

Martijn Benders

Poetry to Read in the Dark



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Dreamflight

Tolkien once wrote:

‘Why should a prisoner
write about the wall, about the unsavory jailer
who comes peeking through a slider?’

That unsavory gaoler is me
and the prisoners I come to check
are my memories.

I report, always.
To imperceptible powers.

When Anthony Pieck
was three years old
he was crying in front of the window:
‘I can’t draw the rain...’

Eucapolypse

Again the hand
scampering across parchment.

When I think upon my childhood
the sensation takes hold
that it was another
who tinkered there.

Some scoundrel
plundering
my recollection.

That little burrow
where I became lost, wailing,
where, as the tale goes,
a four-year-old strolled into a garden
and wantonly kicked a snowman,
bawling children pointing
at an inscrutable behemoth -
was that I? Was I not lost?
Was I not weeping?
Was I not a spacebuff?

I close my eyes, something jogs at me,
two glowing coals in the darkness.
Two suns on a charred hold.
'It's you' sounds a voice, 'you!
You who make and forget!
Don't you remember how
you compassed with me in
the red light of the mother?

I became a drizzle
hoping I would fall
on you, just a little, on you.

I became a drizzle
in the hope that I would fall everywhere
you would ever felt or fall.'

I quickly open my eyes,
the afterglow of coals on my retina.
Serenade from a dead snowman.
Outside, the ocean froths
against the uneven cliffs
of San Andres near Ceidera.

Again hand-tie the days,
it buzzes and ladders in my head,
trees play chess with the light,
my rustling heart
clips in
the delayed draw
of the paper.

I don't remember the doll.
It feels like I'm using a fork
to spear a pea that has become lodged
in the rill of the sheep brain
on my plate. Rules, rules
of the Lost Ark, so sloons
the seething snowman
with penurious malice,
I must let all
my sage-grey brain mass calm,
the pea shall roll, the fork sing,
dip the tooth, the grill
into the graffe, who oh who
of you is still sense-hollow? Run

in the wake of the stone
a life spins out
in graphene and what do I see
through the gemized windows?

Darkness. Gales.

'Desire you so much,' it whispers,
'I'm like a giraffe in the dark,
longing, lonesome, afraid.'

The moon in graveyard light
ghostly gray.

Moon all to silence.
Moon all to poetry.

Sickle into your words,
mow the voidy
with a trick
back to life.

To reassure you I die,
amnesia is bad music.

In this time of spring and youth
while everywhere it crackles,
rustles and boils
I feel the life of the world
working in me, an angry
miner with
a moldy lamp.

The snowman smiles.

He plods, plummets
in the unfathomably deep shaft,
where an ancient world slumbers
that once cradled into me.

I feel the warm earth again,
the rippling bier of the motter membrane
and its trunk trailing blood.

A galaxy coursing
through the ranks of dreams
straight towards my crib,

o Icy star, encompass
me a little while longer, o icy
star, am I then your stillborn?

Snee-nee-nie-ka

Veins thill through my skin
and she lays her breasts
to dare in the Scotch mist,
being such a cold prey
of the mother's womb,
swaying to awaken
in the wood straw bed,
through and in-bawling
into the regal bile
of the bier-matte.

To reassure you I die.
Amnesia is bad music.

In light stringy as sparrow flesh
a galaxy swings me
to the end, did
you not compass with me
in the red mother?

No!
There was never snow in the mother!
Thaw set in the mother!

I forgot about you! I cast you aside!
Angry, scared and lost
into the corridor.

Chew in the dead-end thaw.
Chew in the dead-end thaw.
Chew in the dead-end thaw.



OOIEVAARS
TELLER

YERSINIA PESTIS, THE PLAGUE BACTERIUM, ALSO MAKES BACTERIO-
CINS (CALLED PESTICINS IN THIS CASE) DESIGNED TO KILL COMPET-
ING STRAINS OF ITS OWN SPECIES. A SPECIES OF CATERPILLAR THAT
FEEDS ON TOBACCO PLANTS CAN EXHALE HARMFUL NICOTINE TO
SPIDERS, DRIVING THEM AWAY. CERTAIN SPECIES OF WASPS LAY THEIR
EGGS IN TOBACCO HORNWORM LARVAE. THE WASP LANDS ON THE
LARVA'S BACK AND INJECTS THE EGGS PLUS ADENOVIRUS INTO THE
MAGGOT THROUGH THE OVIPOSITOR. THE ADENOVIRUS PREVENTS
THE LARVA FROM EATING AND THEREBY DEVELOPING INTO A PUPA.
WHEN THE EGGS HATCH, THE YOUNG USE THE INSIDE OF THE LARVA
AS A FOOD SOURCE, TO GROW AND DEVELOP INTO ADULT WASPS.

MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF ORGANISMS CONDUCT BIOLOGICAL WAR-
FARE. BACTERIA KILL OTHER BACTERIA WITH ANTIBIOTICS OR BAC-

TERIOCINS. THEY ALSO
ISMS. EUKARYOTES CAN
PRODUCED BY LOWER C
PREVIOUSLY UNTAPPED
TABOLISM OR LIFE CYCL
CANNOT EASILY DEFEN
BACTERIA USE IRON CH



RGET HIGHER ORGAN-
INS OR ADOPT THOSE
EGY IS TO ATTACK
BACTERIUM'S ME-
ITES THAT BACTERIA
ANCE. FOR EXAMPLE,
DEROPHORES, TO BIND

IRON AND EXTRACT IT FROM HOST PROTEINS. SIDEROPHORES ARE
EXCRETED, BIND IRON, AND ARE THEN REINTRODUCED INTO THE
BACTERIAL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS BY SPECIALIZED TRANSPORT SYS-
TEMS. ANOTHER STRATEGY IS TO SCREEN NEW MICROBES FOR ANTIBI-
OTICS. AS DISCUSSED EARLIER, BACTERIA PRODUCE ANTIBIOTICS FOR
THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF KILLING OTHER BACTERIA. SINCE MOST
MICROBES FOUND IN NATURE HAVE NOT BEEN CULTURED OR IDEN-
TIFIED, IT IS LIKELY THAT MANY NATURAL ANTIBIOTICS HAVE YET
TO BE DISCOVERED. THE FIRST ANTIBIOTIC WAS STUPIDLY DISCOV-
ERED PRECISELY AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II AND ENSURED THAT
IN THE FIFTIES NO POET OF ANY CRITICAL IMPORTANCE DIED FROM
WHAT HIPPOCRATES ALREADY CALLED THE TERING. UIVER, EIVER,
EIBER, ZN.: STORK. BR. ALSO LISCH E GLIJDER (VGL. GOEIE, KWAAIE,
PLIOOI, DOOIEVAAR)

Where the sun's shadow
turns strangely green
I once bested my mother
in the frog race.

Where girls' hair
still bristles with straw
I tumbled from the extreme
into the something-serious.

A snowman is a snowman.
The simulation a simulation.

There was never snow in the mother,
the strutting of death or birth
carried by saddlebill or stork,

clattering like old film letterboxes,
or film shifting off the reel,

the stork counter, whose eyes
do the stinging walk
to settlers in the gorse
peeling the incommode crates,
ringing the huddled migratory birds
with thick, reliable steel...

Everywhere
meteoric gelatine, that's what
poet Albertus Wigman called it, but there
were also elders who thought of jellyfish
that at gale force ten in kamikaze flight
spent the final minute of their
fucking pink gypsy mole life
as silver mercenaries of the air
shimmering-swooshing together.

I am a smoldering molehill
in a landscape of frozen peacock tails.

Steel mat they are stationed
in bail of the moor.

Two charred suns
ember at the hold.

Among the tattered karma vine trees
the yellowing knight mushrooms recruit
the last glaives of the heath fire.

How no moon can fire into heaven,
How no moon can thin in hell.

On the chequered slopes of the mountains
worlds powder themselves.

High red are your eyes
in the sweltering November sun.

The wind lashes the trees.
The wak coals its lap.

Surplice
in the decayed now, the skin of Galicia
a pincushion stuffed with
eucalyptus trees.

I am writing this during Holle Woen
at the home of a Galician family
who play the same tune
on a harpsichord
every evening together.

Invasive, they say.
Those trees don't belong here.
That man doesn't belong here.
That tune...

Eucalyptus
releases an oil
that can ignite at 30 degrees
and the tree litters everything
with its bark and has seeds
that need fire
to take root.

Observe how the world desires to burn.
My hand scampering across the paper
and outside the window I see
the ancient Ferris wheel
of *Kinderreich* collapsing
across the glazed fields
and in one of the rusted gondolas
the drifting snowman.

In his eyes we see
the sunset yearning for fire
to be the only sunset
as I wish for a snowman
to still feel tangible.

To be the only one
who still sits here and writes
while my hand scampers
across the paper.

Familine

Yaw off

I dust
your skeleton
with a culm
for I see them
circling.

Happy
that you are dead
because you wouldn't
have believed
it helps.

