

A photograph of a dirt path in a forest. The path is made of dark soil and is surrounded by lush green vegetation, including tall grasses, ferns, and various trees. The lighting is natural, suggesting a daytime setting. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, serif font.

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Anna M Evans

Anna M. Evans' poems have appeared in the *Harvard Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *Rattle*, *American Arts Quarterly*, and *32 Poems*. She gained her MFA from Bennington College, and is the Editor of the *Raintown Review*. Recipient of Fellowships from the MacDowell Artists' Colony and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and winner of the 2012 Rattle Poetry Prize Readers' Choice Award, she currently teaches at West Windsor Art Center and Richard Stockton College of NJ. The poems appearing here are all from her new sonnet collection, *Sisters & Courtesans*, which is forthcoming from White Violet Press. Visit her online at www.annamevans.com.

My Life as a Polish Nun During World War II

We ran an orphanage in old Gdansk,
which overflowed in nineteen thirty-nine.
Daily, the Germans rolled by in their tanks.
We kept our heads well down and toed the line.
But any child who came here in the night,
no questions asked, was never turned away—
starving, beaten, sick, half-dead with fright,
Christian or Jew—with orphans, who can say?

We had to teach the Jewish ones the creed,
so the Gestapo wouldn't know our game.
The irony of sowing that small seed,
was hardly lost on me, though not our aim.
Children are dear to God, gentile or Jew.
We wanted to save them all; we saved a few.

My Life as a French Carmelite Nun

Outside these walls the revolution rages,
but inside all is calm and I am safe,
tending the garden—tomatoes in their cages,
the vegetable patch. When restrictions chafe
I climb up to the highest tower and view
the city burning, riots in the square.
It's true there's often not that much to do,
but better cloistered here than dead out there.
In my hours of silent contemplation
I must confess I've wondered about God,
his tolerance for death and desecration.
Then yesterday I saw a sign, a clod
of earth that looked like Jesus. Vive la France!
It's good to know that nothing's left to chance.

My Life as a Saloon Girl

My sister lives near Richmond on a farm,
three children and another on its way.
I wouldn't trade our lives on any day.
She's got gray hair already; I got charm
so even hardened gunslingers disarm
and draw out wads of rolled-up bills to pay
for my champagne (It's water.) I display
my pretty knees, some cleavage. What's the harm?

My job's to make them think I'm having fun.
They treat me like a lady and don't touch.
I have a little pearly-handled gun
tucked in my garter for when they're out of line,
but honestly, it doesn't happen much.
Come let's join in, they're singing *Clementine*.

My Life as a Druidess

I stir the steaming entrails on the ground
with my oak stick. The pattern that resolves
is just a frame to hang my words around.

The subtle art of prophecy involves
seeing what the king wants to come true,
so the restraint that holds him back dissolves.

I listen, scheme, and figure the long view—
the Romans gone, the Celtic people whole—
and set the course we need to get us through.

A little theater's all it takes. I roll
my eyes back, mumble, wail. He doesn't guess
how much the kingdom's under my control

or if he does, he's wise enough to bless
the greater wisdom of his druidess.

James Prothero

James Prothero teaches high school English and college English in Santa Ana, California. He is the author of the novel *The Sun is But a Morning Star*, and until recently co-editor of *The Road Not Taken*. He has also published the scholarly studies, *Wordsworth and Welsh Romanticism* and *Gaining a Face: the Romanticism of C.S. Lewis*. He lives in San Juan Capistrano with his wife, paints watercolors, and is owned by a golden retriever.

Immortality Ode 2014: A Reply to William Wordsworth

The child is father of the man
Of that I'm very sure.
That seeds I plant for good or ill
Grow far beyond what I will
To hopes that time may give or kill
And mock my fondest plan.

1.
I still remember now the surging light,
The incandescent, incense light at birth.
The fires' mirth,
That charred the rain-starved hills in flaming night,
Still glowing, memory's child, the birth so wild,
That leaves the scarred earth.

2.
Yes, I chased the visionary gleam
Who does not? Who can deny beauty's call?
The woods in fall,
The arms of a woman, sweet scented seem
To promise everything—to promise all
Until time dims the gleam.

3.
Our birth is but a forgetting, our youth a flaming star.
Not in utter nakedness do we come
From God who is our home.
But in our battered fists we carry a flower,
Faded, crushed, lost beyond any human power
To recall it from afar.

4.
And God knows, as do we, death sure haunts us
As, I suppose, in truth it really should.
It flaunts us
And we know that somehow that is wrong,
That we'd change it somehow if we really could
Change the song.

