

A Hundred Posters

#12 December 1976

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Aram Saroyan:

SNOW IN CALIFORNIA

My daughter's enterprising little spirit
Bestows its gift upon the virgin air:

What excitement the whiteness makes in her!
She clasps it in her mittens

Until it's a snowball which she doesn't throw,
But lingers over, having never before held snow.

S.R. Lavin:

The Holocaust

The soldiers' uniforms march home empty
into a town of ashes

because a vestige of truth is not enough

while I sleep art is dead

That a beneficent concept can be real

we see the complex connection
in its simplest form

Evil reflects upon itself

rumor transcends the real

things seem
apocryphal. Time moves sideways--

all the people go quietly into holes.

The sign says there are children
but there are only signs

Committment to be

How does one go back? having passed through
these mortal barriers, as lovers, or friends?
"It is that no one cares to put up the energy
that is the mundane." Etched in the mind
I can see no one knows how to wait, or,
those who wait do not remember why...
what Milton said.

When You are evoked, called upon to be
that contract with yourself cannot be broken
tho no one remembers, or believes,
is only the inspiration
to remember. Put your eyes back in their
sockets, else you remain blind...
no one remembers. What is love
in the wake of forgetting.
I am incapable of fraud in this matter.
No one believes me.

The Sinking of the Titanic

Why must we have invisible hands

A primer for children would say
what is the Paradise swan to me

All that is contained here will tell you.

I cannot begin again. The seed
was planted in a dark closet

and when they didn't come the way I'd hoped
for it I gave up being a flock of birds

crossing with them

the ocean; a hardly sounded rythmn

learning to be what death is not
myself and my companion

went riding.

(Britton Wilkie:

On the Red & White Stones

Our gypsy mountebank - who must, perforce, be served by quick, warmly, audacious humor - sat before his colored beads and shell games quite numb from the cold (which had crept up upon him with icicle claws). Full flower of images had he, each flowering limned within each other, but the blooms seen only in imaginative fancy among trees whose leaves have passed through autumn's gay red & orange to snowtime's sombre brown & gray.

By the flickering oil stove I lay, my spine stiff as if fixed to a frozen armature. A book, a Victorian book whose spine was worse - of than mine, described for me the Paris Commune of 1871, the explosions of which reached me as little fine-lined blurs visible against the cross-hatching of the engravings - one of which brought the comic impression of a soldier with a sabre assaulting another in front of a restaurant sign showing a rabbit jumping into a frying pan. I read again the tedious story of communist outrages, a few of them sporting & good humored, and of the infamous reprisals of the Thiers government - the stunning sacrifice that raises the time white before us, blackening the fair page

with the spent shell-patterns of quick blind thoughts.

I fell back from the pages and down to sleep - my fire flickering faintly in the immense cold. On sleep's frontier, where perception is veiled by dream as a landscape is lost to sight in incoming fog, I encountered a vivid spirit, that of my great-grandfather, Doctor W. H. Barr who had been lurking in the book. A play of colors shewed he to me: Colors red and black we know from our accounting; colors red & white we know from our politics. I saw the red of the latter upon the black of the former, capital, and the white of the latter upon the red of the former, that is, reaction... Through the blood this vision was most urgent - and, as I am writing in the alchymic vein, the thoughts of "blood money" and the "redeeming blood of the lamb" flow readily...* The red politic seemed to stand out on the black as a source of black irritant to the white, which struggled to repel it. I had caught a cold.

Sneezing, star-crossed lovers exchanged white & red flowers over the martial tombstones of the War of the Roses. Years before a very moor, wondrously black & broad-chested, had told me that our common cold is but an expression of grief. I could imagine it so. Our nigredo, death's shadow, comes upon our white blood cells, which labor to overcome it, to the relief of our red blood cells, busy bearing oxygen.

