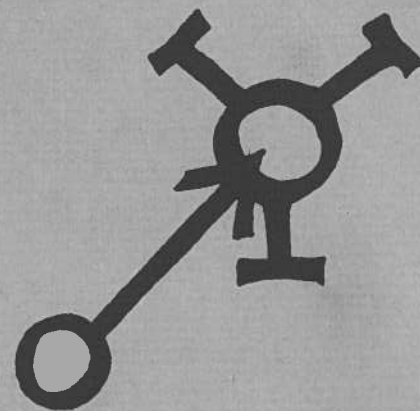


THE MAN  
WHO BIT THE SUN  
POEMS BY  
FREDERICK NICKLAUS



A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

Frederick Nicklaus

THE MAN WHO BIT THE SUN

A first book by an American poet in his twenties who has lived in many of the places in Europe and North Africa reflected in the 29 poems in this volume.

The following is an example:

I HEARD THE RAIN STOP

Death is a clangorous team  
forever treading. I see  
them now, three yoked horses,  
black and covered with bells;  
team treading into sight  
always, since once, at night,  
in that city of unfinished spires,  
I heard the rain stop,  
and all the bullfight afternoons'  
black horses pulled their dreadful burdens,  
the dead bulls, again, again  
in broad arcs across the dust undarkened  
yet by rain: settled with dusk  
oncoming, and the blood's stain.

\$ 1.50

A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

333 Sixth Avenue, New York City 14

THE MAN WHO BIT THE SUN

FREDERICK NICKLAUS

THE MAN  
WHO BIT THE SUN

POEMS

*Children's Play* earlier appeared in *Best Articles & Stories* and in *Epos*.

*October's Reason, The Music Lesson, Morden, Double Dream and Memorial Plaques* Cambridge first appeared in *Voices*.

*Old Woman Setting Silver* and *The Hands Are First to Believe* first appeared in *Poetry*.

*Two Friends* first appeared in *The Kinsman*.

*Whitby* first appeared in *The New York Times*.

★

The author and publishers are grateful to these publications for permission to reprint the indicated poems.

★

A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

© 1962, 1963, 1964 BY FREDERICK NICKLAUS  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER: 64-10673  
MANUFACTURED IN ITALY

NEW DIRECTIONS BOOKS ARE PUBLISHED BY  
JAMES LAUGHLIN AT NORFOLK, CONNECTICUT.  
NEW YORK OFFICE: 333 SIXTH AVENUE (14)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Hands Are First to Believe	7
October's Reason	8
Flood Marks: King's Lynn	9
Morden	11
Children's Play	12
Swinburne at Putney	13
I Remember a Horse in Indiana	15
The Man Who Bit the Sun	16
Lenten Poem: Rockefeller Center	18
Prometheus	19
Two Friends	21
Green Journey	22
Double Dream	24
Old Woman Setting Silver	25
Athletes Resting	26
Dark Necessity	28
Tangier I	29
Tangier II	31
Tangier III	32
Near Munich	33
The Final Room	34
The Music Lesson	36
Chain	38
Memorial Plaques: Cambridge	39
Whitby	40
Caravaggio	41
I Heard the Rain Stop	43
Votive	44

## THE HANDS ARE FIRST TO BELIEVE

The hands are first to believe,  
trembling, alive;  
the brain gone  
rigid with disbelief.

The letter waited  
last on the table,  
where the common eye  
of a tall house  
had found its name  
one by one.

The letter waited  
thin as alarm,  
all others claimed  
in separate rooms  
by a dozen names  
unknown.

I read the letter  
in the passageway  
of a tall house:  
script into brain—  
the brain become  
bastion to grief.

I stand in a dim heraldic world,  
hallway and door and street.  
Trembling, the hands are first to believe,  
the brain dull in retreat.

## OCTOBER'S REASON

They say in thinking back  
to all those hours, the fatal hours before the crack  
called doom, the breaking of news and death renewed  
again,  
they say time is omened with the pain  
it holds for you, waiting in an envelope,  
or in eyes that noose you like a rope.

