

PRAGUE

POEMS

KINGSLEY LLOYD DENNIS

SLOW RIDE

.....and the night crawls on,
a body of blackness
that lies across everything,

bringing restlessness introspection into moments
of wine and darkened sky,
perhaps wondering why ;

and the hand reaches for a sip
as eyes turn from the page,
thoughts directing themselves as an orchestra,

crawling on, like a slow ride.....

11.33pm
14.9.96

NEW FLESH

New flesh ;

something not old
worn
or tasted :

eager to greed
on new tender
scent soaked
of softness

as a gummed babe
shows first suckle
against the mother.

To close around
stranger skin
and declare it
as your own :

a new possession
to be enclosed within.

And here I am
being selfish ;

here my single desires
are becoming
drops of water
in my mouth,
collecting as I write

deciding whether to
swallow or spit,

drinking from myself
in this reaching
for new flesh,

something not old
worn
or tasted

but new.

9.50pm

16.9.96

WHEREVER (I TAKE MY NAME)

The world turns,
 turns,
 turns,
in her own time
 as we beasts
wend our way
 through her avenues

scuffling our feet in crowds
searching and seeking for the elusive
 centre of the labyrinth
 in every city.

And as I walk through
 my new Prague
a light rain touches me,

telling me that sensations
 are felt the same
wherever I take my name.

Damp streets do not change
 for those people
who pass along them,

who are expectant of something
 other ;
such streets are not chameleons.

I am not walking along the world
to find security in new places
 and new faces,

only digesting the places and faces
to nourish upon another food -

wanting to find that change in
 damp streets
coming through my own sight,

slowly treading upon higher ground
to escape the flood that flows below,
continually cleansing its overflow.

And in every city the rain

may fall,
and upon every cheek may feel
its wetness,
but who will be he who hears
another call?
Does the rain fall upon the face
as delicately
or as cold
in another place?

4.41pm
24.9.96

BEING A TINY FISH

Caught myself being ponderous again,
losing humour in gulps
like a fast drinker.

Caught myself in introspection again,
admiring my insides
like a mind surgeon.

So I pause for a golden moment :
shrug the philosophical musings from me
and pour another glass of wine

and sit back in one of those silences
where you are glad for just breathing

and every moment becomes a moment
and life is for now what it is :

then I catch myself drifting again,
moving forward like a tiny fish,

wiggling away.....

9.55pm
24.9.96

HARD TO PLEASE

Lust in the hand
used to feel
grand,

now I'm aching for
another
land.

Stranger's bodies in my bed,
in nakedness
passion red

used to satisfy my
drunken
head

- now I'm searching to be
fed
by other means.

Am I hard to please?

10.14pm
14.10.96

PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Don't know what it is,
but it won't let me go ;

trying to birth,
an egg in womb.

Something nesting
sometimes knocking,
other times quiet
but never silent ;

only waiting
watching
trying to call
in foreign voices :

so I'm listening
changing my frequency
until I hear more clearly,

until I can comprehend
what it's trying to tell me.

Don't know what it is,
but it won't let me go.

7.29pm
19.10.96

THE SMELL OF HANDS IN A CLASSROOM

The smell of my hands is good,
folded in prayer
pressed against mouth in
an ardent concentration
as students sit before me ;
young pedestals of boys and girls
before manhood and womanhood.
I look at them in observing pleasure
- as their teacher ? -
as they whisper and joke and smile
and screw their faces to work.
I look out through the window
behind them : at the cream coloured building.

My hands smell of perfume from the
young blonde student of last class who
displayed her box of scented waters for
all to buy : I tried in jest and declined.
I declined again in my mind, as if expressing
'No' to any possibility coming between us.
Being human, yet distant as a peer ;
wanting,
unable to fulfil
or be fulfilled,
just again smelling the palm of
my hand as it rests beneath chin,
idly watching heads bent to their exam,

being examined also by me.

12.42pm
12.12.96

I FEAR THE FUTURE AS I TOUCH YOU

I fear the future as I touch you :
in the early hours of this New Year
I lived shortly inside of you,
and began this year in a strange fear
of future and intimacy
- why does this feeling arise in me?

Sitting here now as I am, drinking an
Arabic tea that you bought for me,
thinking how by other candlelight and incense
in a real tea room in Prague
- and not a bedroom like this -
I reached and gave you our first kiss.
This secret moment I will never forget,
as you sat silent for a while,
not knowing how to give a perfect response ;
I, your teacher, and you my student,
in our private time forming a special
relationship of another kind ; person
to person ; man to girl or man
to woman - fulfilling the universal rhyme.

This is where you began to believe
in your own misconstrued lies : that
I was married with family ties -
was that a ring on my finger that you spied?!

'No', I tell you again and again ; this is not
the truth : all this I do deny.
So our first kiss ended in a solemn sigh,
my uncertainty created out of your uncertainty.
Such a situation that took several days of
wrangling to repair : now all is fair.
We are back again : all this I do declare.

