

POESIA AO MEIO DIA

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com SUSAN HOY

Mad as the Mist and Snow

by William Butler Yeats

Bolt and bar the shutter,
For the foul winds blow:
Our minds are at their best this night,
And I seem to know
That everything outside us is
Mad as the mist and snow.

Horace there by Homer stands,
Plato stands below,
And here is Tully's open page.
How many years ago
Were you and I unlettered lads
Mad as the mist and snow?

You ask what makes me sigh, old friend,
What makes me shudder so?
I shudder and I sigh to think
That even Cicero
And many-minded Homer were
Mad as the mist and snow.

We The Children

by Jean O'Brien

We, the children, have grown old,
we danced the sun down on summer days,
watched from bedroom windows as night sky
changed from blue to black;
cried for water, our teddy, our favourite doll.
Anything to sing the adults back.

The drizzling rain of winter
that made our parents cross and
hurry us along, delighted us, we had all
the time in the world our hands full with it,
as in rubber boots we jump-splashed
into puddles. Our supreme power.

Displacing water.

We gained ground, left footprints in snow
and grew relentlessly. The adults seemed
to flatten as our voices deepened.
Some nights there were no stars.

Could we have heeded the warnings,
the arrow in flight, time's headlong rush?
Now, we the children pass
in the streets, stare at our faces
mirrored, grown old
with all that glut of time.

WINTER APPLES

by John MacKenna

There is something in the sight of winter apples
hugging the highest branch in mid-December.
A dim burn glistens from the frosted skin,
like sunlight budding through a fog.
And there is sweetness and sharpness in the flesh,
the virtue of the blameless, the long hill yet to climb.

I Was Hungry.

by Alan Titley

I was hungry and you said,
'You can't eat here'.

I had no place to sleep and you said,
'Not in my inn'.

I had nowhere to go, and you said,
'Not in my back yard'.

My town was burned down, and you said,
'My town is full'.

I fought against ISIS, and you said,
'No men need apply'.

My family drowned in the sea, and you said,
'We have no swimming pool'.

I said I was cold, and you said,
'We can fix that easily.'

I have no money and you said,
'The shops are too far away, anyway'.

I said, 'I'm just as human as you.'
And you muttered, 'Well, not really.'

I said you're supposed to love your neighbour as yourself,
And you laughed, 'That's a lot of old guff.'

I said, 'this all happened to you too', and you said,
'But that was a long time ago'.

Mary and Joseph on a Cardboard Bed

by Rachel Hegarty

Ah, come here 'til I tell you, I saw them.
Round, young Mary, with Joseph, asleep
outside Liberty Hall on a cardboard bed,
in sleeping bags and hooded winter coats.
Sure, I didn't know where to be looking.
Scarlet, like I'd walked in on a couple
in their own bedroom. But it was a street,
on the quays, by the Liffey, at rush hour.
Dubliners running to work and school
while the lovers, our homeless lovers,
tried to get the last bit of a morning cuddle.
She had her head down, nuzzled into him.
He had his head out, eyes shut but ready
if needs be, to heave-ho, come on, let's go.

Christmas Eve 1950

by Thomas Kinsella

We have come to the meeting of the ways.
The book is laid aside,
That deep book, an ancient tale,
Of a favoured son of God, Lord of Egypt.
Then, in the ancient days,
The way of a man of God was wide,
And his goal was wide and filled with a light
Which melted the edge of the earth
Which mind made.
And in the light, and of the light,
And the light,

Was the Great God, indefinable.

And Joseph, where that page lies open,
Speaks before Pharaoh,
Cunningly and wisely,
And their two minds search in heaven
And grope in the misty
Equivocal stuff of God.

The coals are fading. My lamp glows;
My book rests open on a couch.
I think of one poet
Whose lamp glowed in a tower,
Who wrote of the herald angel
On Christmas Eve
Through the world's clouds down-steering;
And of another
Whose subtle words
Searched behind the picture
For the dry thought
Drifting on the quick void
Where love and imagination
colour the dark
Which is the nearest we might get to Truth.

And their labours set me the scene:
The way of ancient man
Who knew the spiritual
And lived in God,
Cowardly and terrified.
That way is closing again
Like rays of light that are like rapiers.

The rays strike,
And shining alone in the darkness
Is the one way,
The way of the timeless God
Who has pierced and entered Time.

Gaza

by Eoin McNamee

Our townland is named for Eunan, for his holy well
And for his saintliness which led him to write
The Lex Innocentium in the seventh century,
His law of Innocents, the first law of its kind.
On the battlefield he had seen a mother's body,
Her child attached to her breast in death,
White milk on one cheek, blood on the other.
This witness led him to set forfeits
For the killing of women and children in war.
This witness led him to set law about them,
That those who kill the innocent
Be taken up and justice asked of them.

The well water is black at sunset this time of year
In this country of the west, of gull and kestrel.
In this cold country of eel and swan
This is the saint's well which is for all time law.

Sloe Gin

by Seamus Heaney

The clear weather of juniper
darkened into winter.
She fed gin to sloes
and sealed the glass container.

When I unscrewed it
I smelled the disturbed
tart stillness of a bush
rising through the pantry.

When I poured it
it had a cutting edge
and flamed
like Betelguese.

I drink to you
in smoke-mirled, blue-black
polished sloes, savage
and reliable.



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