

Collied Carpets

Our carpets all were clean, as were our lives,
before those scores of slummy collies came
to stain the once pristine. No mat survives
unscathed by scat or scum, we're not the same
young pups of thirty years ago. Too many
old wags pulled from pounds have made their marks,
dried urine laced with tears for those whose penny
dropped too soon. The sounds of silenced barks
still echo through our rooms, the warp and woof
of rugs and dogs. Their place is empty now,
no shaggy dogs to groom who raised the roof
in joyous play. Their grace is gone. And how
will home and heart now bear such scars again,
we muse, as we prepare the new dog's den.

Sunrise Train

It sprang from earth near dawn and swung bright rays
through far-flung arcs, then, tiny sun ablaze,
swept straight across those slowly flowing mountains
dark as dreams, its white
eye beaming into waning night, its track
a glowing stripe, its silver slicing black
as gaily as a checkered flag flung skyward,
roaring forward till it triumphed by,
a rapid patter of staccato clickclacks
underneath a klaxon's brazen blast,
and streaked out into light,
one long straight silent line horizon bound,
before it blended into morning haze
and journeyed on beyond by sunlit ways.

Easter Flowers

In Easter season wildflowers dance and sing
Or so, from lifted heads and swaying stems, it seems.
The lilies of the field...Indeed these toil not,
Although the breeze may set them spinning,
But they rise in grace across the earth
Before returning to the earth.

And, leaning low into the breeze,
One hears ecstatic echoes
Of a host of petalled spirits,
Those who saw a heaven in a wildflower
Or the outbursting of a trodden star,
Who even for a moment
Stood alone and free before a private vision.

How their seed is scattered,
Flung into the winds
That lean down from high places,
Keening through the canyons of the centuries,
Pale riders to the sea.
Even now, it seems the same soft sea

From which Hans Christian's little mermaid
Turned away to walk as a woman into the wind,
Forever to follow her vision
To whatever abyss awaited there.
She paid the price. Her steps were scars,
Each blade of grass just that.
And yet she limped the land with tearless eye.

How many blades of grass for every flower
Gathered in the wind? She learned
And they learned too, each one.
Their still-ecstatic echoes sound,
The trace of souls alone and free,
Alone and free, alone and free...

These sure and shining spirits
Surely need no requiem from us?
Or if we must, then not some grave remembrance
But lifelong celebration, light of tongue and tread.
Like lilies of the field...

Still, in this serene and graceful gathering
I, tenderly though tearlessly, would tender
These few leaves of tribute to their crown
And thereby lay my lowly flowers down.