

## Poems by Friends

### cutting ties

cutting ties  
her face glimmers  
on the blade

Michael Morical  
December 2018  
Chiang Mai

### The Septuagenarian Blues

Febrility has yet  
To cast its long shadow  
On the Captain's Drama

There have been close calls  
And shadows strong  
And long across the stage

Always to be turned  
Always by the Snow:  
Archetype, iconoclast, trickster

The last of the Real Cowboy's  
Shadow looms large across  
The theatre of our mind

The Captain's story  
Threads through our life  
In a story of great dissipation

Of high art  
Of letters  
And of life well lived

From the gallery  
The refrain: bravo, bravo  
Encore, Encore, Encore

We await the next  
Chapter like school children  
On the first day of class

The king is dead  
Long live The Captain

The king is dead  
Long live The King

-Shan Shan  
December 2, 2018

### **Dali Dream**

O Dali  
Palace of dreams  
Imbued past  
Unencumbered Mountain  
myth  
Laying quietly  
Along the lake  
Misty mornings  
Play with me

*Ron Robertson*  
*Byron Bay, March 2017*

### **There Is No Word For Goodbye**

Sokoya, I said looking through  
the net of wrinkles into wise  
black pools of her eyes. What

do you say in Athabaskan  
when you leave each other?  
What is the word for goodbye?  
A shade of feeling rippled the  
wind- tanned skin, Ah,  
nothing, she said, watching the  
river flash.  
She looked at me close. We  
just say Ttaa. That means,  
See you.  
We never leave each other.  
When does your mouth say  
goodbye to your heart?  
She touched me light as a  
bluebell. You forget when you  
leave us; you're so small  
then.  
We don't use that word. We always  
think you're coming back, but if you  
don't we'll see you someplace else.  
You understand. There is no  
word for goodbye.

by Mary TallMountain

### **Two Girls**

I'm never sad,  
I'm never glad,  
All I am Is two  
girls' dad.

*Ron Robinson*  
*August, 2009*

## **The Owl and the Seagull**

(adapted from "The Owl and the Pussycat" by Edward Lear)

The Owl and the Seagull went off to sea in  
a beautiful tea green boat; They took some  
honey and plenty of money wrapped up in  
a silken coat. The Owl looked up to the  
stars above and sang to an old sitar: "Oh  
dazzling Seagull, Oh Seagull my love, what  
a sleek dazzling Seagull you are,

You are,

You are!

What a sleek dazzling Seagull you are!" Seagull said  
to the Owl, "You elegant fowl, how charmingly sweet  
you sing!

Oh, I'm glad we were married before we were buried,  
but we need much more than a ring!"

They sailed away, for a year and a day, to  
the land where the tea tree grows, And there  
in the wood, a tea merchant stood, with two  
steaming cups perched on his toes,

His toes,

His toes,

With two steaming cups perched on his toes.

"Dear Sir, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
your cups?" Said the tea man, "I will." So they took  
them away, and made merry next day by the  
cherry tree lodged on the hill.

They dined on tea cakes that the tea man bakes  
which they ate with a serrated spoon; And cups  
in hand with bare feet in the sand they sipped  
by the light of the moon,

The moon,

The moon,

They sipped by the light of the moon.

*Terri Coppa*

*August, 2009*

*Note: The Seagull is, in Taoist terminology,  
Daniel's "Primordial Spirit," or totem animal.  
And Snow's totem is the Owl. So we asked  
cousin Terri to compose a poem for us, based on  
"The Owl and the Pussycat."*

### **Three Reasons for Leaving**

1) the onset of hypertension,  
perhaps in the vermilion of a  
shin mein preparation, a  
prescription for the  
very first reason. 2) the  
senility of sensibility and  
the partition of symbol  
and reality. 3) the  
fantasmic television and  
the embattled nervous  
system.

3 reasons for leaving before  
acquiring a taste for  
repression. *Sean Sanz*

### **I don't know what's come over me**

I never  
decided to  
be a  
writer--

much less  
a poet-- it  
just

came over me.

*Sean Sanz*

## **Ishi**

square tongues speak brick words  
that couple into nothing, surrounded  
by hair and flowers. decay of fruit  
and love and sex, all subside into  
chemical contemplation, alcohol and  
buzzing bees, sweet sticky scents.

police machines chop the sky into  
thistles of noise and fear— I pick up  
and carry a river on my back, a cloak  
of home to drape across the  
shoulders of the world, enfolding  
streams and stones.

glaze of bone  
across my eyes, a  
hood of silence,

my tongue of salt  
dissolving into words I  
speak to you.

*Scott Ezell*

## **Requiem for**

I.

Not cold, not hot

silent afternoon

wind moves through like washing hair

the sound of a child's laughter

young mother feeds her baby with her breast

old men pray to the mountain

young men serve tea

people gather in the village square

they've come to hear a man speak

he slowly ascends a stage

he is calm and has a subtle smile

like a flower in the desert

he stands silent

with perfect posture

like a tree

a rumor says he is from the Sakya tribe

an enlightened one

maybe he is Gotama Buddha

small bird voices

the wind is singing

the sounds pass through the bodies of the  
crowd

Sri Gotama surveys the people

with his right hand  
he lifts a white lotus  
then lowers it again  
his talk is finished  
that's it

the people are silent and don't respond  
they don't understand  
nobody moves  
Gotama still smiles  
then he speaks for the first time

*Does anybody understand?*

no one understands  
he only lifted the flower up and down  
but one man rises

the wind stops  
there's no sound anywhere  
everybody silent, he says,

*Words do not express the truth*

*If I use words*

*they will not express the answer*



Buddha smiles  
his subtle smile  
becomes pure and open  
like a child's.

II.

This man wears all white  
that is his style  
he plays saxophone  
and when he dances  
he raises both arms high  
repeating a single step  
his favorite dish to cook is macaroni  
instead of Paramahanmsa Yogananda  
he calls him Yoganadanadaji

death comes suddenly, without warning  
my death will come later  
in Latin, *memento mori*  
we are always living with death  
no one sees the future

not far

not near

when he died was he transformed?

he discarded his body

the body is the container of the soul

like a bird cage enclosing a bird of paradise

he is gone and we remain

I am trying to express this in words

too many words create distance

but I am trying to use words

the white owl

with paint brush and saxophone

opened the cage

flew up to Nirvana

higher and higher

in a slow spiral

then disappeared

he is gone

not hot, not cold

one day in January

one morning in January

the wind came wandering through

a child's laughter

a bird calling

hoo

hoo

hoo

Thank you,Dan. TJ

by "TJ" Tatsumi  
English translation by  
Scott Ezell