Think back to the day.  
It wasn't in the least that way:  
no look of pale premonition fixed like stone  
into the air; but leaves blown  
with October's reason,  
and the season  
whirling and more heady than before.

They say it is a core,  
a pit of anger and loss hard stamped,  
withering on the sky, on fields dark as ashes, clamped  
in tides on the very day.

I know it wasn't in the least that way:  
when every leaf  
unprisoned yet by grandeur or grief  
tilted its phantom in the skyward smoke—  
when fossiled as coal, red red October broke.

## FLOOD MARKS: KING'S LYNN

From flood marks on the church,  
the levels and the dates,  
I read the history of the town:  
great-doored mansions dark and closed,  
the empty customhouse,  
its cupola frosted in the North Sea air.

No one knows I am here.  
There could be urgencies and deaths  
in places where I am known,  
while this many-times-flooded town  
holds me in its frosty air.

The river was the reason for the town,  
a meaning once open and clear  
through loops and eyelets of the cold North Sea.  
I walk by instinct toward the river,

past whitely curling question marks  
of mist impaled along the park's  
black boundaries; think, of urgencies  
and deaths long settled to churchyard dates

and levels.

No one knows I am here.  
I am beyond the reach of letters,  
a cablegram, the midnight phone,

things sealed or curled to strike,  
demanding some

answer or action, though the deepest bones  
shrill hollow. I am alone,  
safe and one with obscurity.

The churchyard told me:  
in the many, the unmeaning dates,  
forget the one.

Palings slide by,  
their black and perfect typography  
registers on my mindless eye.  
To count them is the only reason.

I hear two voices over water,  
one calling, one in answer.  
Two men on a listing barge appear  
through mist; they talk together,

drawing nets, then disappear.  
Their slow words reach after,  
echo along the empty river . . .  
'No one knows you are here.'

## MORDEN

Morden: last stop on the Underground,  
labeled straight as conjugation.  
Some say there are devious roads to Morden,  
dark as its sound.

But children play in Morden, I suppose;  
and a man at breakfast with the children knows  
his home in Morden.

This is not the sound of Morden,  
the root-deep, dim-as-Latin sound  
of Morden, last stop on the Underground.

You would not go to Morden  
in normal turn. No one lives in Morden  
for you, though unmistakably  
Morden has met you, twice, or once  
— must be

ever unvisited, till somehow,  
waking from your dream  
already forgotten, you remember a little  
past breakfast, or later, and it might seem

to you: 'I've been to Morden now . . .  
coal smoke lowering on the late night air,  
amber street lamps round a mournful crescent,  
and no direction there.'



## CHILDREN'S PLAY

I am watching the children at play, the sidewalk  
patch-dried from an early evening shower.  
I watch them from my window, and remember  
a summer birthday across the lawns,  
the hand-joined circle, the handkerchief dropped.

They dispute some toy or another. Now  
he has it, clanging lamp posts, a grimace  
of triumph twisting on his face.  
The others are at him, all of them caught  
in a circle of lamplight in a darkening place.

A summer birthday across the lawns,  
the hand-joined circle, the handkerchief dropped. . .

It is never the frenzy in this game of the streets  
that frightens me. It is the way  
some are always losing interest in the struggle, turning  
to darkness. Even children's play  
has inevitable ones, who seem  
so suddenly quiet, wandering off by themselves—  
in hurt and not to dream.

## SWINBURNE AT PUTNEY

They write to The Pines: Putney.  
And my correspondence is large, my desk  
covered with it; the long  
mornings too short to answer them all.

I like my noon walk to the river,  
have my noon beer, come a sleepy way back  
to The Pines — and my work grows,  
volume on volume.  
If sometimes I miss the sea's  
dark features, I know I am safe  
here at Putney by the curving river.

There were so many faces in London,  
too many not remembered — never seen at all.  
I forgot whole days, and weeks.  
At Cheyne Walk, where Gabriel watched  
the slow barges filled with hay  
pass in the evening light, on this same river,  
I sometimes strayed  
at night through the rooms, and talked with animals  
unimaginable; and they found me naked  
on the floor those October London mornings.

