

READING EDITION

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# COMMENT IN MOTION

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TRANSLATIONS

*April 1969*

NUMBER 07

FLUCTUANT SYLLABIC VERSE

# COMMENT IN MOTION

A Quarterly of Fluctuant Syllabic Verse

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*Set from the scan of the magazine. The poems, their titles, the poets'  
names and the figures at the feet of the leaves are the printer's; everything  
in this color is this edition's.*

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*The printer set his contents page at the BACK of this number, on the two leaves after the last translation. It stands at the front here. Where he gave a run of leaves one line and one range of figures — “From ‘Rimas’ ... 226-227”, “Madrigals ... 248-249”, “Sonnets ... 250-251”, “From ‘En las Orillas del Sar’ ... 252-253”, “Songs ... Two Unknown Spanish Writers 224” — the line is opened out so that every poem can be reached from the contents, and each takes the title standing on its own leaf. A poem that runs over two leaves keeps one line, at the figure it begins on. Two of his titles differ between his contents page and his leaves: folio 225 is headed IF ALL IS NIGHT’S DARKNESS and folio 256 OF THE BRIEFNESS AND FUGITIVE NATURE OF LIFE. His contents page is followed. His own contents carries his half-title, “Translations in Fluctuant Syllabic Verse”, as a line in the middle of it; here that half-title stands over the first poem of its section, at folio 240.*

Versions of poems by Petrarch, Michelangelo, Hölderlin,  
Heine, Christine de Pisan, Charles d'Orléans, Gil Vicente,  
Garcilaso de la Vega, Lope de Vega, Calderón, Bécquer,  
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### Reactions to Previous Issues

"I guess you'll find it understandable for me to find resemblances in theory and practice between your views and those of Father Hopkins. Most of all I like such views since they pay so much attention to the sound-values, speech-patterns, spoken music of verse." Rev. William T. Noon, author of *Poetry and Prayer* (Rutgers University Press).

"The little book covers a wide range. I congratulate you not only on your skill but on the scope." Louis Untermeyer, poet and anthologist.

"I think you may be breaking some new ground here . . . . I particularly liked your rendition of Baudelaire's "Correspondences."" Frederick P. W. McDowell, author of the article on "Aestheticism" in *The Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton University Press), professor at the University of Iowa.

"A wonderful achievement!" Marguerite-Marie Dubois, an editor for the Parisian firm of Larousse, Doctor of Literature and member of the faculty at the Sorbonne.

"The technique is most accomplished, and the result lovely, at once free and rhythmic—an organic beauty owing much to discipline and sensibility." Ruth Pitter, recipient of the Queen's Medal for Poetry. Her collected poems appeared in London last fall.

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## FOREWORD

---

Every poem in addition to its place in the general categories of many prosodists has a subtilized prosody of its own. It is the task of the maker of versions of poems from foreign tongues to translate this unique prosody by adapting it to the host language in the greatest degree possible. It is my hope that fluctuant syllabic verse will serve as a helpful instrument in this delicate transfer.

*Grover Jacoby*

NOTE: It is advisable that the reader of fluctuant syllabic verse be somewhat caesura-conscious; however, this special awareness is not necessary for reading the poems in the first section of this volume.

## CASSANDRA'S SONG

*Gil Vicente*

---

Ah! "Marry," they tell me surely.  
I have never a wish to marry.

Far better to live secure  
On the mountain happier, freer  
Than anyhow fortune unsure  
As to marrying well or badly.  
Ah! "Marry," they tell me surely.  
I have never a wish to marry.

Mother, I won't be married  
Or seeing the years turn tired  
And even with falseness used  
The grace God-given me.  
Ah! "Marry," they tell me surely.  
I have never a wish to marry.

Not coming or come to be born  
For me is some marrying one;  
I hold it indeed well-known  
A flow'ring lives in me.  
Ah! "Marry," they tell me surely.  
I have never a wish to marry.

THERE'S A ROSE'S NEW LIFE  
IN THE GARDEN

*Gil Vicente*

---

There's a rose's new life in the garden.  
How greatly I find to my liking  
The sight of the nightingale  
And its readiness to sing.

And now, down banks of the river,  
The girl plucks the lemons there.  
How greatly I find to my liking  
The sight of the nightingale  
And its readiness to sing.

The girl plucks the lemons there  
To give to a friend of hers.  
How greatly I find to my liking  
A sight of the nightingale  
And its readiness to sing.