Fallout

Two things
my father wanted:
her hard drives
and an old, broken
plastic Christmas tree
that he spied in the attic.

The rest
could go
to the dump.

I don't think he will make
Christmas with that broken little tree
but if he does

I'll cut the dry stollen,
sprinkle so much icing sugar
that we vanish together
into a cushioned void.

At the funeral

My father's hand doesn't
understand what a hand is.
He hears a poem for
the first time in his life.

My mother doesn't
know whose funeral this is.
If the funeral director
were to recite *Bottle on the Wall*
she would clap and sing along.

I chose Emily Dickinson,
a bird stripped of its voice.

A parched world
full of tolerated people.

My father heard it,
briefly, but
it was a poem.

The coffee room

As if it were a wormhole
they sat there, in the middle of the coffee room:
the order of real people with
a least possibly lost giant
who presided over the meeting.
His words meant and with weight,
honoring my sister
who was one of them, people
in whom the malleable-human installation
once failed because during
configuring the civilian module
their fairy-tale head
started shaking: No, no!

The order still exists.
It takes no end at the dream flight
but cradles and sways on its dead ends
and where creators see an end of decor
the order begins from on or before.

The death of Gogol

When the Duma had decided
the Danilau convent would henceforth be
for young problem children
they opened his tomb,
found the skeleton upside down
face down in the earth
as if he had plummeted
from the sky into the grave.

Diary of a Madman

is his saddest work,
that animals can think or talk
became unthinkable to the modernist.

After burning his masterpiece
he received from Turgenev the analysis
'morbid agony' after Gogol
tried to exorcise the devil with
a hunger-strike. Perhaps

dark figures twisted him in the coffin
because during embellishing the corpse
they could not bear his deprived gaze, something else
is inconceivable to us moderns.

Flower or Foreign Power

Slide 228. Striking sunflowers.

‘Did you know that our V.O.C. ships
used to take a painter with them on their voyages
He had to paint the land on the bow
we were going to explore, and if it didn’t resemble
reality he would be keelhauled, utopia had to
resemble a real utopia!

‘Those flowers look radioactive.
Then I think: did he mean something by that?’

(Slide 229)

Neither audience at large nor critics
asked questions about
pouring coffee during
the eating of potatoes.

(Slide 230)

Thanks to us, Lords
this became an interesting pain-ter
without foreign intentions
getting in the way of his fame.

*'I feel how Dad and Ma instinctively (I don't say sensibly)
think about me. There is a similar reluctance
to take me in like a big shaggy dog in the house.'*

**

In the end, only Gauguin showed up

The dream was an artists' colony.
In the end, only Gauguin showed up.
After two angry months, he beavered away
and hacked Vincent's ear
off with his officer's sword.

The official story
is that, out of heartbreak, Vincent
cut off his own ear to present it two hundred meters
away to a lady of easy virtue. An official story

and a conspiracy theory. Which do you believe?

Does it matter?

In the end, only Gauguin showed up.

December 28, 1888

A bleak, foggy morning in Paris,
Gauguin goes to attend the execution
of the criminal Prado,
Count Linska of Castillon,
the man who kept refusing
to give his real name.

Gauguin complained about the scramble,
not notable enough to experience
the decapitation directly in the front row.

Initially, the execution goes awry.
The hatchet grazes Prado's face
cutting only his left ear off.

Gauguin, that fantastic fencer,
in all the scuffle afterwards
never got to read Nietzsche's
last letter, in which he exclaimed:
'Prado, that was me!'

A few hours before he went to confess
into the ear of a beaten horse.

Protocol

The tumor
was the size of a small handball
and I felt how the thing lived
in its own sonorous frequencies.

We had been sitting there for hours.
The morphine did not kick in.
My request for anaesthesia
was firmly denied.
That was not the protocol.

The protocol is
that noble gases are pricey
and precisely because they are so pricey
they might well play a role
in patient death, a role
that the cheap morphine could not
fulfill or create.

Nenia

The fuse has blown
in the house of love.

The dead chew on pears
with a marrow-like hunger, never
lingering back to the
manned memory of a hand.

The sun full of wiring,
and fuses blew,
the fuse of a good song
is the soul's finest fade.

The fuse of a song.
The dead chew on pears, grinding
light as piers are moiling ground.

The death of Dylan Thomas

One overslept morning
Dylan calls his mother Florence.

'I've always
wanted to leave, mum, because my
breast functions so badly here!'
he boomed through the handset.

He flew to New York very genteelly
into the good night to search
for fresh air for the heart.