But I rocked with the sea  
as they carried me up;  
and my parents' Isle  
grew mythic with the sea.

Of course there was the flogging block  
that stalked my dreams . . .

Now I live at Putney, saved for my work:  
there is a new drama, and the letters,  
the noon beer.  
I have forgotten how the brandy tastes.

I am deaf, so talk little;  
think sometimes of London, and Landor, and Baudelaire,  
and streets that dim like faces.  
But I remember Simeon, how he ended  
chalking on the sidewalk; beautiful Simeon,  
dangerous friend.

It is time for my noon walk  
to the river that wound somewhere,  
and the pint of beer, amber in the afternoon  
toward sleep. I wonder  
if I should have ended with Simeon, chalking on side-  
walks  
my vision of the sea.

## I REMEMBER A HORSE IN INDIANA

I remember a horse in Indiana;  
it came from the fields, it ran alongside  
the bus. I remember its reddish hide.

But believe me, I failed the fright of its eyes.

For a sudden and tunneled moment of trees  
it ran, and out through the rich green dusk  
of Indiana,  
three summers ago.  
But the end of that close was no release.

Believe me, I had failed the fright of its eyes.

## THE MAN WHO BIT THE SUN

'He bites the sun!' the old woman said,  
shying from a thirsty pariah dog,  
head back, hands upraised,  
shadow on a white wall.

I bite the sun, I thought,  
turning to the cool door,  
the clicking darkness of the pool hall.

Within it was not dark at all,  
but lamplit protest to the day.  
Early as workmen, the players bent  
to the game, their long deliberations  
befitting a serious morning purpose.

I thought of lost intent,  
things that could lead a man there  
at the day's beginning to rack the balls  
on the green baize.

So the heat grew.  
Pariah dogs paused long-tongued at the door,  
loped away on pariahs' nefarious errands.  
I waited all morning, taking no cue,  
at nadir of purpose even there.

I thought of Van Gogh, who painted this place  
in far-off Arles; who painted the dread  
and emptiness, the passions gone sour  
under a wall clock's white face.

He worked until the heat exploded in his head;  
then black crows swarmed and carried off his reason.

## LENTEN POEM: ROCKEFELLER CENTER

It seems not long ago,  
that flooding of the rink for another winter.  
Now they are raising flagpoles, and the snow  
from the hundred doll house roofs of the steep  
cathedral has melted away.

Already the spring is a week old.  
They are selling wind-up rabbits in the streets,  
and the dogwood's allegory is told  
in store windows once again.

Salvation Army boy, you stand  
with milk-gray face as if entombed  
since Christmas, the bugle in your hand  
silent to the coin-rapped tambourine.

Sexless as Christmas, boy shifting  
a narrow chill from shoulder to shoulder;  
behind you metal Atlas lifting  
a metal world. Lovers meet

«by Atlas». Like loiterers they see you bring  
bugle to lips. You are ignorant of those  
who plot new lust in an ancient spring.

## PROMETHEUS

There is wind on the shoulders of Prometheus,  
white-starred the banana bunchings of his hair.

I know it is wrong, this redeeming of days  
by a lunch hour fountain, but I am forced.  
Excusing myself with deiant politeness  
from a table of strangers in an automat,  
I walk toward the fountain half of the hour.  
My heels seem the clicking of traffic lights  
in Union Square, three-thirty A. M.

There is wind on the shoulders of Prometheus,  
white-starred the banana bunchings of his hair.

It is the clicking and not the color  
that matters then, for alternate green  
on street bricks, bus window mirrored faces,  
is a feeling of dawn forever seeking  
the lunch hour salvagers of their days.  
It is movement through middle-of-August trees  
in Bryant Park at half-past noon.

There is wind on the shoulders of Prometheus,  
white-starred the banana bunchings of his hair.