To give to a friend of hers  
The fruit in her silken hat goes.  
How greatly I find to my liking  
A sight of the nightingale  
And its readiness to sing.

## CANTIGA

*Gil Vicente*

---

Well-favored, truly, the damsel is,  
How lovely, beautiful!

Mariner, tell me  
From life board ship  
If sail or ship or star ever was  
Like beauty of hers.

Noble knight, tell me,  
Armed, foot in stirrup,  
If horse or arms or war was ever  
Like beauty of hers.

Cowherd, tell me  
While cattle crop  
If cattle or valley or range appears  
Like beauty of hers.

## THE GIRL IS REALLY IN ANGER

*Gil Vicente*

---

The girl is really in anger!  
Ah, God! Could one address her?

To take the herd to pasture  
The girl goes into the hills.  
Lovely as every blossom,  
In anger much like the sea's,  
In anger much like the sea's  
That girl there.  
Ah, God! Could one address her?

NOTE: Gil Vicente was born in 1465 or near that date, Lope de Vega Carpio almost a century later. Both either preserved or adapted some of the most beautiful popular lyrics in order that they might be sung at certain points in many dramatic works. However, the "Cantiga" is said to be a completely original poem. The songs by unknown Spanish writers following those of Lope de Vega are taken from the famous collections, the "Cancioneros". It is often not known whether a particular poem in them belongs to the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. Gil Vicente was Portuguese, though these songs of his were written in Spanish.

FROM THE TREE OF ROSES I  
COME

*Gil Vicente*

---

From the tree of roses, Mother,  
The tree of roses I come.

There, where the stream is forded  
I think the roses look red:  
From the tree of roses I come.

There, where the stream is forded  
I think the roses look red:  
From the tree of roses I come.

I think the roses look red.  
I plucked the roses and sighed:  
From the tree of roses I come.

From the tree of roses, Mother,  
The tree of roses I come.

## VILLANCETE

*Gil Vicente*

---

On into the fight,  
Brave cavaliers!  
Since holy angels  
Come here to help with it,  
On into the fight!

Here with such dazzling arms  
From sky hither flown,  
In God's name, in man's name,  
They call, "Help for the nation!"

On into the fight,  
Fine cavaliers!  
Since holy angels  
Come here to help with it,  
On into the fight!

## SONG

*Garcilaso de la Vega*

---

I keep from talking more  
Now finding you offended.  
Through dying in silence is said  
Much more by far.

A great offense is given  
To you with any words,  
Whom talking really angers  
Without a gain.

My tears herewith will scatter  
Without a word from me.  
This dying silently  
I'll have for lawyer.

## SONG

*Lope de Vega Carpio*

---

Naranjitas me tira la niña

The girl is tossing the orange fruits  
There in Valencia's Christmastide.  
Tossed her from me they'll only go  
Again to orange blossoms turned.

From the maskers' wandering crowd  
Her window drew me back.  
Through her eyes the morning broke,  
Their sun leaving me aware.  
The little oranges from there  
She tosses in an exultation;  
All to her is all in fun,  
Love farthest ever from her mind.  
Tossed her from me they'll only go  
Again to orange blossoms turned.

The girl is tossing the orange fruits  
There in Valencia's Christmastide.  
Tossed her from me they'll only go  
Again to orange blossoms turned.

SONG FROM "THE RUSTIC IN  
HIS CORNER"

*Lope de Vega Carpio*

---

Well enough! Fortune!  
Let this olive be mine.

No olive more pleasant,  
Green skin, delicate,  
But inside wooden fruit,  
All boldness to importune.  
Well enough! Fortune!  
Let this olive be mine.

Though ripe fruitfulness  
Of fullest bitterness  
Comes by the load, no less,  
I need only one.  
Well enough! Fortune!  
Let this olive be mine.

SONG FROM "THE SILVER  
GIRL"

*Lope de Vega Carpio*

---

Go along, sighings,  
Where you always fare.  
If my darling is sleeping,  
Neglect to apprise her.

SONG FROM “THE GRAND  
DUKE OF MUSCOVY”

*Lope de Vega Carpio*

---

With what a whiteness  
I entered the harvesting;  
Now sun-ravished, I’m looking dark.

I used to be fair  
Before the reaping;  
The sun disliked seeing  
White flame of my power.  
My lily’s luster  
Was youth, daybreak.  
Now sun-ravished, I’m looking dark.

