barlagda  
blottlagda*

*granit*

*så hårt  
under min hud*

*den evinnerliga  
smärtan*

*i det  
som inte längre  
går att laga*

*eftermiddagssolnedgång  
över den brutna asfalten  
små steg framåt*

### *OPEN QUARRY*

open quarry  
the wound

earth  
laid bare  
barren

granite

so hard  
under my skin

this endless  
pain

in what can no longer  
be mended

afternoon sunset  
over the broken tarmac  
small steps forward

## *Hifsa Ashraf*

scatters my thoughts  
the wave of autumn leaves

annihilation  
the sacred lily  
one step away

fog and breath clouds carving together new fears

# *Antonio Mangiameli*

*la luna piena —  
Il luccichio dell'amo  
appeso al filo*

full moon —  
the glitter of the hook  
hanging on the wire

## *Angiola Inglese*

*fiori di ciliegio —  
il vento asciuga  
una nuvola*

cherry blossoms —  
the wind  
dries a cloud

*nuvole —  
il vento di stasera  
muove la luna*

clouds —  
tonight's wind shifts  
the moon

*calmo sul mare —  
il fischio del treno  
di pendolari*

calm on the sea —  
the commuter train's  
whistle

*il numero  
dei petali di crisantemo —  
sezione aurea*

the number  
of chrysanthemum petals —  
the golden section

*le parole  
che non vorrei sentire-  
tuono lontano*

words  
I don't want to hear —  
distant thunder

*pioggia  
di petali di ciliegio —  
le cose che mi vengono in mente*

rain  
of cherry petals —  
the things that come to mind

## *Dave Read*

### *Tab*

I decline an invitation for drinks.  
Their breath is heavy  
with the scent of night.

### *Slope*

The last leaf drops from an autumn tree.  
Their discussions no longer  
include my potential.

*Clearance*

At times I am sentimental.  
I take pride in a past  
you know nothing about.

*Red Eye*

In my neighbour's garage, a band plays global rock.  
I plug my ears, imagine  
myself a world away.

*Slip*

With just enough light to see through the night,  
I unbutton her blouse  
star by star.

*Park*

After a night's sleep under the pines,  
no addict, he brushes  
needles from his arms.

*Hinged*

I'm surprised by how little space it needs.  
The door to the past  
swings shut.

*Stone*

A sense of comfort grows with silence.  
The poems I might have written  
settle in my head.

## *Stefano d'Andrea*

*il pan dei morti*  
– giusto per ricordarmi  
che sono vivo

Pan dei Morti  
– just to remind myself  
that I'm alive

[*Pan dei Morti*: an Italian dessert, eaten during the festival of the dead.]

*riva di fiume –*  
*la nuda lampadina*  
*d'una balera*

river bank –  
the bare bulb  
of a balera

[*balera*: an Italian folk dance club, often located outdoors]

*villaggio antico. . .*  
*nei caruggi deserti*  
*l'ombra del vento*

ancient village. . .  
through the deserted caruggi  
the shadow of the wind

[*caruggi*: narrow alleys, typical of Ligurian small towns]

*Tom Montag*

*from* THE WISHIN' JUPITER POEMS

SOMETIMES IF

Sometimes if  
you've seen enough

you let go.  
Sometimes you

hold on until  
the tiger turns.

That's the moment  
what you love

devours you.

COYOTE ALONG BUFFALO CREEK

I whistle. Coyote  
stops and starts

and stops again,  
then turns into tree

or grass or creek,  
something the color

of this rich earth.

SLOWLY

Oh, yes,  
slowly,

the patience  
of prairie,

of water  
in such

flatness.  
God bless

the wisdom  
of all

that's holy.

## COYOTES DEVOURING

Coyotes devouring  
the dead cow.

Every day less  
flesh, more bone

shows. Every day  
I stop to look,

taking what I can  
from death.

## THE SPEED OF DEATH

They have measured  
the speed of death

and it's not fast  
unless it's yours

and not instan-  
taneous, more

like the slowing  
of water from

the faucet when  
you turn it off.

Then you're gone.

*John Perlman*

Chill March morning  
posting two cards  
a birthday and  
condolence

Deepening dusk  
great-horned owls in  
the shoreline oaks & pines  
hoot beneath the cries of snow  
geese soaring inland in silhouette  
from the wetlands of the bay to  
flock in stubble fields of  
soybean & corn

## FOR HIERONYMUS

the kind  
of self-regard  
at proximity of  
passing that sweeps  
us yelping thru the gates  
begging mercy from  
absolute zero

as Nothing

dilates

House finch and  
cardinal brawling for  
seed at the feeder in  
pride of their furious  
scarlet fatherly  
devotion

Rain swoops cold & hard  
At dawn on Christmas eve  
Throughout the homelands  
Appalling typhoons hurray  
Refugees seeking respite  
From the grim lodging toll  
Levied on all beings of  
This precious  
earth