Witch doctor Feltenstein
injected a three-times
excessive dose of morphine into the already
blue-faced braggart-poet
of his short, dead-drunk days.

His mother, Florence, named after
that city full of warehouses and night jasmine,
comes from a family cursed with Phtisis,
a form of Tuberculosis also
called 'The Kings Touch'.

Letter to Hans Vlek

Rose read me your letters
in which you pretend to be
a celebrity in Spain
when really she knew
that you were writing from an asylum
and that pain of pretending
I already knew your daughter from that,
she made dirty mattress art, Hans,
in Helmond. I know why now.

Rose thinks it was because of the LSD
in Marrakech. Apart from the
mattress art, I also knew Roos
from the evaluations in which, as a
board member had to assess my performance
as an art congerge and ten years later when
I was sitting in a totally destroyed caravan
drinking myself to death, Rose came along,
we suddenly had a date.

We sat on the floor, Hans,
on a rancid mattress.
I had made soup
in a blender.

Rose thought the soup was disgusting.
We watched an Iranian art film.
She had a thing with boring, reliable Jan.
'You're in my trousers anyway' she said.

She called every day.
She didn't think I should drink myself to death.
She thought I should learn to take care of myself.
I said you've been living your whole life
on benefits, what do you know about that?

Rose with her mattress art
Manifested a poet with mattress.
You shouldn't complain about that.
That's where 77,000 volts comes in handy.

I said I'm not your father, Roos.
I'm not pretending anything. This is a dirty mattress.
Famous poets come all the way
from Amsterdam to kiss my hand here.

Hans, I look through the gallery
at the same roasted light
through which Franco clipped
at your corpse in the horreo.

White millet sticks
to the bingo cages
of your eyeballs.

Gerard called, nice Gerard.
Doing something about Hans Vlek.

His voice went more and more crooked,
like the voice of someone who suddenly realises
that it's not about poetry at all.

The death of Ingrid Jonker

'It's because of the sea,' she wrote
in her last letter, 'if I appear tortured
it's because of the sea!'

My question to the biographer
which pills Ingrid was addicted to
she could not answer.

My observation
that after twelve hours there can be no alcohol
in the blood anymore met
neither rebuttal nor agreement.

She had to be
be admitted regularly.

It was as if she
needed a dead end
to turn in
as regularly as possible.

The death of Jan Arends

The hall of the flat where he lived
is filled with snake plants.

Going up
a wide marble staircase.

At the height
of Nixon's drug war
when the narrative
about jumping out the window
was blaring everywhere

the masochist jumped
for the final blow though
the manager of the building
claims that Arends
had been hammering
a landing platform
outside his window
in the absence of a balcony.

Slauerhoff's death

*'Is it wise to mourn the death of one who did not love life?
Who would not have grieved for it himself and who also long before his illness
already knew not to praise life itself?' - Anthonie Donker*

In Middelburg, in July 1940,
a bookshop was on fire,
during an exhibition by Slauerhoff,
causing the loss of many unique works.

The inner city had been in flames two months earlier,
though it's unclear if it was due to German bombardment
or French shelling. Experts disagree.

The first publication
of Benthem & Jutting
was a pamphlet in 1801
on the eradication
of begging.

The death of Prince

Zen from his own work. Poets after me. The book is better than the woman. Athletics of cut flowers. The problem with people going to sea. A damn good youth writer & other stories. Fat heart. The death of Prince. Remarkable products. All of them Deadpanned. Not snubbed by the handful of reviewers Flanders has to offer, but silenced to death. I might as well have written them with smoke in the air. When I was calm again and the tram had reached the Korenmarkt, I got off. And who did I see in the distance? None other than... (Continue reading behind a very thick and high paywall...)

The death of Jotie

The father
of the little girl
who you had beaten so
was expert in flying saucers.

The heart must cooperate
in order to die
from an overdose of
expensive cocaine.

How you must have tried your best
at those feverish exclamation points.

And the UFOs on that wallpaper
attempt to land in the lost
Roman wilderness of pain.

NE MEID!
ZUK!

Utopie



Red Cinnamon

In the bed of the braiding,
coffee-coloured Yellow River in 211 BC
struck a meteor and a miscreant scribbled
'The First Emperor will die, his country
go to pieces' on it.

The Kwin people were known as banal, acultural,
and especially skilled at making up rules and laws.
Kwin Shi Huang subjugated all other peoples
and so the country of China was born.

The meteor was pulverised
after it also wiped out a few villages.
In those days, celestial bodies were
entities to be reckoned with.