## THE DEAD LOVER

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

Shrilly the Moorish damsel cries  
Under the olive trees;  
Tremors run through the branches.

Charming form of a girl,  
Form of a Moorish girl  
Weeping her lover's fall  
Under the olive trees.  
Tremors run through the branches.

## LUNA QUE RELUCES

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

Moon with your lighting  
That sets night glowing!

Ay, moon with lighting  
Pure and silvered,  
All of night glowing  
On my precious enamoured.  
Moon with your lighting  
That sets night glowing.

## SONG

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

Mientras duerme la niña

While she sleeps in youth's freshness  
The flowers, the roses,  
The lilies, white lilies,  
Come lending their shades.

On grassy verdure  
The girl reposes  
Where Manzanares  
Comes rushing its streams.  
The wind is not moving  
The branches and leaves  
Where the lilies, white lilies,  
Come lending their shades.

The sun has obeyed her  
And no further goes  
As a lovely ray falls  
From her mouth and eyes.  
The birds are not singing  
For seeing such glories  
Where the lilies, white lilies,  
Come lending their shades.

## I WOULD NEVER BECOME A NUN

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

I would never become a nun.  
I'm a youthful enamoured one.

Forget me and all my pleasure,  
My pleasure, my being glad,  
And leave me alone, unsubdued.  
I'm a youthful enamoured one.

## THE HERON GOES

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

The heron goes with depth in her wound,  
The heron enamoured;  
She lonely goes and she lately cried.

Where the nests of the heron are,  
On intimate banks of the river  
She lonely goes and she lately cried.

## SONG

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

Aquel caballero, madre

That cavalier, Mother,  
Who sees himself my lover;  
I'm dying and he must suffer.

Mother, that cavalier,  
Who goes covered with love's wounds,  
I also share his pains;  
With them I'm dying here.  
His love none any truer  
Merits my saying here:  
I'm dying and he must suffer.

## SONG

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

Vi los barcos, madre

I saw the vessels' sails, Mother.  
I saw nothing worth my care.

Mother, there are three damsels  
Who come from another town  
And in the flowing waters  
Are washing blouses, their own,  
All washing blouses, Mother.  
I saw nothing worth my care.

## ALL IS NIGHT'S DARKNESS

*Unknown Spanish Writer*

---

If all is night's darkness  
And the way no distance,  
Do venture, my friend.

Now after midnight  
Grief's cause will not come.  
My luck keeps him home  
And I born unfortunate!  
He shows me his hate  
In my living on troubled.  
Do venture, my friend.

FROM “RIMAS”

*Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer*

---

XIX

As over your breast is leaning  
Your melancholy brow,  
I see how you resemble  
A broken lily now.

To give to you the purity  
That it and the heavens know,  
You were made by God like the lily  
Of gold and snow.

FROM “RIMAS”

*Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer*

---

XX

Be always aware, if your lips once burn  
From an atmosphere consuming unseen,  
That any soul which can speak with the eyes  
May easily kiss with a look alone.

FROM “RIMAS”

*Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer*

---

XXXI

“What is a poem?” you say driving  
Your eye in mine. How blue!  
“What is a poem?” you are asking.  
The poem . . . . it is you.

FROM “RIMAS”

*Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer*

---

XXXV

No surprise your neglect! But your endearments  
    Surprised me greatly in an earlier day;  
For whatever myself contained of worth,  
    That was beyond you an ample way.

Note: Numbers XX and XXXV really belong in the section for fluctuant syllabic verse, but it seems preferable to keep all the selections from “Rimas” together.

## RONDEAU

*Charles d'Orléans*

---

The summer's couriers run  
To ready his quarters here,  
And are laying a new floor-cover  
Of flowers and verdure woven.

In spreading thick carpets of green  
Through the country everywhere,  
The summer's couriers run.

The hearts chilled by inertia  
Are healthy, well-favored once more.  
Winter, remove yourself, stir.  
Thank God! You are quickly gone:  
The summer's couriers run.

## SONG

*Charles d'Orléans*

---

I scarcely take such kisses,  
Those for appearance given  
Nor those for friendship's gain.  
Too many mere partakers!

Supplies run into thousands  
With prices always down.  
I scarcely take such kisses,  
Those for appearance given.

You know of any precious?  
The glad, the private one.  
All others surely then  
Are mere diversion of strangers.  
I scarcely take such kisses.