And maybe it is more a mist of death  
slipping under shiny black doors of bars  
yet early in the evening. Lights grow dimmer,  
and in that moment it must be dawn,  
I know it could only be dawn outside,  
dawn creeping like pigeons upon the walks  
from fields of childhood across the way.

## TWO FRIENDS

## I

I am young, he is my older friend.  
I grow in his shadow like a sapling.  
His roots enclose me.  
The rustling of his memories  
protects me with illusion  
I am young, he is my older friend.

And the forest shall claim my older friend.  
He shall fall and his shadow be lifted  
from me, and all his rustling sounds  
stilled in the forest.  
I shall thrive upon his mouldering —  
or else be broken in his fall.

## II

I am old, he is my younger friend.  
My hands are nourished in the touch of his  
light as the tips of leaves.  
I am released  
from the weight of all my memory.  
I am old, he is my younger friend.

I feel the height of my younger friend  
lithe as a sapling's shadow beneath me.  
He is protected from the swirling banks  
of the forest in my slow falling.  
I wonder if he knows his swaying laughter  
shall feed on my remembered roots.

## GREEN JOURNEY

They met me at the station; the steaming train pulled on.  
I swung my long legs into the dogcart; we rumbled  
down the road. Waist-deep  
white mist lowered across the wet fields, and the day's  
greenness was transmuted in my brain.

I heard nothing of our talk,  
stepped from the stopped cart  
before the school. The cart creaked on to dusk.

I am shown to my room.  
My worn luggage sits heavily  
as thoughts and hopes unopening in my head.  
The gaslamp hangs my shadow on the wall.  
I leave the trunks closed, and lie on the bed  
alone, afraid; my fright  
mounts singly with lampflame in the Lincolnshire night.

It was a green journey from London,  
a dogcart waited at the station —  
but I, Verlaine,  
lie thinking of another green, its verdure in my blood:  
saucers higher and higher piled, the listening faces  
that leaned to me around the glowing table,  
till the lamps rocked  
along the boulevards, and I hulked  
home in a green absinthe haze,  
home to my bed and waiting wife —  
swung my muddied shoes to the white sheets,

struck her screaming until my brain  
flared out like lamps at dawn.

I see her face tonight; I put  
my face to the pillow, and cry until the first gray  
light reminds me of Mons and prison day.

Soon I must count the morning faces:  
enter the classroom, its high iron lamps  
dead with morning. Eyes will close  
on me, hard, bright; past narrow windows  
at start of the school day  
all my green dream,  
hedgerowed and foreign, sweep dankly away.

## DOUBLE DREAM

A beach house by the Great Peconic Bay,  
the long-planked upper room, a stairwell deep  
and railed at center; windows turning gray  
with dawn — a woman trembling in her sleep.

It is the dream, his drowning voice again  
calling, calling until he sinks from view.  
She cannot answer. Each night she must remain  
in flagging struggle with the force that drew

her from her bed and down a darkened hall  
with moon-strung steps, outreaching, feeling there  
another hand, her husband's, on the wall  
halfway between their rooms. His wordless stare

spoke all the knowledge that their tongues could not,  
their fingers joined their noncommittal breath:  
a man and woman from that moment caught  
halfway between their life, their drowned son's death.

— She starts up straight, explodes once more the dream.  
The low moon large on marsh grass tall behind  
the house; and the tideless curving of a stream  
as devious as her ever-grieving mind.

## OLD WOMAN SETTING SILVER

I feel it in the air,  
a presence:  
light, as a falling petal  
plummets with a stone's force  
of meaning in the mind;  
light as an accustomed chair  
creaks with its unaccustomed burden  
of being empty;  
light, as the touch of the old woman  
setting silver for a son who drowned.

A presence must be guarded in the mind,  
or else  
falls in dangerous lightnesses;  
must be caught and cast in ritual,  
kept from spilling to the wind.

The old woman setting silver  
at her drowned son's place  
moves heavily round and round  
the widening circles of her loss.  
The silver glimmers and is not the sea's  
shimmering of surface;  
the silver is massive, its merest glance  
draws her down  
to baroque and gleaming heavings of his tomb,  
the deep, essential heaviness of the sea.