## READING CARRUTH'S ANTHOLOGY AT NEW YEAR

When I bought  
this book new 47  
years ago about half of  
the dates of birth had only  
a dash marking the unknown  
date of death now only  
one or perhaps two  
poets survive in  
the last few pages  
without news of  
the fearful  
closure

The last viable  
lilac bloom appeared  
when I'd left the room

at the center of the coffee  
table wilting in a crystal  
drinking glass journey's

end for this year's  
Veneration

The lilacs have  
vanished into green  
& heart-shaped leaves  
sweet scents dispersed  
into memory of early May  
into chronicles of fifty-one  
years planted into soils  
where we have stood  
hand in hand before  
the treasure of  
pleasures of  
blooms  
to be

*Robert Christian*

6.50 AM. 27.11.18

It was and is a clearing away  
to find you brighter and starker  
nonetheless illuminating  
in a way the universe as if you knew  
the task was yours alone to do

13.11.18

MID—NOVEMBER POEM

The last six weeks of  
the year taken up  
from the start of  
December (two weeks

away) by Christmas  
excitement so as  
the Year dies  
the pace quickens

and we may no more  
still to a quiet frost  
or wonder at the  
possibility of snow

becoming snow itself  
than we may know  
the thrill of summer  
or time lost forever

The rejuvenation  
is love's whatever  
we think or do  
in silent space like the stars

appearing now and  
then to be there  
for us as needed  
as we would be and are

## READING

Was it the seven gates of Jericho  
one of which ... ?  
I don't know  
Don't know much

7.11.18

'Beauty can do no wrong'?  
— of course it can!

Fingering legitimately the  
winter rose cringing

to be bravely beautiful  
we live as roses and as we are able

7.11.18

## FRIENDS

'Narr then, Narr then!  
Patrick's greeting and mine to him  
— slightly higher from me  
— a whinny sometimes stretched  
across the 'a'; in my exegesis  
(a word he would have frowned at)  
true signs of a Lincolnshire friendship

## LINCOLNSHIRE

Though to call this area  
of Earth by its county name  
now would be perhaps to set  
beating wings of swans  
beating again in fear of future  
business for this county area  
found men sleeping comfortably

as never before we are Moses's  
and at Christmas the Crib  
is lit in churches  
and the thrill in children's  
minds but give no special credence  
to what you find in Lincolnshire  
— there being kings, bishops, poets, swains elsewhere

## *Debbie Strange*

a Blue Morpho unfolding the wingspan of sky

night runes a scattering of porcupine quills

eco-tourism the coming and going of tides

out of the blue three humpbacks breach into the blue

on the edge of enchantment autumn fog

# *Lucy Whitehead*

the slow seep of silence   melting snow

sunlight falling  
on a painted lotus  
autumn solitude

a flash of gold  
under the maple leaves  
koi pond

autumn sunlight  
shadows deep inside  
the seedheads

the long high howl  
of a wolf  
winter grief

sleepless night  
the winter duvet  
whipped into waves

*Jack Galmitz*

CRUSTED SNOW

in drifts on asphalt  
New Year's Eve  
feels like the world's  
ended not like a fire's  
beginning it's rough  
and it looks like no life  
could endure its slicing  
edges so I stay inside  
and watch television  
hoping to get a glimpse  
of what others are thinking  
about this terrible tilting away  
whether it's permanent or  
fleeting

