Pentastichs, Plus

James Laughlin
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)