## ATHLETES RESTING

The athletes rest, half-posing on the mats.  
One shifts to tie  
his sandal, and the others all betray  
in the tapping of a foot, an averted eye,  
the gym itself tight-laced with furtive waiting.

Trapeze rings casting noose-like shadows  
stir with an April breeze from the court.  
Restless eyes have caught on them,  
their swinging, pretended  
suspension of time.  
Restless eyes. And a clearing of phlegm  
can shatter in this desperate resort,

retreat of those whose very lives  
are spaced like sets of exercises.  
Three months in season — Listen, now  
one dares to speak: "The tourists, all rich,  
but never any fun, and mostly fet . . ."  
He puts his hand to his cooling brow.  
Athletes resting,  
beautiful men.

Trapeze rings casting noose-like shadows  
stir with an April breeze from the court.  
You remember Van Gogh's *Night Café*,  
its hanging lamps, the figures poised

in evil waiting;  
a billiards table, the forgotten play:  
"A place where one can ruin one's self,"  
he said, and sat, and waited for the day.



## DARK NECESSITY

You are building a snowman, your letter says,  
to fill an hour.

My aged dog is with you, ever  
spreading her pattern of tracks around you  
black on the snowy lawn,  
black flower.

I read between your lines: you are drawn  
on icy wires from room to room.  
The walls are febrile with the glint  
from the drifted lawn.

You cannot understand,  
and pause by every window, squint  
with distance rather than the dazzle  
outside . . .

waiting . . .  
wondering . . .

Why have I left you? You blame yourself.  
The house seems larger than you planned,  
its rooms more echoing.

You are pulled all day  
from door to window, blaming yourself—  
forgetting my dark necessity,  
black flower  
fast enclosing me.

## TANGIER · THREE POEMS

for T. W.

### TANGIER I

I

Time weakens, draining from walls  
where spectres pass, white into white,  
beckoning to you and me.

Last night, through a grill left open  
in the house now gleaming and shuttered from  
the sun,  
a white cat leapt to the dark hall tiles,  
slept its light  
sleep on the hall chair.

You woke in the night,  
following some white spook of noon;  
the cat, hissing,  
was gone through the high grill.

2

The night at least seemed a little safe:  
doors barred from the inside,  
black tile on white.

Time weakens. In the sun's  
ascent, through streets slanting and stepped,  
odor and a tangling of tongues,  
we take our sure descent.

3

A spectre melts into a wall.  
— A cat curls in a dim hall.  
Our steps fall openly from light.  
— The black tiles find the white.

Asleep, I dreamed us safe and near,  
till a thing that stole so quietly in,  
hissing, leapt through an open grill,  
and left you trembling by a chair.

TANGIER II

I close the shutters  
on a garden gone white with sun.  
We lie half sleeping in the faint  
tap tap then scrape of a mason's trowel  
closing the afternoon.

A clock ticks on — Then leaves  
grow loud with sudden rain.  
Opening the shutters,  
I tilt a cup to the untilted streams  
spilling from eaves to the garden stones.

A cat picks miserably along  
the mason's uncompleted wall.  
We share the cup in a rainlit room  
as leaves fall silent  
and birds take up their songs.

The clock ticks on,  
a leaf drips absently on stone.  
Songs ended one by one with dusk  
recover in the pulse  
a singing not our own.

### TANGIER III

A noise of dredging from the beach  
wrestles the night wind:  
fails, then rushes near  
with flame-like reach. Candles lick  
at wind, then cling to the wick.  
Worklights cluster along the pier.

Spewing fireflies to dark,  
palms obscure the furtive walk  
around the black harbor's bend.  
A cypress, shadow huge on the house,  
sways aloud. Flame runs close  
on the wick, then flares to wind.

Bright as worklights on the pier  
the Dipper hangs above the water:  
downward turning as the years  
burn down by slow and lonely harbors  
through the heart's thin valves, the fall  
of blood-surf in the ears.