The first time we laid our bodies completely bare
I was compelled to explore you all over everywhere :
to touch you here and to feel you there.
Beyond our nakedness I had no other care.
And now with our brief encounter ended
I endure our first real uncertainty apart ;
a test for us, is it a special friendship from
the heart or a curious experiment in the dark?

I know only well enough of our problems
in our lack of communicable language :
you say 'I am only Level Two!'
- I, too, say that I know this, yet I say
further that 'we speak in other ways than words'.
Unknowing, too, you express 'But why me?'
I return with 'the words you speak in your eyes.'
I know not what else. Should there be rules?
Should there be a doctrine or documentation?
I have only my declaration!
And this is good enough for me.
Will it be good enough for you?

Still, remembering your subtle body in my hands,
I fear the future as I touch you,
not knowing about my life, how it lies,
or even how we shall lie.
All I know, or can know for now,
is that I have pleasure and warmth
in our private precious moments,
and for this time now I shall live.

9.10pm
4.1.97

A MOMENT OF MISSING INNOCENCE

In this
my dedication
I offer you
my celebration

for one who
is so young to me
yet with who at times
I long to be

as your youth is
precious to my touch
and your innocence
allows me comfort.

With the charm
of a girl
you give me chance
to play the boy

as we two,
as a child's loved toys,
exist together simply,
somehow briefly,
as though something
was forgotten in our
older lives
and we must return to it
now to remember again,

recollecting one's past,
a moment of missing innocence,
before we continue again.

Two together to remember
the pain
of moving apart,
of moving on

like a first love lost
in the throes of finding
one's growing up

yet now each thing,
every innocence,
to be loved and cared for
as if the proof of pearl
of humanity's worth,
is our slight hope for
knowing compassion.

7.51pm
25.1.97

ONE SOUL

One soul
has flown
from my cradled nest ;
not to be known
in this life :
an innocent and intimate
friendship laid to rest.

So I offer my blessing
in all that I have ;
words that you cared
not to choose, never,
and my actions, muffled,
that you found vacant
and not expressing.

My blessing must be made
in silence, in sincerity
as no-one will hear it ;
making me humble as
I mutter it.

I will care for you
in my own moments
of resourceful memory :
every tea-house tender kiss
and street-scented hugs.

I am giving you
only good thoughts,
transmitting no pain -
only a wistful nod of my head
and a hope that somehow
we both will gain.

A life allowing us to continue,
perhaps without meeting again :

yet one soul
has flown
from the arch of my arms

and I pray for smooth wind
in her flight.

10.07pm 27.1.97

STRANGE HOW HUMBLE

The hand
that warmed my cock
only twenty-four hours before

is now the hand
that winds the clock,
closing the irreversible door.

Strange how humble
an unresting life can make us
feel when facing the real

journey of unending meaning :
also a sadness, a surreal madness,
both a tragedy and a joy.

10.20pm
27.1.97

HANGING AROUND

There is an impermanence
in all things ;

hanging around for the moment,
as I drift in-between coffee bars
and beer cafes :

the young, those that are my students
in the day,
sitting in laughter and pretty talk.

I, reflecting, seeing the life of death
in all things

hanging around for the moment

in amiable cigarettes and fingers
clasping cups,
murmuring over forgotten or future
intimate loves :

how it all will go into just instant
impressions
and nothing more.

Yet it all is fine
- idle socialising to pass the time -
between birth beginning and inimitable end

hanging around in coffee bars
and beer cafes

passing hellos and throwing goodbyes :

Watching it, I, in my travelling by.

3.37pm
29.1.97

DID I ?

Did I upset thee,
thou who is precious to me?

Did I unbalance your emotions?
Me, who has no control over
your perceptions and private notions

yet who receives the brunt of
your blunt blows and castigations

like a dummy bent and twisted
with the force of your afflictions :

hurt by the projected pain of
your indulgent emanations.

And so, did I upset thee again,
one who is sweet as innocence to me?

10.06pm
24.2.97

ALWAYS PLAYING

Always playing
and never ourselves ;

Frigid actors within
our fleshy shells.

Every twitch and smirk
a false reaction,

Something so unreal
it absorbs us :

it becomes us. Nothing but models
on a wildlife board

being hunted by a higher prey
lost to us

and yet once a brother to us ;
sometimes a memory.

Now, persistently playing, we
avoid our calling.

10.22pm
24.2.97

PASSION SORE

Sweet against my touch,
flesh innocence ;
I am given blood and love
when I am immersed in you :

I adore the colour of your lips
when I have kissed you -
passion sore.

10.48pm
4.3.97

MAN

Man is cruel to fellow man.
Man longs for the need of a partner.
Man feels alone at the best of times.
Man is continually torn between an
Unseen love and an unfathomed rage.
Man travels and seeks in order to find
Or stays stone still to accept.
Man can also burn his brother and
Maliciously wound his mother.

Yet above all :
Man desires to locate the Other.

1.31pm
6.3.97

IN THE TOILET OF A DISCOTHEQUE

IN WROCLAW, POLAND

Standing
over the porcelain piss pot :

Steam
from the alcoholic urine
warming
my beer cold hands.