What do you call the little rule
that the banal and platitudinous always triumphs?
The Rule of the Falling Star?

In an anonymously made painting of Emperor Kwin
Out of his cuckoo head comes
a vermilion ball
like a jack-in-the-box, his eyes
trying to zap it to pieces, that's how it must have
have felt to live eternally refreshed

between the braiding beds
of the coffee-coloured Yellow River.

**

In Mierlo, meanwhile, I find only
potato bovists and here and there
the vermilion wood mushroom.

The potato bovists are yellow and sickly
on the undigested leaves
saving their last breath
to launch one pillowy cough
full of cinnabar
also called red cinnamon by Romans
and wealthy Roman women used it
to lipstick their lips with
which kept them from growing very old.*

In the re-education camps
where the saprophytic state
vegetates on red people
they only know rules,
rules, rules, and
break, cap
(ball, cap, sphere, hemm
moor, cowl, hood, hood, hood) - it braids.

*The History of Kisssmetics by Cultural Devastation,
Anonymous Conspiracy Theory, the Pill Archive.

Apotropaic Practices and the Undead:
A Biogeochemical Assessment of Deviant Burials in Post-Medieval Poland

As early as the 11th century, it appeared that Poles
regularly buried a vampire with a sickle around her neck,
so that the evil creature
would behead herself
if she rose from the dead again.
Only Jesus was allowed to do that.

That vampire
was always female
and also always
someone local.

An unmarried woman, probably.
An unsprayed wolf.

The sickle the brand
with which the herd gave death
its agrarian imago.

AN
NA

Immaculate

After she bore Our William six children
she was forced into divorce and declared insane
and locked in a windowless room.

The first divorce granted by the church
in human history, on condition
that she was mad. They later buried her 'anonymously'
in Meißen cathedral under a kind of four-leaf clover,
a pagan symbol.

Anna was 16
when she was married off to Our William.
In the following eight years
six children were born.

Anna was twenty-four
when she was declared insane
and locked up without light.

She died of 'neglect', it says.
On her 'anonymous' cathedral tomb
with the strange four-leaf clover
someone has made an anonymous rorschach stain
in which the imaginative tourist
may discern an angel
or some other miracle of their choice.

Heinderen

To modernise death
to anonymous battery farming
we need only respect privacy
as we used to do in the mass grave.

Atmospheric death
which we will call 'heinderen',
a variation on meandering,
hindssight will take on
a nice uncomfortable connotation.

Live your decent heinderen life
burning up right on schedule
and to rid us of the agrarian image
the sickle becomes a reliable, fat little thumb.

Watch everyone stick it in the air.
A mass of thumbs up for the invisible man.

Cloud rot

Thunder mushroom is a solemn name
resembling cloud rot, but on
the northern English peninsula of Spootersham
they call it a tree cow.

To me, on the contrary, it reminds me
of Shostakovich's Nose, which of course
is Gogol's Nose
who drew reinforcements and now is
dancing on the face of the audience

and the first almost undetectable frown
on the face of Joseph Stalin
which later during Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk
became too heavy - an assassination! A plot!

No one knows
why Shostakovich was allowed to continue to live
under a tartan curtain of velvet censorship.

Spoetersham does not exist, I read.
A peninsula it is not at all.
The cloud rot really is everywhere.

Long live the nose, patron saint of all
shorthorn lovers seeking shelter.

Cold War

What has become
of the punks and frat guys
of my youth?

The punks jump into a salute
for any coffee lady with a hitler moustache
as long as it wears one of those dirty sallow blue
Sciencer suits.

The frat guys froth
with exploded Trump haircuts
about an order of reptiles.

Where have all those young people gone,
creamy turtlenecks, Spandau Ballet,
they bring the cold war back
to the bone, but it's pointless,
there is no audience for it,

just people jumping into a salute
and people leering greenly at it all.

Beauty, finished with art, 2022

No one from a better family
still needs finishing with art.

A blurred animal
bangs time and again
with its head against the wall.

Is it out of boredom?
Because of hopeless suffering?

No, whispers a voice,
he is molting
like a snake.

Just like
you used to
switch classes.

Fringe culture

The fringewobbegong is a carpet shark.
But in English it is called 'The tasselled one'.
You wear a tasselled fez or slippers.
Originally, I thought 'fringe' was the translation
and I saw a conspiracy in that, something
derogatory, those beautiful tassels had to be reduced to
'fringe'. But this wobbegong
was discovered by Pieter Bleeker, who used his
ichthyological hobby as an army doctor during
the glory days of the famous 'culture system'
It was precisely the English who
thought, frills, no, no frills! There is a fish,
the parrotfish, that grinds the flower animals that
biologists called 'coral' between its strong
jaws and those calcareous skeletons
cause the snow-white beaches
for which paradises became so famous,
a fact that regularly wanders into poetry
as if mass tourism without that rotten fish
would have suddenly preferred a different cultural system.