Once more the candles flare,  
the cypress rocks on the wall;  
flame goes blue at its very end —  
then noise of dredging in the night,  
the Dipper hanging still; one light  
quick patch of smoke assailing wind.

### NEAR MUNICH

I wake on a stopped train, alone;  
three who had shared their wine with loud  
exchange of travellers through their own  
country are sleeping now, heads bowed.

Merging with my mirrored face  
low houses hunch beneath the cover  
of trees around a moonlit space.  
I dim the light — steam rushes over

the window as I see a pale  
horse tethered there with dust curls blown  
between its hooves, its ragged tail  
swaying like weed on drowned stone.

## THE FINAL ROOM

(*Beethoven, d., Vienna, March 26, 1827*)

Windows are shuttered, but the flask  
of wine, half-finished, left uncorked,  
weights the curtains on the sill  
across the courtyard. Distant thunder  
rummages near along the river;  
storm light certain to explode  
yellows the walls. Yet no one closes

his window, where the curtains filling  
jiggle the flask on the slanting sill —  
it shatters on courtyard stones.  
The storm must find its own:  
make maelstrom in his room of letters,  
sketchleaves scrawled last week or years  
ago in houses where the curved

ear trumpets rested on the staves.  
Here in this final room he takes  
the storm; fists to thunderclap  
outclenched he takes its stroke and mass  
and stroke; then clawing at the bunched  
and food-stained blankets crumples back  
into the swarthy pillows.

Evening deepens on low hills,  
doorways empty, lanterns are lit.  
Someone sweeps the cobbles; his house  
is tidied and his window closed.  
Now whisper how this man who loved  
May-warm rain has rushed forever  
out hatless through the silver squares.

## THE MUSIC LESSON

She replaces the old fur coat beneath the door;  
we pass into the cluttered sitting room, the views  
of Venice and Chillon above the broken grate,  
the lamp with its turning forest fire shade,  
the piano still closed from the lost afternoon,  
the endless afternoon of lessons for children

She settles herself in the wicker rocking chair.  
I arrange my music on the rack, and remember  
to ask about her daughter, still in Paris, and if  
returning there for a lengthened summer  
she had found it the same as when they lived  
by the Luxembourg Gate, long years ago . . .

when life was music and promise.

"Ah, yes — but soon she must sail for home.  
The library needs its ladies for the fall;  
already she has stayed too long. . . " Thus time  
took youth and settled as it would.

And now through my first easy scales I hear  
pacing in the room above: intense,  
monotonous, then scurrying steps.  
For a moment they cease. "Oh yes," she says,  
"my oldest son is back for the month;  
it seems we are well into fall, and his plans  
for the coming year . . . next year . . . his plans . . ."

My body tenses, but not to my playing:  
I feel his eyes on the back of my neck,  
his figure lurking in the hall, and then  
retreating up the stairs. The pacing resumes,  
the piece is finished.

Now the hour is over; she takes me to the door,  
past the forest fire lamp. She kicks the coat  
aside. I bid my weekly farewell  
on the leaf-rattling stoop. The impatient porch light  
is out before I am down the walk.

## CHAIN

The boy curled on a wicker couch,  
long sleepless in the lightning-poked cottage room,  
forking his fingers on the streaked, cool pane  
smooth to his touch,  
remembers

grizzled lattices of the tidal glades,  
the afternoon — listens to the chain  
lashing in lake rain  
all night lashing in the playground swept by rain.

The chain is lashing, lashing  
loud to its iron pole.

Rain  
pounds the playground, the benches, across the beach.  
Chain more terrible than the unseen surf  
of the stormed lake.

The boy who stood alone in the glade and screamed  
with breaking joy, alone,  
nightfall, the cottage a point of light  
far up the beach, through the glades and under the storm  
just building, now trembles to smooth the rain-  
erupted glass; safe on the wicker couch,  
listening, all night listening to the chain.

## MEMORIAL PLAQUES: CAMBRIDGE

Thinly yet rich across these endless plaques  
a faltering sun has found its certainty:  
on warm and foetal U made stalking V  
the autumn light is chiseled sharp as bone.  
October lounges slowly from the Backs;  
leaves whirl and bank about the chapels where  
laughter through the quads is rattling bare  
on names that roll into a night of stone.

