

1986

## From "Couplets"

Robert Mezey

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from Couplets · *Robert Mezey*

7.  
The poet sits praising himself over and over,  
As if it mattered, as if it could be proved.

The lover regards his pleasures as his by right;  
He seizes on them, he thinks *they* were what he  
was after.

If you really have it, you don't have to think about it,  
You're not always looking to make it something  
special.

Otherwise, the bud blackens, the petals fray back  
into themselves.  
You do not go into the feast until you know this.

9.  
She thinks if she puts out, her sainthood will be  
recognized.  
He figures his wit and pathos entitle him to love.

She laughs and cries, showing her small teeth,  
He lifts her dress and buries his face in her bush.

She loves somebody else, who doesn't give a shit.  
He does too, but that's different.

It was all good clean fun that had no future  
And now it doesn't even have a past.

Neither of them is even alive at this point—  
There's just me, and you, I suppose, wherever  
you are.

What a mess, the meat burnt, the sink overflowing,  
The kid won't stop crying, he wants his milk.

10.

The bee's so bloated with nectar he can't fly,  
Buzzing on his back at the flower's foot.

So many fresh blooms! Summer will never end,  
The fucking idiot dances in his euphoria.

The first faint brown nibbles at the edge of a leaf—  
Even the city cousin notices such things.

Down an aisle of leafy shade and leafy sunlight,  
Growing smaller and smaller, she disappears.

The watcher, shivering, cannot believe his eyes  
That this body too should be taken away from him.

The dry husk of a stonefly clinging to a rock  
Came apart in my fingers, the wind lifted it away.

*Ojos que no ven, corazon que no siente—*  
The little peasant whispers it over and over.

15.

Remember the depths of her eyes and swimming  
there.  
Remember the glistening festivals of her body.

Remember the sudden chestnut mare and the colt  
Running out through buckthorn to the high  
mountain lake

By which we slept. Remember the fullness of  
the moon  
And the mountains drinking in that sea of milk.

Remember the long silences. Remember the flute  
Answering to itself high up on the red cliffs.

Remember the rock floored with sun and two  
immortals  
And the white water crashing and frothing in  
the channel.

And her arms raised to her hair, lifting the small  
breasts,  
The flat belly, legs akimbo, tuft of fur,

The faint shadow of the wings of the dragonfly—  
Remember everything. And now forget it.

20.

Don't be afraid of dying. The glass of water  
Is quickly poured into the waiting goblet.

Your face that will be of no further use to mirrors  
Grows more and more transparent, nothing is hidden.

It's night in the remotest provinces of the brain,  
Seeing falls back into the great sea of light.

How strange to see that glittering green fly  
Walk onto the eyeball, rubbing its hands and praying.

Don't be afraid, you're going to where you were  
Before birth pushed you into this cold light.

Lie down here, next to Empedocles;  
Be joined to the small grains of the brotherhood.