5.

Still the splendor in the grass remains;
Though each slender, fragile blade dies,
And the child cries,
The splendor endures, seen after long years
By another child's eyes.

6.

Thus, though our faith is small, and our fears
Be large, our love be shrunk to from what it ought.
The meanest flower can give
Thoughts that lie too deep for tears
And joy to still surprise us while we live.

C.B. Anderson

C.B. Anderson was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. His book of poems, *Mortal Soup and the Blue Yonder*, was published in 2013 by White Violet Press.

Conciliatory Gestures

It doesn't matter what we do tonight
(And you, my dear, shall have complete control)
As long as we avoid another fight.

My main concern is that we make things right,
And in accordance with this worthy goal
It doesn't matter what we do tonight,

Provided you believe that I'm contrite
And crave your company with all my soul.
As long as we avoid another fight

And reconciliation is in sight
I'm certain we'll agree that on the whole
It doesn't matter what we do tonight.

Perhaps we'll chat, or if the moon is bright
Then maybe we can take a quiet stroll
Along a winding road. Another fight

Would hamper second chances and invite
Our recent differences to take a toll.
It doesn't matter what we do tonight
As long as we avoid another fight.

Jeff Burt

Bio: Jeff Burt lives in Santa Cruz County, California, and works in manufacturing. He has work in Dandelion Farm Review, Windfall, Nature Writing and Rhino.

Marriage Knots

So I lift your face and kiss your lips
And you keep right on talking.

I guess that's good. How many trips
Have I ended with a quick kiss
And kept right on walking?

So I lift your face and kiss your lips
And they are full of chatter,

The kids in school, the faucet drips,
My sister called and on the desk's
The mail, the dog's gone fatter.

So you lift my face and kiss my lips
And I discuss the daily grind,

The dump and run, the market flips,
And all the while our marriage
Knots the everlasting bind.

Robert Lavett Smith

Born in Michigan in 1957, I grew up in northern New Jersey, in a suburb of New York. Since 1987, I have lived in San Francisco, where for the past fifteen years I have worked as a Special Education Paraprofessional for the San Francisco Unified School District. I hold an M.A. in creative writing from the University of New Hampshire, where I studied with Charles Simic and Mekeel McBride. In 1982, I studied with Galway Kinnell, as a member of the Master Class at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. I am the author of four small-press chapbooks, and more recently, of two full-length collections, *Everything Moves With A Disfigured Grace* (Alsop Review Press, 2006), mostly free verse, and *Smoke In Cold Weather* (Full Court Press, 2013), a gathering of sonnets. My previous work has appeared in places as diverse as "Poetry Northwest," "Hanging Loose," and "The Hiram Poetry Review."

DOLL HOUSE

i.m.: Patricia Lewis Smith, 1953-2005

The tiny rooms, immaculately furnished,
Stood for the home we never could afford:
The roll-top desk, the copper cookware burnished
And hanging neatly, each embroidered word
On the stamp-sized sampler hung above the couch,
The bed with its bright quilt. In miniature
Were gathered here the dreams she could not touch;
Her doll house dreams brought out the best in her.
These days, her ashes stain a windowsill
No larger than a matchbook: she is gone,
But in these things she loved there lingers still
Some essence rescued from oblivion.
Each elfin fixture resonates with loss,
And grief's the only tenant of this house.

THE WRECK OF THE EDWARD (SIC) FITZGERALD

When I was still a teenager, I thought
The shipwreck nodded to the Rubaiyat;
I pictured quatrains strewn on frigid water,
And was dismayed to learn that it did not.

Leonard Kress

Leonard Kress has published fiction and poetry in *Passages North*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Iowa Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *Atticus Review*, *Harvard Review*, *Barn Owl Review*, etc., and most recently, *The Swarm* and *Writing Disorder*. His recent collections are The Orpheus Complex, Living in the Candy Store, and Thirteens. He teaches philosophy, religion, and creative writing at Owens College in Ohio and serves as fiction editor for Artful Dodge.

Sonnets to Cynthia as if Written by Sextus Propertius

I should go hike the Appalachian Trail,
Charter a skiff and drift down to Key West,
The tonic sun, a perfect lean-to rest;
Regain lost vitality. So, regale
Me if you must, thinking you'll change my mind.
First your delights followed by your Philippic
(I taught that word to you!) downright epic,
Its cataloging of my faults. You've found
Them all and more, and then, how you won't
Survive my absence. Blame me for your loss
Of faith, your gods all fled, employ such blunt
Objects to strike, and then, slyly, to toss
My way—"It won't be long till other guys
Will find the welcome mat between my thighs."