## RONDEAU

*Christine de Pisan*

---

If churchward I shall take my way,  
I only go therein to see  
A one as roses fresh and lovely.  
There is no reason much to say,  
Not anything to make a story  
If churchward I shall take my way.

No path of mine can lead away  
Where she remains unseen by me;  
They call me fool (but fools they be)  
If churchward I shall take my way.

FROM "VERSCHIEDENE",  
EMMA - 4

*Heinrich Heine*

---

Emma, end the false confusion.  
Am I crazy now from loving?  
Or perhaps itself, this loving,  
Only follows being crazy?

Ay, I'm tortured, darling Emma,  
Now along with madly loving  
And along with love's own madness,  
Overall by this dilemma.

FROM "LYRISCHES  
INTERMEZZO" - 51

*Heinrich Heine*

---

I walk everywhere in the garden  
Through the summer and early day.  
The flowers are talking and whispering,  
I aimless with nothing to say.

The flowers are talking and whispering  
And staring in pity too:  
"Do not mistreat our sister,  
Pale melancholy you."

FROM "THE NORTH  
SEA"—7—(THIRD LYRIC)

*Heinrich Heine*

---

Golden shaking sparks from heaven's  
Eyes above through space are falling.  
Night throughout and ever deeper,  
Love inhaling, breathes my soul.

Very eyes of highest heaven,  
Fill my soul and vent your sorrow;  
Overflow my soul in pouring  
Down the lucent tears of stars.

HELEN

*Heinrich Heine*

---

Enlivening me with carnal glow  
You enforce your enchanter's will;  
But once that glow is conjured up,  
It is never, never still.

Indent your mouth against my own!  
Man's breath is breath divine!  
The dead are never satisfied  
Imbibing souls like wine.

## THE RUNENSTEIN

*Heinrich Heine*

---

Rock reaches into the sea ahead,  
I seated thereby and dreaming,  
The cry of gulls in the wind's shrill breath,  
The waves awander and foaming.

Once many a love was surely mine,  
And many an eager friend.  
Around me the waves now wander and foam  
At the whistling of any wind.

## DESCEND, SUN OF BEAUTY

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

---

Descend, sun of beauty, for little  
They heeded you; sacred one, they never knew you  
Since never wearied and still  
You were risen over the weary.

For me both your lowering and emergence are  
friendly, O light!  
And well, splendour, are you known to my vision!  
For a godlike revering stillness was learned by me  
As Diotima ordered my senses with healing.

O you herald of heaven! How I listened  
To you, Diotima! My love! How from you  
To the day's gold with lit thanks  
I looked upward. The lively

Rush of the streams was there, flowers from earth's darkness  
Breathed with their love for me,  
And over clouds' silver smile  
The aether inclined in blessing.

## THE ZEITGEIST

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

---

Too long over my head in dark cloud,  
God of Now, you are governing!  
Every side is too wild and fearful, and things  
Shatter and sway with my turning look.

Alas! Boy-like, I drop my gaze downward,  
Seek salvation in caves away from you, and attempt  
To find in my timidness,  
O vibration of all things, the place of your absence.

Allow at last, Father, to my opening eyes  
Your contact! Were you not first after all  
With your spirit-awakening ray? Splendidly  
You brought me lifewards, O Father!

Germination of holy power well comes from vine-shoots.  
By a mildness of air in the wandered grove,  
A heartening god meets with them,  
The quieter mortals; yet with greater power you wake

The chaste soul of the young, instructing  
The old in the knowing arts; only the base  
Becomes baser, the sooner to end  
When you, the shatterer, seize him.

## M A N

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

---

Scarcely shooting up through the waters, O Earth,  
Came mountain-peaks and with fragrance,  
Breathing pleasure; and full of the lasting verdure  
Of groves amid ocean's gray desolation rose

The first untouched islands; and joyfully  
The eye of the Sun-God saw the newcomers,  
Laughing flowers, children all of his own  
Youth eternal and out of you born.

From the more favored of islands where unpausing  
The air tenderly poured round the tree-trunks,  
There lay under clusters of grapes, at mild night's end  
In the dim break of morning's earliest hours

Born therewith, Mother Earth, your child of all loveliness;  
And toward Father Helios in his first look upward  
Goes the boy's recognition and wakes and chooses,  
After trying sweet berries, the sacred vine

To nurse him; his maturity hastens; beasts avoid  
Him, for quite other than they  
Is man; he is likened neither to you  
Nor the father, for in singular boldness,

Your joys and his father's high soul,  
O Earth, are joined in him with your sorrows alongside;  
Like Nature, like all the Gods' mother  
With her grasp universal, would he form himself!

