

POETS'S
STONE



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Walking towards them through some dappled park

Dazed, spitting sparks, I glide. Unlike standing, unlike walking,

Instead a hazy dance that pirouettes towards

The white square that sits in a pool of black, and I see them.

Behind their glassy exteriors, bent in geometric shapes, beaten to silence. Through

Each fragmented socket I see them sit, singing softly, some

Have sealed their lips but the sound escapes and dissipates. Each fingernail dappled

And blotchy, each tooth chipped. Their squashy silhouettes fade, lines blur, the white square shrinks, and I am gone.

The clouds give way; it rains in the park.

- Jamie Thorogood

Found Poem

Everybody called him the champion.

He dreamed of Africa.

Blood came out from under the fingernails

They went through this fiction every day

There are three things that are my brothers the fish and
my two hands

The older fishermen looked at him where sad

Its what a man must do

He dreamed of Africa.

Its what a man must do

Blood came out from under the fingernails

The older fishermen looked at him and where sad

They went through this fiction every day

- Ned Freeborough

A warning from the past

Jol looked up. A blast of cold air and a flurry of snowflakes met his curiosity. He brushed them off, sighing, and looked out across the icy wasteland. This far north, there was little light in the winter, and Jol could barely see the hunched forms of the native labourers through the twilight. He squinted across the tundra and surveyed the dig sight. He yearned for warmer lands, southwards, where an archaeologist could make a real living, digging up the crumbled remains of the Old One's cities. But here, he knew, despite the cold, that he was in the right place. The ancient structure he knew was there, underneath the permafrost, could prove crucial to the rebirth of his country. The weapons stored underneath this frigid waste could split the very matter that made of the universe. How he'd show the doubting priest-kings in the great halls of his hometown, if he brought back a couple of those.

That afternoon, Jol scrambled down the vast crater the excavators had already made. He had heard reports that the simple labourers had hit solid concrete. He grasped his brush and pickaxe and slid down the hole. What he saw at the bottom made his heart leap. A huge concrete roof, at least twenty metres long, had been uncovered. Along its surface were vast yellow and black symbols, looking almost like strange, disjointed triangles. He ushered the hired digger out the way and brushed the dust of the roof. He picked a good spot, lit his torch, and smashed the corner of the roof with his pickaxe.

The solid concrete resisted the first few blows, but after he had been hitting it solidly for around five minutes, he heard a loud crack and the part he was smashing caved it to reveal a dark room, black with age. He leapt down. Immediately an electronic light turned on. "Ingenious", he muttered.

It was indeed ingenious how, after all the long, lonely millennia, the lights of the Old Ones still flickered on, without a switch being flicked, when you entered the remains of their buildings. Some devilishly complex bit of technology, Jol concluded. His eyes scanned the room. On one wall, there was a large mosaic, that showed the world as it appeared in ancient times. His fingers traced the marble hexagons, finding his homeland in the south, the cold barbarian lands of Uropa, and the vast expanse of Asia. His eyes darted off the mosaic and rested on the other walls. On one, a dark passage led off downwards into the gloom, and on the other, strange carving were engraved on the solid concrete. It looked like the arcane writing of the old ones. There was a picture of the world, surrounded in laurel leaves, and underneath were five paragraphs, written in what appeared to be five different languages. The script of one was long and wavy, another was square and complex looking, and the rest appeared to be relatively similar, aside from a few unique squiggles.

In the middle of the room there was a large canister with a label in his own numerical language, 2038AD. He absent mindedly pressed a large button on the side of it.

Immediately a large screen lit up on the wall, dusty and cracked with age. He wiped the debris off it, and a picture of a woman appeared on it. She looked as though she came from the barbarian northern lands, but she was dressed richly in a suit and a tie. She was standing in front of a large building, and the symbol of the world in laurels was everywhere, on the building, flying on flags, even on the woman's notebook. She started talking in a hurried, urgent voice.

The language she spoke was rough and course, not flowing and poetic like Jol's own. She seemed concerned, and very worried. She started gesturing with her hand, and suddenly, she disappeared, to be replaced by a moving image of a bomb exploding. But what a bomb! The very glance of it made Jol's hair stand up on end. He could feel power radiating from it, the power to destroy worlds. The message ended, again, with a large image of the blue world in white laurels. Then the screen went black.

So, the weapon was here, the mushroom bombs of the Old Ones, and he Jol, was going to reclaim them for humanity. He knew what he had to do. With a spring in his step, he strode out the room, down the dark passage in the side of the wall. More engravings had been carved into the stone passageway. Human faces, screaming out in pain and anguish, crying out in fear. He ignored them and carried on.

At the bottom of the steep stone staircase, he reached another room. In the middle of the floor there was a dark

pit going into the abyss. He crossed the threshold and stood, looking around. Immediately he froze. Through massive tubes on the side, a sound was coming. Music. Slow, sad harsh music. He realised what this was. The arctic wind had been funnelled through these tubes to create a harsh minor melody. The tunes created an air of sadness and despair. Jol shivered. Around the room were images. Images that chilled him to the bone. A city burning, children with clothes on fire and skin melting. And the bomb, his bomb, leaving its nightmare mushroom cloud scattered across a blood red sky. He turned away. "Why have I come here", he thought. Not for personal gain, or to further science, but so his government could unleash this horror upon the world. Diagrams as well were etched onto that wall, of the ground exploding and little helpless stickmen on fire. He glanced at the hole. It was down there. He knew it. The mushroom bomb. He shimmied towards the edge. He looked down into the darkness of the pit and saw the silent sickening image of the burning child in it. He felt his whole body collapse in an unheard fit of revulsion and he knew no more.