War

As Lord Lilford wrote
that a merlin had tipsied
a woodcock from him
Catherina the second at the time of
her conquest of the Crimea
had the falconer train merlins
to snatch songbirds from the sky
which she locked up that spring in large cages
of Venus lead, in the portrait that Rokotov
painted of her you can see in the top corner
a huge cage in which, you don't see,
a mistletoe thrush tormented by homesickness
for mistletoe berries
and urged on by her silver stick
predicts the future: shrink, shrink.

There were poets, I won't mention names,
who have suggested that Catherina was
strangling of some birds after their prophecy.

However, there are other poets, I am one of them, who point to all
those small hamlets in Twente that were called 'the Crimea' after
that war because, they say, the people there are small and grew
crooked from picking up pennies.

In Groningen and Friesland
a krimpe or shrinkage is the space between
two rectangularly meeting outer walls
of a house. In the peat colonies, it is the corner
near the door of the house.'

But hear my rebuttal chant, silver prick:
'walls meeting rectangularly. How do they do that?
Think about that before you go knocking everywhere
to hand out sweet hairberries or cowberries.

Basket

I dreamt that I was in a Greek village where everyone moved to because it was still affordable, and I found a secret door and it led to the room of Ilja Pfeijffer. I put one of his ludicrous rings in my pocket, which I then presented to the mayor of that village with the notification that I could be of use to his village as a famous burglar. I woke up and Veer said she dreamt Jordan Peterson was living in our attic. Let's hope it will finally rain today, I bought a wicker basket to symbolise that I am not giving up.

Silver line

Few people know
that the eugenics programme of the SS
and Mengele was largely financed
by a patent on bicycle reflectors.

Bicycle shops around the world
had to pay money to the Ahnenerbe
to allow people to pedal safely
through the dark.

Safe
pedalling through the dark,
the slogan used to still
be called a 'silver line'.

To pedal
with silver lining
through the dark.

Henry the Birdman
is so called because while he was picking
dead birds from his bird nets someone
told him he was going to be King.

Now something throws a massive wheel
into the grid, men with steel birds
on their chests, I see
the rostered future,
I see a star that will
shine over our factories

as Daimler wanted:
a trinity, with or without God.

Do not go gendered into that good night.

Treatment room, dahmy glasses.
Two brothers, one may be called that way,
must constantly rub up against each other
to scientifically test whether gender
is indeed a form of free choice.

The psychiatrist is called Money
and takes sadistic pleasure
in child confusion.

Where is the Matelbarbie?
Where is the Matelbarbie?
It's in the church.
It's in the black church.

Less confusing
was the self-inflicted death
of David Reimer, later on.

Who disappears behind that smokescreen? Operation Paperclip.
Freedom slaughtered, death a mishmash
of papery flesh and pinkish slime.

The death of Attila József

In a devilish cooking pot
with a sludgy flame on top
boil his almonds.

Not to be confused with a Quiemada,
a Galician firepot for predicting the future
with blue fire and booze.

Is it you who screams there
in the flapping front porch
because it won't be Antal Horger.

No father, no mother,
no God, no country,
no cradle, no blindfold,
no knees, no train,
no train, no knees.

The pompous roses
tolerate no wild bertram
on the serfed puszta where not
only reign was allowed to fall.

Gezi park poem

There are those who say 'they're just trees',
cut them down and replant
replant a thousand trees.

The same people
would say 'they're just people'
Just shoot them, we'll breed
a new school elsewhere in no time.

We don't want a thousand trees.
Because those are not real trees.

They are trees
that need to be afraid in the dark.
They are trees that need backing.
They are trees that are planted.

What we want
are trees with experience.
Trees that resist
to your gases and poisons.

We just want
a little cane of shade
for a sloppy dog.

No trees-dubai.
No planted money forests.
A real faith,
no gazlam.

A crooked, insignificant tree.
That's what we want - to be surrounded
by small, insignificant things
that do us no harm.

Ode to silence

Yes, but her?
Your other sister and my other soul.
Grave silence, more lovely
than three sweetest girls,
what about her?
No Clio, not you,
nor you, Calliope,
nor any wanton line or ointment
of beauty will comfort me.