Ay! Therefore his arrogance drives him,  
Earth, away from your heart, and your gifts  
Are useless and also your tender hold on him;  
He follows a thing in his rudeness preferred to you.

From fragrance of his shores' meadows must man  
Venture forth over blossomless water,  
And though his groves be shining in  
Golden fruit, nonetheless he must dig

Caves into mountains, exploring the shaft  
Far away from the cheerful light of his father,  
Thus untrue to the Sun-God  
Who disdainful of slaves laughs at care.

Therefore freer breathe birds of the forest  
Though man's breast lifts with a prouder beat  
And he in sight of obscuring future  
Must also see death and fear it in loneliness.

And weapons against everything breathing, man carries  
In fearful eternal pride; he in discord  
Consumes himself and his flower of peace  
Blooms not overlong in its frailty.

Is he not among all alive with him  
The one most blest? But more deeply tearing

Is not destiny's hold in all-reaching requital  
On the ignited breast of the strong one?

## V A N I N I

*Friedrich Hölderlin*

---

God's scorner they called you? They left  
Your heart heavy with curses and bound you,  
Gave you over to flames,  
Holy man! Oh, why no flaming return

Here from heaven for you, no blow  
To the head for those slanderers, no summon of storm  
That may toss their barbarian ash  
Out of earth, out of homeland!

But she, whom you living loved, who took you  
In death, sacred nature, overlooks  
Mortal acts, leaving you and your haters  
Absorbed into antique peace.

## *Translations in Fluctuant Syllabic Verse*

Comment in Motion · No. 7 · Issue p. 240 · Scan p. 38

### RONDEAU

*Christine de Pisan*

---

The river of sadness and spring of tears,  
Here wid'ning to grief, to a bitter sea,  
My poorest heart that feels so sharply,  
All leave me submerged and drowned in troubles.

I'm plunged and driven in every harshness,  
For round me wider than Seine run strongly  
The river of sadness and spring of tears.

Their greater waves fall with greater largesse  
As though fortune's wind were all about me  
And leading them on with intent to carry  
Me down unrelieved. How hard oppress  
The river of sadness and spring of tears.

## RONDEAU

*Charles d'Orléans*

---

Now weather is leaving her cloak aside,  
Her mantle of wind, of coldness and rain,  
And assumes at last an embroidered one  
Lovely with sun, a gleam and cleared.

Not a single bird and beast abide,  
But sing or call in their proper jargon,  
“Now weather is leaving her cloak aside.”

The river, fountain, and stream are clad  
In a livery pretty as ever worn,  
Of jewelled droplets wrought and silvern;  
New dress is the law for everyone:  
Now weather is leaving her cloak aside.

## B A L L A D E

*Charles d'Orléans*

---

In thick of the forest of Tiresome Sadness  
It happened withal in making my way  
I came to encounter the Amorous Goddess  
Who enquired whereat I was wont to stay.  
I answered, "By fortune I'm being made  
In exile's wood to live time's passing,  
That ever rightly I must be named  
The man astray who is choosing wrong."

In her manner of smiles and humbleness  
Came answer to me: "If I only could say  
Why yourself, my friend, endure distress,  
My every power would tender aid.  
It is long ago since I sought to place  
Your heart all in pleasures. Who forced its undoing?  
In you how displeasing to find of late  
The man astray who is choosing wrong!"

"Alas! Let me say, my sovereign Princess,  
You know my condition. What's left to relate?  
By effort of death comes widespread rudeness  
That has carried my dearest so far away  
Who every hope that I owned contained,  
Who guided me; while she went along  
Through her living years I never became  
The man astray who is choosing wrong.

One walking blind has no help from day.  
In finding my path I must use a cane  
To grope about wherever I'm going.  
Great is the pity that keeps me the same:  
The man astray who is choosing wrong."

Note: This poem would seem to have some relation to the life of its author. The Duke of Orléans was taken prisoner at Agincourt in 1415. Before that time his wife, the widow of a king of England, had died. During the years of his influence on the government, France experienced many difficulties. He and Christine de Pisan were perhaps the greatest French poets who were writing at the commencement of the fifteenth century.

