

1998

Pentastichs, Plus

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Recommended Citation

Laughlin, James. "Pentastichs, Plus." *The Iowa Review* 28.1 (1998): 32-33. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.4951>

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James Laughlin (1914-1997)

PENTASTICHS, PLUS

SINGING HER NAME

There where this lady's loveliness appeareth
is heard a voice which goes before her ways
and seems to sing her name with such sweet praise
that my mouth fears to speak what name she beareth,
and my heart trembles for the grace she weareth.

Guido Cavalcanti (1255-1300), translated by Ezra Pound

She was wearing a rather scanty
dress but it was made of gold. (25/1)

VIRILITY

To show her virility, the woman decides to
sodomize the man. Making him lie down, she
distracts his attention with her chatter in
order to untie his nivi. She kisses him on
the cheek until he agrees entirely . . .

*A passage from Vatsyana's Kama Sutra
translated from the ancient Sanskrit by Alain Danielou*

. . . you remember the part
where that Greek guy was . . . (13/3-4)

SWEARING, FROM THE LOGIA OF YESHUA,
TRANSLATION, DAVENPORT

Do not swear by the heavens, because
they are the throne of God. Do not
swear by the earth, as it is his
footstool. Do not swear at all; let your
yes be your yes, and your no your no.

You would call to the cats, "*Micci, micci, micci,
vieni qua, c'è da mangiare.*" (15/2)

LIFE STORY: TENNESSEE WILLIAMS (ABRIDGED)

After you've been to bed together for the first time,
without the advantage of any prior acquaintance,
the other party very often says to you,
Tell me about yourself, I want to know all about you,
what's your story. And maybe they really do . . .

My best friends have always been
The ones in books. (23/3)

A WINTRY CHRISTMAS

It's winter, so cold, and three feet of
snow. I think of Villon's lines about
the hungry wolves. "*Sur le Noel, morte
saison, lorsque les loups vivent de vent.*"
The wolves have nothing to eat but the wind.

He would write a message to her
with his finger in the dust. (20/2)