Sonnets to Cynthia as if Written by Sextus Propertius (3)

You are nothing special—don't be deluded.
Without my constant public praise, so over
The top, identifying you as my lover,
My muse, my one, you'd never be included
On any list that mattered. I was wrong,
About your face, your eyes, your lips, your hair,
Your feet, though often driven to despair
Envisioning you in someone else's song.

I'm over that thanks to the talking cure,
Shock therapy, and exorcism, bland food
And no caffeine. Where once I felt allure,
Now it's disenchantment, less time to brood
Over new language games. I can assure
You, those toxic charms have been let from my blood.

John MacLean

John MacLean is a retired teacher. He has also worked on merchant ships, in a gypsum mill and as an assistant district attorney. His poetry has appeared previously in *The Road not Taken*, *The Lyric*, *Avocet*, *Spitball*, *Kota Press*, and *14x 14*. His book, *If You Teach It, They Will Read*, is published by Rowman and Littlefield. He and his wife Mary, a sign language interpreter, have four daughters.

Grandmother's Face

We found her in a box my father left,
A card I'd never seen, framed in old pearl,
Dark eyes, round face, a chin with dainty cleft,
The hundred year old photo of a girl.
And so I met my grandmother at last,
Her nimbus of brown hair against the white
Of crinoline and drape, her eyes locked fast
Upon the ghostly lens, before the light.
What secret wish waits in her still, sly smile?
A vision of the son she'd never know?
Could that lost aperture have held her while
She searched the lens for where she had to go?
Could she see all that her short life would be
And leave that smile for husband, son – and me?

Mom's Notebook

The blank, white marbled composition book
She found abandoned in my childhood things.
She lists there (as if that were all it took)
The names of new physicians each month brings,
As if to list were to maintain control
Upon a body, papery with decay,
As if pale, blue lines could contain the soul,
Safe within names and places, times of day.
The notebook covers offer, though too late,
Small rectangles of possibility
Where my young hand might list new teachers' names,
While tables in avoirdupois, troy weight
Reduced the world with such facility -
The "Useful Information" all fear tames.

Alison Heninger

Alison Heninger is a graduate of Oregon State University. Her favorite poet is T.S. Eliot. She hopes to one day have a pet dragon.

One Last Message

Hey Kat, this call is just to let you know
I don't need to hear your excuses now.
I tried to call last night, and you did not
answer. I had an extra ticket, thought
you'd like to see the show—The last night of
The Phantom of the Opera. But it's tough
to get in touch with you. I called FOUR times!
This has happened quite a lot—which is fine,
perhaps (for you). I find it somewhat rude,
especially when I call and it's a *tad*
important. I can't take it anymore, Kat.
Why do you have a phone? You never use it.

Christopher Fried

Christopher Fried was born in 1985, is an alumnus of The College of the William and Mary, and is primarily a formalist poet. He had his first collection of poetry, *All Aboard the Timesphere*, published Summer 2013.

Hear the *Kaiju* Roar (Akira Ikufube)

If the beat marches, let it march as grand
movements across the broken landscape. Tone
can be as bountiful *hayate* blown
against the coastline. Marching band,
call forth the images of *Kaiju* film,
the men and monsters, metaphors of some
calamity I barely know. At helm
is music in our childhood we could hum
out of tune, as across the T.V. screen
fake monsters met actors in bloodless wars.
Even those who can't read music know the score,
it's all the same, the final act and scene,
the leather glove across the double bass.

Could you recall a safer childhood place?

The Last Roman of the South (Allen Tate, 1899-1979)

Conserving the traditions of the past,
Kentucky son, with your neo-classical verse
and molding your personality in casts
of marble forms, you pictured the mortal hearse
of Greco-Roman antiquity astride
the twentieth century roadway and spilled
tears over Aeneas as he sails the tides
searching for a new homeland to be tilled.
As a young man you rebuked Mr. Hughes,
declaiming that “maybe in the North they might
meet as equal artists,” but then saw a bright
future for Ellison and reshaped your views
concerning the societal questions that remained
while you held firm to your classical quatrains.

Richard H. Peake

Peake published early poems in *Impetus* alongside John Ciardi and in the *Georgia Review*. His collections of poetry include *Wings Across ...* and *Poems for Terence* published by Vision Press, *Birds and Other Beasts* (2007, available on his website: eagle1author.com), and *Earth and Stars* (containing poems published between 2007 and 2012 and available from the author at rpeake1@hotmail.com). Recent poems have appeared in *Avocet*, *Harbinger Asylum*, *Jimson Weed*, *Boundless 2013*, *The Book of the Year 2013* of the Poetry Society of Texas, and *The Red River Review*.