## RONDEAU

*Charles d'Orléans*

---

Strike no longer on door of my thought;  
Care and attention, be annoyed no more,  
For thought is asleep and would stay unwaked  
Having wasted her night as a sorrower.

Herself endangered, since no-one has thought:  
Leave her asleep while yourself withhold there.  
Strike no longer on door of my thought;  
Care and attention, be annoyed no more.

For sake of her healing, Good Hope has thought  
Of readying now this cure for her:  
Unlifted her head from the pillow's feather  
While here with repose it is recompensed.  
Strike no longer on door of my thought.

## THE ENEMY

*Charles Baudelaire*

---

My youth was only a darkening storm,  
Crossed here and there by emerging bright sun.  
The thunder and rain with such havoc are come  
That few reddening fruits remain in my garden.

I finally arrive at the Autumn of values  
With the need of using the rake and the spade  
To heap up again the overflowed sods  
Where holes have been hollowed like graves for the dead.

Who knows if my dream of flowers again  
Will find in this soil over-swept like a shore  
The mystical food that gives force for existence?

O sorrow! O sorrow! Time eats away then!  
A vague foe in gnawing the heart to its core  
Strengthens and grows on the blood of our loss.

## MAN AND THE SEA

*Charles Baudelaire*

---

Love of ocean, free man, is deep in your heart.  
The sea is your mirror; you are viewing your soul  
In the infinite lengths which the waves unroll.  
A gulf no less bitter resides in your spirit.

You joyously plunge in the breast of your image.  
Your eyes and your arms embrace it; waves come  
Alluring your heart from its shadowy hum  
In a noise of complaint unconquered and savage.

You are both set apart for darkness and care.  
Man, no-one has sounded your deeper abyss.  
Sea, no-one discerns your intimate richness.  
Of whatever you hold, you want none aware.

And yet during centuries endless in numbers  
You wrestle together sans pity or stay.  
By courage and death you are carried away,  
Eternal contenders, implacable brothers.

## A TASTE FOR THE VOID

*Charles Baudelaire*

---

How lovingly, spirit, you greeted a fight;  
But hope, whose spur once ignited your ardor,  
No longer straddles you! Wherever you are,  
Old horse, your foot stumbles; sleep without let.

My heart, be resigned as a sleeping brute.

Fatigued spirit, vanquished! For you, old marauder,  
Now love is flavorless as much as dispute.  
Farewell, music's brassy and sighs of the flute;  
No longer tempt, pleasures, a heart pouting and somber.

The Spring is losing her adorable odour!

Time swallows me down more and more every minute  
Like some immense snowfall a body grown stiffer;  
I am after no cabin serving as shelter  
As I view the round globe from a mental height.

Embrace me, some avalanche, in quick descent.

## OCTAVE

*Michelangelo Buonarroti*

---

I now have bought for you, though very dear,  
A little something with a pleasing scent,  
For odor-told, I often know the street whatever.  
Wherever you may go or I am at,  
Without a doubt, I shall be clear aware.  
If you conceal yourself from me, I pardon it.  
Though turning blind, I'd find you then  
You carrying this wherever gone.

## MADRIGAL

*Francesco Petrarca*

---

Or vedi, Amor, che giovanetta donna

You gather now, Love, how merely a damsel  
Owns neglect of your reign, of my sickness' care;  
With two enemies now, she still is secure.

You are taking up arms, while she, robed, hair acurl,  
Shows, seated, feet slipperless in grass and flowers,  
Against you a pride and me pitiless ways.

I'm taken prisoner. If your bow now holds  
Withal any mercy, an arrow whatever,  
Seek your vengeance and mine; O seek it, signore.

## MADRIGAL

*Francesco Petrarca*

---

Non al suo amante piu Diana piacque

Hardly more pleased was Diana's lover  
By an equal chance when seeing her stand  
All naked amid the chilling water  
Than the shepherdess leaves me when rustic, rude  
She readies herself to wash a veil fit  
For hair of L'AURA lovely and blonde.  
I find myself made, though skies glow ardent,  
To shiver therewith from an amorous frost.

## SONNET

*Francesco Petrarca*

---

Movesi il vechierel canuto e bianco

With whitening hair the old man moves far  
From the place of sweetness with years procured,  
Away from the family, leaving them troubled  
When seeing the father dear to them weaker,  
His ancient frame being hauled therefor  
Through the final days that remain to be lived,  
His goodly intentions his one possible aid,  
Of all roads weary and broken with years:

He comes to Rome in accord with his will  
To behold the likeness, indeed, of him  
Whom again in heaven he hopes to see.  
Alas! At times, I am seeking as well  
With all effort, my lady, through crowds of them  
The form really yours, desired by me.

