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The Art of Poetry: One

Dario Jaramillo

David W. Young

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on several occasions.
Why, I even loaned him my shoes.

The Radio Reporter

Hungary's largest sub factory!
Her most sought-after export item!
The match of the century
In the world's largest stadium!

On the most outstanding scholar———
To the excellent artist———
With the important writer———
In the largest jungle of our country . . .
The Hungarian Athens!
The Hungarian Stockholm!
The Hungarian Père Lachaise!
The Hungarian dinosaur.
Hungarian jazz.
The popular mannequin———
The world-famous egg painter.
The reporter

in the jungle;
the reporter in the Père Lachaise;
the reporter in the egg.
On the earth, in the air, under the water.
Under the earth.

Translated by the author with Larry Levis

DARIO JARAMILLO / COLOMBIA

The Art of Poetry: One

You ought to make use of poetry
to speak badly of your family;

to joke a little about Oedipal suffering,
to destroy with brilliant irony the cretinism of all the maiden aunts
in the world:
the one who demanded that you learn to play the guitar,
the one who made you recite whenever she came to visit,
the one who recommended vitamins,
the one who gave you her home-made biscuits.
You ought to use a poem to say horrible things about your friends:
the one with a dried up soul,
the other who got fat and had two illegitimate children who'll someday
inherit his name,
the one who sleeps with the woman you want, or
the one who calls you up at midnight,
the other who has bad taste and is also a moralist.

You ought to make use of poetry. But no.

Translated by David W. Young

Imaginary Biography of Graham Greene

Failure is a kind of death:
today you know with certainty
of a child's horror when the hummingbirds
fly across his window to the garden
and he sees them, stunned:
it is daybreak.
Terror is a plague
and you never got rid
of that lump in your throat;
think back to the silence of clinics
when the world was the space
you could cover on your wheelchair.
Don't forget the day you found out
happiness is so fragile
it can be shattered by a word.
Bear in mind you had to choose
between lying and loathing,
that you were a deceitful ghost,