Already once for silence departed,
for her the cool-tongued,
for her the tranquil heart
that I always meekly follow,

Wandering through Heaven and Earth,
Hell and the four seasons;
Thalia, not you,
nor you, Melpomene,
not thy incomparable feet,
O graceless Terpsichore, I seek
but the paler, thoughtful,
most beloved of you all.
I seek her from afar.

I come from temples where her altars are,
from crippled forests that bear her name,
noisy with sacrifices and flames, high cymbals
and cymbals struck on high and strident faces
obstreperous in her praise.

They neither love nor know anything
of this Goddess from wrothed times
left long ago,
she left the conquered shrines
and fanes of her ancient sanctuary.

Dark and legendary
for a brief moment
she was frothed in marble,

that itself now, behold, the merrily
mumbling rain obliterates
and the unstressed snow,

which cannot trace her
with the swarm of my music.

'She will love well,' I said,
'if love is an inhabitant of that heart,
the flowers of the dead'.

The red anemone that noiselessly

moves in the wind, from another wound sprang

The heavy-sweet blue hyacinth,

blooming underground,

and pale yellow poppies,

dearer the silence will not know,

In the black shade of what obsidian steep

stiffens the white narcissus numb with sleep?

(Seed which Demeter's daughter bore from home,

uptorn by desperate fingers long ago,

reluctant even as she,

undone Persephone,

and even as she set out again to grow

in the twilight,
in the lean, ominous loam
of doom).
'She will love well,' I said,
'The flowers of the dead.'

Where round-dark Persephone haunts winter,
indeterminate for home, the indeterminate.
Without a sunny southern slope in northern Sicily,
with sullen pupils focused on a dream,
so staring at the stagnant stream
flowing through the undeniable
battlements of hell,

there, there she will be found,
She who is beauty, veiled of men
and music in a swoond.

'I long for silence as they
long for breath.'

Whose helpless nostrils
drink the bitter sea; what can be
so stout, hearkening in all death,

rage, considerable fury,
as she alone,
on whose icy breast,
I ever lay unchallenged and untroubled
and whom I always miss,
even to this day,

I am still not weaned from that cold bosom,
if only she gives me back with it?

I looked for her in that dolorous labyrinth,
where no ray of sunlight ever fell,
I looked for her in the bloodless.

I looked for her but in the air
so exhaled with venom,
whispers floated
that questioned me,
pressing me to tell
how many little ripples of light
I count in the tide of day,
that coat my sleeve
like tantalising shadows.

I paused before each grievous door
and heard how all the clouds chime.

I also looked for her
in the tribal context of missed opportunities
known as gods,

but neither was she sitting next to God
as a child entrenched from him.

(Her silent face
 stems mine
with communion in fire...)

The stuttering immortals stand
hand in hand in an ever-trumping circle,

their faces crisp and meek
as they stomp around
your footprint, Mnemosene
is not among them.

A diurnal dream
is a recurring daydream
in the slumbering kernel
of existence.

Your corpulent heart is full of
cracked columns, caryatids
overthrown, kneeling
under the lamp of Psyche
dripping on the marble wax
which was once a bed
but now called love,
with a young sleepy body
that dusts through the day.

There the bittersweet, white wisteria twists
fingers into the strangling wall and
the gorge wildens with weeds.

Like a cantankerous worm
there the silent white orchid feeds
on the steeled echoes
of our memories:

O grey mother of Pieria,
mould mother on the bow,

flee with your many daughters
for their wedding day

the dream wolf, the wolf-Apollo
awaits you in Argos
and the forty-nine buried heads
of the newlywed sons of Egypt
collar around in parched soil.

Neither below nor above the ground
is silence yet to be found,
that is your whole warp trail,
lovely before your songs sounded,
sweet in tightening
the thumbscrew at the end.

Oh take it anyway
that here somewhere your sister
lies embedded in death,
and that I may resistlessly follow
my closed hands a wreath
on her unmoving breast.

That we lie here
until our ages cradle us.

Beyond the gate of reverential life,
Beyond bumblebee and concave hole.

Where faith genders us in,
even a neuter mind like mine,
into divinely monotonous sobriety.

Seek her no longer.
Hell is a desiccating run.

Moon of Jasmine

Please, Mr van Schemeren

And we peet through life again,
and null through the world.
They slander at me in the walls,
deliferring for me for all time.

Rig the world
for the evening land comes to beer.
Language, Mr van Schemeren,
tales to the weedy hither.

Long live the full unloading light
in which the lost belong to us,
with love looping through
in all time-lasso for
woehoehall and diecielings.