## SONNET

*Francesco Petrarca*

---

In qual parte del ciel, in qual idea

Wherein what sky or idea, where  
Was image ever by nature found,  
The fine lightsome face with which she could  
Unveil here below high workings of air?  
Afloat on the breeze was such golden hair  
From nymph among springs or goddess through wood?  
Were ever such virtues by a heart collected,  
Though of guilt in my death when added together?

In vain he is looking for beauty divine  
Who never has seen those eyes of hers  
As ever so smoothly toward him they turn,  
Has never studied love's slayings, cures,  
Who has never heard her sweet sighs drawn,  
How sweetly she speaks, and sweetly smiles.

FROM “EN LAS ORILLAS DEL  
SAR”

*Rosalía Castro*

---

No va solo el que llora

Scarcely alone is the one who weeps.  
Tears, never desert me, for mercy's sake.  
One sorrow only suffices the soul  
And never a joy may do the same.

Destiny's plaything, husk of humility,  
I rolled in sadness lost and away  
But carried everything needed along—  
For company carried my pain.

FROM "EN LAS ORILLAS DEL  
SAR"

*Rosalía Castro*

---

Alma que vas huyendo de ti misma

Soul running ever away from self,  
Through others whereto has this madness led?  
If consoling fountains are dry within you,  
Dry are all fountains you'll ever find.

How evident still that stars are in heaven  
And over the earth perfumed flowers again,  
Though not any thereof in the shape of those  
Whom, loving you then, you loved, mournful one.

## SONNET

*Pedro Calderón de la Barca*

---

Estas que fueron pompa y alegría

All these that are pleasure and rich display,  
Whose first moments awake come in dawn's first whiteness,  
Late in the day will be pitiful transience  
In night's arms forever sleeping away.

These gradations of splendour surpassing the sky,  
A rainbow striped scarlet and gold, snow, ice,  
Will serve as a lesson to the life of the race:  
Excessive the effort enclosed in a day.

To flower, the roses awoke in the dawn  
Only to age with their rapid flowering:  
Cradle and tomb in one bud are seen.

In this manner men have been always faring;  
Their lives in a day are come and gone  
And centuries consumed as hours pouring.

VARIED STIRRINGS OF HIS  
HEART AFLOAT ON THE  
WAVES OF LISI'S HAIR

*Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas*

---

In ringlet tempest, in waves of gold  
My heart is swimming through gulfs of light  
Ardent and pure, and knows beauty's thirst  
When your headdress is freed in shower downward.

This Leander's sea is a storm impassioned  
When love is revealed where life is lost.  
Icarus' glory with wings now burnt  
Discovers death as a path through gold.

With a phoenix' pretensions and weeping where  
It watches the last of its charring hopes,  
From its very death it would life engender.

Its hunger and punishment imitate Midas  
Rich, avaricious, yet poor in treasure.  
In coy golden fountain, the heart is Tantalus.

ON THE BRIEFNESS AND  
FUGITIVE NATURE OF LIFE

*Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas*

---

All in its wake the year's briefness carries  
Of mortal existence, mocking the vigor  
In marble's coldness and steel's bright valor,  
Confronter of time that compactly dares.

Before foot learns how it comes and goes,  
Life moves toward death and appears obscure  
For it is a poor and turbulent river  
Absorbed by black sea in lofty waves.

Every short moment is one step's length  
Unwillingly taken through travelled day;  
Whether standing or sleeping, I'm quick enough gone.

Briefest of sighs, the last and most loath,  
Death is inheritance, forces its way,  
But legal, not penal—no cause for affliction.

## TIDINGS OF DEATH

*Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas*

---

Once they were strong, though later to crumble,  
The walls of my land where I fixed my gaze.  
They were tiring now with the passing times  
By reason of which their valor turned frail.

To the fields I hastened, where sun drinks all  
It desires of streams, the loosed ice of waters,  
And there by the forest knew herd's complainings  
Of the loss of light that the shadows steal.

I entered my house; I saw how the plunder  
By years of usage had left it stained;  
My staff was bent and no longer sturdy.

I knew that my sword was time's to conquer;  
I found no object where my eyes now rested  
That was without death as a present memory.