

The Shadow Lands – 5 Poems for Sixfold

“The Shadow Lands”

(to the heroes with the iron legs)

It may have been aboriginal
 or on a Tlingit totem
it may have been spoken in Moquelumnan
 by the gray-haired Miwok
engraved, legend, family, heritage.

A sacred ground of honor,
 the Shadow Land.
There are those who know
 the road, path, plain,
know the landscape; secret and spiritual

the tides of the Pacific Northwest.
 the totem’s carvings
The men and women with the iron legs
 who know the heritage and history
have charted the Chinook salmon runs,

before smallpox from Victoria
 was carried by *Brother Jonathon*,
and they were escorted by gunboats
 when they evacuated their encampments
a dozen to a canoe, with no return ticket.

The pandemic workers understand the iron legs
 those with the iron legs
understand what it means
 to walk the Shadow Lands,
to **be** the *‘People of the Tides’*.

Those driving the heavy trucks
 during the third and fourth watches
their minds living in panoramic orchards
 while their children are sleeping;
unconscious hands steering the lading to relief sites.

The iron legs supporting the faithful arms

holding ante mortem hands
of those no longer waiting
for the afternoon visits alone.
The ones taking the ante meridiem calls

and those working the ambulance docks
continuing into a fourth sleepless shift
the in-ambulant patients, chilled, lungs full of fluid;
and the people of the tides with iron legs
in the midst of another catastrophic disaster. ✨

“Pluie printanière sur les Champs-Élysées”
Spring rain on the *Champs-Élysées*.

The fresh rain gives vigor
to etiolated seedlings;
the air crisp – humid – hazy.

En passant whispers of the strolling, smiling couple,
unostentatious emotions imploding

the breath of the newborn baby
entreats the nose and senses
a new soul breathes.

For a moment the mist, the infant, the *amoureux*
an unbreakable image that they are all one
le premier amour on my last spring in Paris.

La vie, la vie, that spring rain *aux Champs-Élysées*. ✨

“The Ocean’s Children”

North of the Redwoods on Route 128
one can hear the rushing sounds
of the ocean’s children’s giggles
the undertones of the camping, moonlit lovers,
quietly murmuring, murmuring.

To tent under the Albion Bridge,
...gaze at the night’s ocean and stars
does seem like an eternal cathedral.
Canticles of cresting waves; psalms
being sung by the gulls and cormorants.

The naked sun appears to rise
out of her gray, morning bath...
and unable to turn his gaze away
the sky reveals a blush of delight
flush across its countenance.

Three seagull tattletales chide the sky
while they drop clams on seals
that jostle in the boisterous waves.
Navarro Beach is like the wrestling
laugh and tussle of teenage boys. ✨

“Even the Sky Smiles for You”

“连天空都为你微笑”

Lián Tiān Kōng dōu Wéi Nǐ Wéi Xiào (pīnyīn)

Your smile brings color
to the Beijing sky,
你的微笑给北京的天
空带来色彩
nǐ de wēi xiào gěi Běijīng de tiān
kōng dài lái sè cǎi,

the scent of your small oranges
disperse the smoky air.
你小橘子的气味
驱散烟雾弥漫的空气。
nǐ xiǎo jú zi de qì wèi
qū sàn yān wù mí màn de kōng qì。

In my daydreams,
we are always together,
在我的白日梦中，
我们永远在一起
zài wǒ de bái rì mèng zhōng,
wǒmen yǒng yuǎn zài yìqǐ,

yet the most beautiful sunsets and proud clouds
never linger.
即使是最美丽的日落和骄傲的云
也不会萦绕。
dàn zuì měi lì de rì luò hé jiāo ào de yún
yǒng yuǎn bú huì yíng rào。

Soon only the sun and the moon
will know where we are.
很快只有太阳和月亮
才能知道我们在哪里。
hěn kuài zhǐ yǒu tài yáng hé yuè liàng
cái néng zhī dào wǒ men zài nǎlǐ。 ☘

“A Prayer for Pettiness”

Of all the world's largesse
the myriad things that keep
the mind; soul occupied...

...listen...

sit quietly next to one
for whom there is affection

Observe the peace
of Nishikigoi in the lily
covered green pools
draw in the evening's respiration
listen to the cricket's
washboard tunes

Anticipate the fireflies
lay hand on hand
be enveloped by their breathing
drift with the susurrations of this moment
plead in silent prayer,

“Sun, moon – be still.” ❧

####

End of, *“Shadowlands - 5 poems for Sixfold”*