The bloody gypsy, charmed by these quackeries, warmed by the way white & red thoughts are woven together, brings his rocks out from the womb of cinnabar. In one hand he exhibits the Red Stone, apparently mercury oxidized, though I also hear "the red sulphur of the wise" in the other the white stone, presumably "calcination" or reduction. He holds forth the two stones as keys to the mystery of the one philosophic stone — the mastery of elemental transmutation... How often he has repeated these symbolic gestures above the intersecting, intermingling lights & liquidities, mortal folly a swarm of flies about him, with the assurance that the essential treasure will always remain concealed. Behind him appears an heraldic phantasy of opposing warriors. Two knights are held fast by the paint brush in their rush to battle. Above them the artist has daubed in two stars: one red, one white. Recalling a priest at mass, he seems contained in a sacramental vase, the symbolic heart of a vast flower, which, in the growing cold, closes up about him.

From this enclosure I awoke to give my reflection to the common cold in process. I feel the vitality of the irritating principle — perhaps the wee animals responsible are

cousin or ally to the bacteria that
cause decay. Why not sneeze?
Here the noble knights, star-
guided, seem mounted on very
tiny creatures adrift in the
blood.

B. Wilkie
Ithaca, N.Y.
November, 1946

optional
footnote - page 2

Here is a shrouded ikon
radiant with the very pure
blood of the high families...

Here the white is very rare &
clear, the crown as of thorns,
and from its fixation in
elixir descends to our hearts.
Of the blood, it is a solution
in which conflict is dissolved
& contained. It is also merely
the snake-oil of medieval
handwriting.

Bob Arnold:

CROSSCUT

Across my knees
An old blade can be brought back almost new
It is not winter yet

TERRA

There is evidence of spring everywhere
A pair of geese, into a headwind / point north
The shed door shuts easier now
Rainwater comes to the meadows
Planks are thrown down

HIKING, NORTH 1971-1974

Far
A lake
Like a horse on its side

LOVE AND LANDSCAPE

Don't ask us how we crossed the saltwater marsh
The grasses were high and easy under foot
The last stream was spanned by a driftwood plank
Thrown carefully into the muck
I didn't sink and you didn't sink
And when we came to ocean
Skittering of sandpipers
You held your dress and walked into the spray
It must have been also the sudden daylight that I loved

Richard Dillon:

YEAR-END REPORT

Skyscrapers cleave heaven's belly
with millions who
in eventime relax
before fireplace or telly.

Supersonic aircraft
piloted by veterans of major battles
connect wide-eyed travellers
at the life-experience's highest levels.

Holy men from alien societies
surrounded by distraught entities
receive standing ovations
while continuing to confuse them.

Venerable judges and silver-tongued advocates
ponder the facts
and fates
of obscure and famous individuals.

Swift striders
race over lawns
free of fuss
fluidly towards silver cups.

Solar stations
gather might
to power cities
through unremitting night.

Upright students
gather to discuss
allegiance to
political trusts.

Witty beauties
remind young men
to raise the necessary funds
to delight them.

Public servants
inform their constituencies
of the latter's effect
on precarious ecologies.

Landlords are glad
when no work is to be had
to let rent evaporate
without getting mad.

Factories anthem
in muzak caverns.
Backpats go around
for jobs well done.

The children's garden
blossoms in concert
with the
solar system.

Ribboning dreamily,
highways unite distant cities.
Hallways carry secretaries
in efficient hurry.

Farmers with dapper knowhow
till the soil
to the applause
of a healthy citizenry.

Adventurous young women
kick about town,
shirtless, braless,
hair crewcut down.

Huge ice sculptures
offer caviar
heaped on tiny trays
while flashy folks, grinning, sashay.

Waiters snatch ashtrays
the instant
the ash
coincides with glass.

Elastic trombonists
ignite the nights
under moonlit skies
balmy with kites,

While orbiting on high
beeping and staid
sattelites track onward
night upon day

Over black ducks
usually uncommonly wary
which rush the sky
flying over a territory

near newspapers tacked
to walls of cracked shack
reporting these tales
to idiot hermit.

Other Publications
Davies, Hotel Boulderado
Box 319, Rm. 519
Boulder, Colo. 80302