Yes,
where do I belong?

1.08pm
8.3.97

LONGING FOR THEE

I long for thee
so passionately,

Yet thou art no woman ;

And neither man,
muse, painting, money
or life's material honey :

I long for thee
so earnestly

For thou art Me.

5.10pm
8.3.97

CONFESS

How can the world confess
to know a man
when he doesn't even know himself?

So how can you confess
to know the thoughts
that I myself don't even know?

If I cannot learn to love myself
I can never hope to love you.

9.27pm
26.3.97

I THOUGHT THE MUSE HAD LEFT ME

I thought the muse had left me ;
flown away like a temporary thing.
Frightening : as a lover declaring her
feeling of nothingness ;
as an empty page and full heart.
Trying hard to recapture what is needed,
to tear down false walls and words
and build anew the new you.

Looking for the inspiration of a new life :
something to fill and something to gain.
I thought the muse had left me :
but it's only watching me, waiting
for me to breath fresh again.

6.41pm
25.4.97

PRAYER FOR THE LIFELONG WANDERER

Walking through streets inevitable
oblivious of side goings-on,
the croak of passers-by and high architecture,

Thoughts inaccessible and destination unknowable
yet continuing to tread predictably
and with the gait of a pilgrim rhythm.

Leaving in rear view the once-loved shrines
of physical companionship and remembrance
almost as the departure of an honoured guest

Or the worshipper turning back and onward
after the price has been paid in worship
and faith with spirit pledges a renewal.

And the walking eternally sets back in motion
with glances cast sporadically and momentarily
on both sides as the voices and sights are passed,

Saying an internal prayer to the lifelong wanderer
as he nomadically strides with a half-closed heart
and a painful longing for open sincerity and love.

10.10pm
28.4.97

I AM A TROUBLED FIGHTER
OF TIME

Naked to the waist,

sweating,

Trying to push back the borders,

panting

And arms aching, feverish of reddened face

heaving ;

Laughing hysterically with the perplexity of

joy

And sobbing with a pervading nothingness and

anguish.

Madly shouldering against the perimeters of

knowing

Declaring loudly that I'm a bastard continual

fighter.

10.46pm
28.4.97

REACHING TO REST MY HAND

Reaching to rest my hand
upon your head
sprawled bare across the bed

I ache in fingertips stretching,
in passion and in precision,
aiming to touch the hair awaiting
to twist and curl the threads to plait 'em :

but you turn your head in arrogance
and innocence ;
silently shout your solitude calling,

yet I hear no more, ears erased.
I lay naked beside only to praise :
to trace my touch through hair and brow
and admire face and to question now.

12.45am
30.4.97

THIS PRAGUE

Perched on a kitchen chair
on the bird-shit balcony 7 floors up
I look out over the high-rise flats
towards the suburban Prague horizon :

Grey hues of concrete erect and dense
broken up at intervals by the sudden immersion
of colour as a gaudy painted or mural building
stands strongly amidst the skyline.

This is the landscape of my Prague,
existing beyond the baroque and gothic structures
advertised in pretty tourist pamphlets
scattered throughout the Old Town Square.

This brick forest has been a slice of my Prague
after returning from the smoky and archaic hospodas
of rickety Mala Strana backstreets
and squashed antiquarian coffee shops.

Yet I take my nature from my star sign
- the sideways-walking crusty pink crustacean -
that Cancerian creature that carries its
own abode in its aquatic wanderings,

And like him I stagger on this sideways path
making home upon any new found land, or sea,
for external architecture makes little waves
when I build upon the internal landscape within me.

4.07pm
11.5.97

MY PRAGUE

Sitting on the Petrin hillside amidst
calf-high green sloping grass I stare
out onto the facade of Prague -
my other Prague of architectural splendour illuminated
by the sunshine slapping against red-slate roofs
and the green turrets of the city's churches :
a salute to the religious urge that has been,
and still is, repressed beneath the grotesque of
the baroque's suppressed clench and the
mystified mayhem of a magical Prague.
The stench of debauchery still lingers
like the smell of its ancient alchemical sulphur ;
this madam of a city is both a mistress
and a whore, a hunting ground to find
the dens of all the alcoholically ignored -
shutting themselves behind doors of smoke
and the flowing stream of serviced beer.
And I bear fond admiration for being here,
present in this remarkable and changing city ;
at once a place so seemingly open and
paradoxically so vastly closed.
My Prague, I did not find a love in you,
though your women are truly of a beauty :
but I did find an excitement, an adventure,
a personal growing up and a further understanding
towards man's inexplicable lore.
With you, my passing Prague, I could never say
life was a bore.

4.00pm
12.5.97

A SMALL PART

A small part of you
Is inside of me,
And a small part of me
Is inside of you.

That is the beauty of life.

11.25pm
7.6.97

Dedicated To

Martina S.

COMPILED ON 24/07/97

Copy No :

WITH LOVE