Aping Mithridates

—*I tell the tale I heard told.*

Mithridates, he died old.

A. E. Housman

Terence, my man, you counsel care.
I admit sampling Ludlow fare.
Too many times in youthful flings
I pledged John Barleycorn, my king.
Before I heeded your advice,
brewed with malt, made wine with rice.
I drank pints and quarts with gusto
and thought the world looked better so,
no matter that views from the pot
see the real world as the world's not,
read your cautions for readiness
but paid no heed, I must confess.
But my embittered hour has come.
Crowds and parties enhanced with rum
offer less retreat from dark thought
and show me truth of what you taught.
So now I counsel others well.
Life's tickets give few wins to tell:
the world is full of testing meets,
take lessons from all your defeats.
Learn what joy there is in seconds
in case your feats break no records.
Savor honorable mentions.
Thank fate you stay in contention.

Yard Songs

*Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—*
Percy Bysshe Shelley

E-o-lay-tee
rings my woods; a wood thrush sings there
e-o-lay-tee
violins thrill the summer air
entertaining, uplifting me.
We enjoy the cool woods we share
e-o-lay-tee.

A chip-burr-wee
tells a scarlet tanager's here
a chip-burr-wee
in my yard saying he's happy
to be back to offer some cheer
with a robin-like call clearly
a chip-burr-wee.

Gulp, kulp, kulp, kulp
gloats a dry yellow-billed cuckoo
gulp, kulp, kulp, kulp
he foretells new rain with his gulps.
He is one of the rain crow crew
cleans worms from the trees he renews
gulp, kulp, kulp, kulp.

Oh-tea-kettle-tea
a wren sings loudly near my shed
oh-tea-kettle-tea
to tell us all just where he beds
and where he will feed nestlings tea
bugs to grow and feather quickly
oh-tea-kettle-tea.

William Craig Rice

William Craig Rice started out working as a teacher at the Webb School in Bell Buckle, Tennessee, then apprenticed as an Alfa Romeo mechanic, and later served on the Harvard faculty and as the 12th President of Shimer College, a Great Books institution in Chicago. He is now on the staff of the National Endowment for the Humanities and lives in the District of Columbia. His work has appeared with *Sewanee Review*, *Harvard Review*, *The New Criterion*, *National Review*, and other journals, and he is co-editor of a forthcoming volume in the Southern Classics series of the University of South Carolina Press.

Sapphics for a Miniature

Stunted world of a Persian miniature, hung
low on a library wall: a tiger hunted,
men on elephants, monkeys picking plum dots —
often I lived in

forest, slunk through bamboo striations, jade green
trees with indigo shadows I could rest in,
till the hunters' approach frightened me back and
I would be standing,

smelling leather of travel books where I'd read
tales of carpets and knives exchanged for passage
over Caucasus peaks where tigers ambled,
still unmolested.

Silver Dollar

for a newborn

Pray keep this tender always near,
Well-struck proof of your natal year,
Locked in a box of vital things.
It comes from liberty, not from kings:
Cold to the touch, but still you hold it dear
And only count its worth in blessings.
Protect it in tumult, shine it in calm,
And warm it often in your palm.

C M Foltz

C M Foltz's most recent poetry publication was "Don't Forget these Moments, Though They May Bury Us" (a sestina) in *ISLE* (Oxford Univ. Press) in late 2012, and "Cape Cod" (free verse) upcoming in spring 2014 in *Innisfree Poetry Journal*. Currently, he is a PhD student in Poetics at the University of Texas (Dallas) and editor of *Battistrada Arts Review*, a journal of poetry with contributors such as Thomas Lux, Kyle Vaughn, Bruce Bond, and Robert Gibb, to name a few. He lives in Dallas, Texas and teaches English at Mountain View College.

The Rage Of Night: Anchorage City Lights, 2013

A moment after dusk and all is dark,
This world, this spiraling ball of flame burned out.
And city lights begin to rise and arc
Toward the sky, the face of gods spread out,
That starry face that rages with these lights,
These lights, our artificial gods that burn
Throughout the night, like Jacob when he fights
Against the angel, ancient god we yearn
To know, to feel as though he fights and burns
Within the dark of night to reach our world,
This world colliding with his lights, and turns
And turns each night to see his face unfurled.
And in that face, our worlds, our lights collide
In dark, in light, till dawn when gods subside.