All gongs hang darkly in the dining halls,  
mirrors for the big-haunched cats that feign  
watchfulness from bench and dais stool;  
portraits glimmer on heraldic walls —  
now perfect-footed, Byron walks again,  
Brooke swims once more across their star-deep pool.

## WHITBY

The stranger from the station  
stops at dusk to hear  
different sixes tolling  
and the sea near.

He strays on spectral crescents  
climbs above the town  
to the abbey ruined on East Cliff,  
then climbs in darkness down.

And different sevens tolling,  
a buoy sounding one  
one with water's motion,  
harbor-locked, alone.

## CARAVAGGIO

I posed for my early paintings, using small mirrors:  
saw Bacchus, the beckoning god  
of indulgence and desire;  
held fantastically broad  
shallow goblets; though bold as fire,  
~~recoiled from a harmless butterfly.~~  
I leaned among the curling vines  
and verdure of my young years.

Then I painted David with the head of Goliath,  
and first became prophetic of my life.  
In that still-writhing face suspended  
from the youth's hand,  
I painted my future, perhaps my end.

But there were others to follow my first murder,  
years of expulsion, of favor, and flight again.  
In Malta I was Cavaliere de Grazia, given a gold chain  
and two Turkish slaves.  
Like the diseased limb I had become,  
I was thrust out. I go from place to place  
painting crucifixions, depositions, martyrdom.

The last of Bacchus is burned from my face,  
David's look become that of Goliath,  
rage forever fixed under the boy's grip.

Last night, here in Naples, I was stopped, attacked  
in a deep doorway and left for dead. I lie

today in some hospital court. With my vengeful hand  
I smash a hovering butterfly.

Recovered,

I board a felucca for an unknown port.  
But the wind is wrong;  
heat grows fetid along the wharves.  
Somnambulant with sun, I go ashore,  
wander absently among the white bales,  
drink a bad wine, then another.

— The ship is gone, gone, its sails full  
beyond the harbor!

I run

after it, run along  
the beach. July  
sun doubles in my skull,  
heat fills my veins.

I run until I fall  
here, where sand rills  
from stone foundations, eye-  
less towers of a place  
known as Port' Ercole.

As I die,

the sun, my final mirror, holds my face.

I HEARD THE RAIN STOP  
(Barcelona)

Death is a clangorous team  
forever treading. I see  
them now, three yoked horses,  
black and covered with bells;  
team treading into sight,  
always, since once, at night,  
in that city of unfinished spires,  
I heard the rain stop,  
and all the bullfight afternoons'  
black horses pulled their dreadful burdens,  
the dead bulls, again, again  
in broad arcs across the dust undarkened  
yet by rain: settled with dusk  
oncoming, and the blood's stain.



## VOTIVE

He goes in summer  
before the fall  
seconds its fires  
in narrow waters,  
the summer inlets  
of locust song.

He has stayed long  
through known shallows  
of locust song,  
but the days  
of banked flame,  
the gray ash burning

of little warmth  
wait, and the long  
holding to the dream:  
when splendid, far,  
cold votive water  
gives back the star.

7740 128

SET IN DANTE TYPE AND PRINTED  
AT THE STAMPERIA VALDONEGA  
VERONA • MCMLXIV

*Some American Poets Published by  
New Directions*

William Bronk  
Hayden Carruth  
Gregory Corso  
William Everson

Lawrence Ferlinghetti  
Jean Garrigue  
Lincoln Kirstein  
James Laughlin

Denise Levertov  
Thomas Merton  
George Oppen  
Kenneth Patchen

Ezra Pound  
Kenneth Rexroth  
Charles Reznikoff  
Muriel Rukeyser

Delmore Schwartz  
Tennessee Williams  
William Carlos Williams

\*

For complete listing, write to  
NEW DIRECTIONS  
333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14

PRINTED IN ITALY

171/100