He awoke at the bottom of the pit. All around him were strange glowing metals and rocks, pulsing out a weird light in the darkness. His head ached. He felt his scalp. With a spasm of horror he found he had no hair there. It was on the floor. As the day wore on, he realised his skin was burning. Burning! He then knew why the mushroom bombs were so elusive, why the Old Ones had died. They had destroyed themselves, falling prey to the primeval instincts that had driven him down this dark pit.

They only tried to protect the future from the mistakes they had made. Jol was trapped. He knew now that he was dying and his last thoughts before unconsciousness enfolded him, was the shimmering metals in their odd canisters, winking out their sickening light. "We told you so", they seemed to be saying.

Fin.

"my god what have we done" – Captain Robert Lewis,
captain of the *Enola Gay*

"now I have become death, the destroyer of worlds" –
Robert Oppenheimer

- Jake Helsop



The Worm

-
The rain hammered down;
a cataclysmic thundering
that charmed our patient souls
to a perilous aquatic wandering:

tarmac pavements, red brick paths,
the terrifying exposure of concrete.
Heavy footfalls leave most of us dead,
a tide of bloody carnage underneath

where broken bodies squirm,
coil in parodies of mirth
imagining the last mouthful
of delicious, loamy earth.

- David Anson

Sonnet

I miss you like a tree misses an axe,
Yet my mind cradles your memory still.
I was Icarus with my wings of wax,
You were the sun but with a winter's chill.
Like a ghost you haunt my dreams while I sleep,
As if knowing you can't hurt while awake.
I watch you in my mind's eye where you keep,
Taunting me with my past mistakes.
Although I know you belong to time too,
Part of me wonders if you are the same.
But that's only because I still think of you,
That's the effect of your poison in my brain.
Guess I only miss what you used to be,
Still I can't help but think: do you miss me?

- Alice Hockey

Triangles

I Run

Weeping blood.

Broken nails and

Speckled skin and

Stiff knots in

Torn lamplight.

Blank lips, motionless
shoulders,

Pales eyes on

Ripe cisterns,

Reeking.

I want words.

Beautiful words.

Iridescent words.

The shining balm.

Skin broken –

Deformed triangles,

Mother murderer,

Vibrations spark.

I Glow.

- Jamie Thorogood





"The Lady of Shalott", a lyrical ballad by the English poet Alfred Tennyson:

A pale, pale corpse she floated by, Deadcold, between
the houses high,
Dead into tower'd Camelot. Knight and burgher, lord and
dame,
To the planked wharfage came: Below the stern they
read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Original interpretation of the painting by Sidney
Meteyard, By Alice Hockey



Extract from the Eve of St Agnes

"A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and
kings."

- John Keats

Drifters

I got a hundred miles left in my beat-up car
An empty highway and a cheap guitar
I got wishes that are made that I know won't travel far

I got love hanging on by a fishing line
I got a map in my head with no design
I got a whole lotta drive left for these dreams of mine

Thinking I can take the long way out
Driving so I make my way down south

Cause drifters like me
Know that life ain't free
So they spend and buy as much as they can spare

There's a big moment ahead
But right now is what we get
So what's the point in settling down in just one bed?
Cause drifters like me, drifters
Love the road instead

There's a motel inn open at the end of the road
I think I'll stay the night cause it's getting cold
But I don't know if I'll be coming back till I'm much too old

The planes outside my window keep me up all night
Is it the loneliness I'm feeling or the star lights?
Either way I think I'll cross the border tomorrow

Not sure where I'm really heading towards
But I'll find myself way up north

Cause drifters like me
Know that life ain't free
So they spend and buy as much as they can spare

There's a big moment ahead
But right now is what we get
So what's the point in settling down in just one bed?
Cause drifters like me, drifters
Love the road instead

Love the road instead
Road instead

I've been bitten once or twice by hopeless love
But these wheels that I'm driving always rise above
The sorrow and pain don't translate on my highway

- Isabella Montero

Found Poem

The sun and his steady movement of his fingers had
uncramped his left hand
He pushed his straw hat hard on his head
He ate the white eggs to give himself strength and also
drank a cup of shark liver oil

No one should be alone in their old age.

"Eat a little more" he said "Eat it well"

"I'll kill him though," he said. "In all his greatness and
his glory."

"We'll put the gear in the boat then get some"

"I wish I had the boy to help me and to see this."

"Fish," he said softly, aloud, "I'll stay with you until I am
dead."

God, let him jump

Take a good rest young bird

How did you sleep old man?

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and
at the hour of our death

It must be very strange in an airplane, was his last
thought on Earth

No one should be alone in their old age.

- Zeb Jay

Africa

he dreamed of Africa of the sea as *la mar*
In the dream
his eyes and they were the same color as the sea
The old man was thin and gaunt with deep wrinkles in the back of his neck
blotches of the skin cancer
The iridescent bubbles were beautiful in the sea
The old man leaned the mast with its wrapped sail against the wall
wind was in the east a smell came across the harbour
On the boat there were brown walls of the flattened, overlapping leaves
And He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff
he woke up in the morning

Isadora Clay

Poem of quotes:

he smelled the land breeze he woke up
a sudden deep of seven hundred fathoms,
He shivered with the morning cold
and the light from the dying moon.
But I will see something that he cannot see
It could not happen twice
but any moment now the sun would rise
I may not be as strong as I think
They played like young cats in the dusk
with the light from the dying moon.

Niko Hitchens

