

B.Z. Niditch

At Fall River

Taking a story book
created into song for flute
and chorus
composed at school
for my aunt and niece
along with an éclair
ripened fruit, cheese
a honeyed croissant
and java we had
deliver along the banks
of Fall River
with a please and thanks
under a blue ink cloudless sky
in the cool air
as wind rises off the water
on my once anchored kayak
now ready to float
tearing us by the sunny
ocean docks
we paddle away
at an early hour
by the silent warm
dew and rocks
cradled at the shore's back
by tiny crocus, wild flowers
and muddy roots of phlox
praying to get out to help
the invading embraces
of a Siamese cat
now caught by branches
at a dawn's mirage
after a weekend storm
in this obstacle course
towing oars in at sea
drinking in a boiling brew
to keep from being thirsty
in our phantom banquet
as we put the cat on our knee
I'm asking for a napkin
when my red eyes
are with allergy

in a nature's whirling abyss
while asking
my laughing company
to take a camera's snapshot
as we need a miracle's graces
with no curfew
at supernatural powers
to wake me up anew
in a half baked sun
and view a series
of red painted leaves
sinking under the Bay
on the open boat sea
thinking of lotus blossoms
in a still-cloud painting
of Monet,
now with the clocks
pulled ahead
by one feverish hour
to share our bread
along the bent river bed
on this wonderful reunion
preparing our clear
yet padded shades
over the sludge
on weighty boarded docks
as once carnivorous
blue fish gather by
our rusk rations of bread
unloaded from
Portuguese sailors
we wish for nothing less
than a reflection of Poseidon
dressed in street clothes
for our protection
over the seas
which only a fortnight ago
had ice-cold
deaf leaves here
among the Evergreen trees,
and ask the masked
god of deities
to be with a sung chorus
of nymphs
among a garden snakeskin
while a blackbird

flies by our hair
as if on
the brightened Himalayas
with radiant
heightened Phoebus
riding on air
shines as an only next of kin
I'm offering to my family
a vibrating porous line
in a text enlightened
from words of Baudelaire
among these entrails
and flying birds
yet trying to answer
all mysteries as butterflies
obliviously float
over an occasional sludge
we sight a right whale
on our side by chance
knowing only poetry
has an answer
to a daughter and son
as Melville's heirs
we wish to decide a cadence
and summon up
the visionary Muse
who is clever enough
not to lose any grudge
yet fulfills
our questionable words.

Anthony Caro's World

Encountering your marble
in various cities
at a resemblance
of mirrored stone
shaping our world
recalling insight
from impressions
named in sculpture
as a visionary shade
of my memory
always surprising
at your tall pillar
as a moving dividing limb
into a phantom's
body appearance
in a museum's
echo of entourage
along a dissonant corridor
becoming silent to his courage
at a walled composure
into a precision cut
from his shut in world
of glimpsing a space of frame
in a future sunset
of silhouette's eternity.

Mondrian in Manhattan

On his studio bed
in Manhattan
Mondrian listens
to jazz
by orange lines
of sponged bright red
his art soothed
by wildflowers
in the canvas space
with new drawing
on an overheard
perspective
from phantom dreams
turning on silence
in patterns from the pale
tree's shading of three birds
on the window pane
remembering his youthful
Dutch landscapes
of paintings consolation
in childhood memory
from a lassitude of the earth
to color in from your soul
when the fingers of time return
to touch others
alone in shadow of a cornice
of well being.

March Crocus

Now that the spring air
has a signal to us
on the Manhattan lawn
by the calyx
of my imagination
turning on
brownstone to green
now that we listen intently
to arias of Bach cantata
of a local chorus
on the radio,
always in the same dream
to press in
on the friendship
of a twenty year distance
with the window open
to smell the sky blue sea
along the Atlantic's divide
when kindred hummingbirds
will answer on the trees
and we wrap our initials
on them as a love bracelet,
now as an allergy of pine
opens our nostrils wide
to swim
by Whitman's children
along orange vineyards
exchanging our sleepless eyes
like an old love in the orchard
hides our minds
to give us another chance
traveling toward the statue
of a risen poet Emma Lazarus
on the island of our horizon
and we ask the yellow crocus
for the first spring dance.

Return to Spain

My breathless shadow
entangled by a neon butterfly
should appear
by paper airplanes
shimmering from
sandy knees
of a dancing body on board
still aching
from an Achilles heel
sprained from soccer ball
thrown by a boy
and future bard
reciting Homeric odes
in the courtyard
up to the clouds
of our buried pastimes
he with the voice
of prophets
in the chilled abyss
of a consummate morning
soon my niece and nephew
at our breakfast nook
when rain has prevailed
is it still time of admittance
that every passing voice
has not always failed
its listener's
waiting only at the Prado
for the paintings
of El Greco
thinking of my ancestors
who left Toledo behind
hurrying by
the cold iron doors
we are now exiled
to the four corners
of my grandmother's shawl,
could it all have been worth it all
the exiled peevish hours
all my years back bent
with words to bring out beauty
an artist recalls
gathering wild flowers
on the pastel's holy walls

in a poet's painful early light
knowing even words
can be magnified
as we recall being abandoned
in our childhood's verses
yet we return to a melody
in our first reader's response.

Vermont in Play

From our wintry slumber
telling my wanting relatives
who often visit Vermont
there may even be a bear
hiding at home trying to loosen
the bird feeder on the Elm
yet we are here
to be dazzled
in a whirlwind
over the grey tongue
far from the city smog
from high alighted buildings
we will still hear
the metamorphosis
of this journey's dialogue
and with endurance, sing.

Chia Pets

Those terracotta figurines
like the alligator
lizard, bear or kitten
we cannot help liking you
bent to gather our thoughts
in our slippery animals
of memorable garden faces
making believe
that intoxicate
an adolescent monologues
of conversation
on days of loneliness
seeking companionship
with a brief monomania
in our mother tongue
trading with a friend
in Pennsylvania
to initiate a private zoo
of an experimental
model imitation
of mammals and pigeons
from the morning
in nonchalance viewed
into different polygons
from our imaginations
in passing a geometry
of fur and hairy prodigality
opening up a new world
of popularity.

B.Z. Niditch is a poet, playwright, and fiction writer. His work is widely published in journals and magazines throughout the world, including: *Columbia: A Magazine of Poetry and Art*; *The Literary Review*; *Denver Quarterly*; *Hawaii Review*; *Le Guepard* (France); *Kadmos* (France); *Prism International*; *Jejune* (Czech Republic); *Leopold Bloom* (Hungary); *Antioch Review*; and *Prairie Schooner*, among others. His newest poetry collection, *Everything, Everywhere*, will be available from Penhead Press in September. He lives in Brookline, Massachusetts.