

Editorial

Contemporary poetry, almost all over the world, faces extinction chiefly because people have lost their earlier reading habits. Human culture has undergone a massive transformation. Considered stochastically the print media might be actually receding; normal custom of reading books at bed-time tends to get replaced by the more relaxed activity of watching television. There is also some issue with form, more noticeable among others being the surreal obscurity of verse, the veneer of disjointed post-modernism, the lack of metre. It is however encouraging to note that there are poets who belong to the archaic and ever vanishing community of ritual man. Judith Wright, Frederick Turner, Mary Freeman, Cynthia Zarin have contributed to English poetry even in times as ours. I shall excerpt a few poems and let them speak for a slice of life. But they symbolize the spirit of a millennium that hosts human grief, joy, fear, or self-exhorcising creation in its lines.

Apple Jack

Mary Freeman

Fallen apples bruise, the better for those
Who prey on such, such fallen fells
As these which lay around my apple trees
Awaiting the invasion of the ants.
Chance is, I like them too, and munch on one
While gazing on this fallen feast, this manna
From the sky. There is a kind of insect
Not an ant, but one that bores inside it--
Bit by bit it bores, the apple worm whose
Life begins and ends in apples pending,
Whose fall bequeaths it new beginnings there
Beneath on earth where crushed-in apples lay;
Pray my ending ends so well as these did,
Harboring hopes of home within their rotting flesh,
Fresh food for future generations; hope my
Bruising somehow breeds a new condition,
Rendition of my being. Like rotten apples
Wormy to the core, let me be pressed out
With a turning vise, squeezed of every drop;
Wind up at last a swig of apple jack.

The Peace Treaty

Frederick Turner

My neighbor's cow has got across
The green creek down below,
She's on my island, eating grass
That I had planned to mow.
And so I sit and watch her graze,
And drink a glass of wine:
Would that the whole world had our ways
Of treating mine and thine!

Birth

Louisie Erdrick

When they were wild
When they were not yet human
When they could have been anything,
I was on the other side ready with milk to allure them,
And their father, too, each name a net in his hands.