*Madhuri Pillai*

in legato the writer's pen cold tea

discarded poems drifting rose petals speckle the grass

suburban sky sliding through a plane's roar

*David J Kelly*

new time zone  
daylight's dishabille  
as night shifts

rills and rivulets  
reviving in the rain  
liquid nouns

stormy night  
as autumn arrives  
a lullaby of leaves

## *Margherita Petriccione*

*nel mio bicchiere  
la luce va e viene  
luna e nuvole*

in my glass  
the light comes and goes  
moon and clouds

*ancora e ancora  
cadono bisbigliando  
foglie di quercia*

again and again  
they fall in a whisper  
oak leaves

*moscerini dell'uva –  
il brivido delle pozzanghere*

grape-flies —  
the puddles shiver

*due novembre —  
nel campo di fiori di pietra  
la voce del vento*

November 2<sup>nd</sup> —  
a field of stone flowers  
the wind's voice

*nessun sapore  
ed infiniti gusti —  
rivoli*

no taste  
and infinite taste —  
rivulets

*bere acqua di sorgente  
con tutta la faccia  
tempo di pensionamento*

drinking spring water  
with your whole face —  
retirement

*calzettoni di lana —  
Nel contesto dei giochi  
anche le ortiche*

wool socks —  
even in the world of games  
nettles

*solo rocce ...  
il ritmo familiare  
del mio respiro*

only rocks ...  
the familiar rhythm  
of my breath

## *Giovanni Di Mauro*

*Pioggia autunnale  
Lo scroscio cadenzato  
muta in silenzio*

autumn rain  
the cadenced roar  
silencing silence

*L'eco del mare  
Il su e giù dei ciottoli  
all'imbrunire*

the sea's echo —  
the rise and fall  
of pebbles at dusk

*Tra il fogliame  
si nasconde la luna  
La svela il vento*

the moon hides  
in leaves till  
the wind reveals it

*È quasi sera  
Sul coccio di uno specchio  
l'ultimo raggio*

It's almost evening  
one last ray  
in the shard of a mirror

*Musica e fiori  
Dell'aurora il profumo  
è sconvolgente*

auroral music  
and flowers — the perfume's  
convulsive

*Del biancospino  
solo un graffio rimane  
Manca l'odore*

just a scratch  
from that hawthorn —  
the smell's gone

*Occhi negli occhi  
e mano nella mano  
Tu io e la luna*

eye-in-eye  
and hand-in-hand  
you-and-me and the moon

*Il vento all'alba  
sfiora l'orlo di un flûte  
Scappa una nota*

dawn's wind touches  
the flute's rim  
a note escapes

*Luna salata  
Dalla risacca colgo  
qualche bagliore*

the moon risen  
I gather its gleaming  
from the backwash

*Spicchio di sole  
nel frullato di nemi  
Alba agrodolce*

sun cloven  
in the tumble of rainclouds  
a bittersweet dawn

*Tiepida l'alba  
nascosta tra i cespugli  
Ne scopro i raggi*

Dawn's warmth —  
I discover its rays  
hidden in bushes

# *Angela Giordano*

*cielo di neve*  
*il caldo abbraccio di un amico*

snow sky  
the warm hug of a friend

*mezzaluna*  
*la notte si espande senza rumore*

Crescent moon  
the night expands without a sound

*giorno che sfuma —  
il sussurro del vento sui gelsomini*

day that fades  
the whisper of the wind on jasmine

*tappeto di foglie  
i miei capelli sempre più bianchi*

carpet of leaves  
my hair ever whiter

*si spoglia il ginkgo  
un lago giallo ai suoi piedi*

the ginkgo strips bare  
a yellow lake at his feet

*i melograni —  
la collana di perle  
di mia nonna*

the pomegranates —  
grandmother's  
pearl necklace

*giorni pieni di parole  
la zucca vuota*

days full of words  
the empty pumpkin

*alba autunnale —  
la nebbia già s'addensa  
sul vecchio borgo*

autumn sunrise —  
fog already weighs down  
the old village

*raccolta delle olive  
il sapore della prima spremitura*

olive harvest  
the taste of the first pressing

## *Réka Nyitrai*

an octopus  
in her father's lungs...  
first autumn rain

trail end -  
a scent of thorns  
in the strawberries

deep autumn...  
the raven's scream lengthens  
its shadow

the twig  
under the raven's weight -  
stillness

alone together two different sunsets

fleeting world  
filed with sparrow chirps:  
tea bowl

*Deborah P Kolodji*

a goal's wiggle room sockeye salmon

## *Goran Gatalica*

autumnal sounds -  
my father shapes the wood  
into a violin

winter moonlight  
piles up against  
our guest room wall

raven-boned  
this deep winter  
melancholy

Christmas night —  
the homeless sing  
on ice-bitten roads

*Christina Sng*

hummingbird  
hovering on my hibiscus  
Parkinson's

sakura leaves  
fluttering around me  
butterfly rain

going downhill  
with malfunctioning brakes  
just one glass of wine

half-moon  
of my thumb  
Mt Olympus

a fallen tree  
resting on another  
mother's arms

## *Francesco Palladino*

*noci in cantina  
verrà l'inverno e avrà i tuoi occhi*

walnuts in the cellar  
winter will come and it will have your eyes

*i vecchi amici partono  
un passero guarda il mare*

old friends depart  
a sparrow watches the sea

*lentamente la musica che suona  
due Novembre*

slowly the music that plays  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>

*dolci canditi per il caro estinto  
pioggia d'autunno*

candied sweets for the dearly departed  
autumn rain

*primo raffreddore  
ultimo canto di cicala*

first cold  
the cicada's last song

*sgombro in rete*  
*negli occhi il luccichio del mare*

mackerel in a net  
the sea glistens in their eyes

*uccelli migratori*  
*non mi sono mai mosso da casa*

migratory birds  
I've never left home

*alluvione*  
*nel becco del merlo erba e paglia*

flood  
grass and straw in the blackbird's beak

*ghiaccio sul monte*  
*foglie di mille anni sempreverdi*

ice on the mountain  
the thousand year-old evergreens' leaves

*Peter Newton*

enough snow  
weakens the feud  
between us

enough snow  
so the older kids  
go outside because

enough snow  
to make the world  
good as new

the  
pine's  
spine  
snapped  
by  
a  
micro  
burst

mast year  
another friend  
comes up short

loose thoughts  
gone in a gust  
year's end