Only demonic flowers sing,
but me, I sing like a saw palmetto.
Magicians lose their composure
when their hankies vibrate with my voice.

Why am I writing this,
because I am a clock
that with its echoing beat
freezes the world.

So my readers have a chance
to escape, you serfs of time,
that afterglow with poetry,
with the real black bees
and the failed higher honey,

why did you dress up
prisoners as bees? To sting
the same people as my memories?

'Kill your idols' is laziness.
I say: gorge your audience.
If those child-elderly heads
who come to test their whoring devices,
throat, throat, throat, put your clads around
the blue-veined shrivelled neck
of the smilpin kitty mama
and start squeezing: gorge, gorge,
she just keeps smiling hahahaha
with her blue-departed thudding head.
Hahahahaha they are going to lock you up,
nomadic poet, hahahaha.

And so you off them one by one
until the whole boomersoo is bataclanned.
Gorge your audience! Gorge your audience!
Let walls become your critics,
gaol-comb your lyric!

‘Just strangle yourself!’ roars the magician,
‘hop in the lining of my hat,
my stroke, my battle, I plunge it all
in rascal Latin, the flowers, the plants
the namelessness of all the lands,
I drench it in quidditchery!

‘I remember when the bees were black
and not dressed in crook suits,
the Carnica and the Buckfast, bred
to steal efficiently, all the higher
honey passes to man
thanks to my high-quality scholarship
and sorcery! And there in the field,

on golden spurs they deal
head-butting flowers, all
must belong to the void where
only zombie buzz still drone.

Zoom, zoom, morradoom.
Round but off that globe!
Round off that square stable!

And while
the rickety hisses
a cough teases the throat
of our Warlock, or does
he suddenly have two hands too many?

'Gorge yourself, poet,
fulfil the prophecy.

Take a good look
into my pink diary eyes,

can you see
the rainbow at the end
of that straitjacket tunnel?

Lime samples my veins,
bell nails pierce my hands.

San guine, without gene.
Spangled feature of the blood.

The morning light smokes of cocks
and violas in the curtain-flutter.

Parrot walls conjure me
into a profoundly cuffed world.

The world stands no chance
to reveal the forbidden room,
I feel to the bitter end May-late.
The time things spill out is over.
Something hopes off inside me.

The passing of time,
conconstantly creaking doors
close to the walls that have been,
the smell of sealant and the chafing
of gloves on oily skin.

A good executioner knows:
blood begins in the bones.

A cross spins on the almaline land
between thistles and wind and a sudden
rocking white-eared oak
with its chestnut eyes, bewitched candyfloss
among the waxcaps and prickle creeks
in this autumnal turnstile.

The light takes its guard in the dar-wies
And the sieve-tree comes in the gorse.
O Aare O Oerts come raging in the sint,
with your ornament of caterwauling life!

O love, come, disguise yourself as the sea.
The turnstile comes shadowing in the alcove.

The turnstile comes shadowing in the alcove.

Exactly while writing this line
my father died. Horn
now blooms on my wounds, no one
dies as beautifully as I can.

Above the smoking lavender fields
six red flamingos fly
back to St Maarten.

Over the old pink shepherd's fire
of a barren raspberry bush
stands the robbing autumn
quilling empty the trees.

Barefoot feels like a feast.
Really, try it.

You will be crucified
like cockchafers on the balls of deer,
their crowns quenching in pine mush.

Time,
an endless series of sarcophagi,
an ever-smaller version
of yourself revealing itself as
Matryoshka.

There you are
burning with the red augery
dead against the white
of pure resistance.

Reeling animal,
wiching gool

in the couperose
weurd of a poison dance.

A row of jasmine moon
hooks upside down
to the street.

A living fence

After 54 years, this life
failed to become my life.

I see the street
paved with whitish-pink clover,
candling against the rainbow
of my ribcage.

Fur mosaic of the skeletal eater,
the soothing elixir of inertia.
The sarcophane.

Mold heralds the winter.
St. Martin shares his cloak.
We stand for winter and say:
we are naked, come and clothe us!

Oh white shepherd, share your red cloak,
your red snow, your red cinnamon,

O mumps sits, mumps sits
Mumps sits in the bones.

Come in the goose coop dream,
look Tuf Tuf, Winnetoe, look
the upside-down goose swirls,

look Kauw-Liga, your heart
full of knotted pain
stands for winter

and trains.

the simulation is a simulation

This year, my family died out. In this collection, I predict my father's death and it later becomes a concrete part of the collection itself.

At the same time, some readers may have to read the collection in the dark because of the *Energy Heist*.

Where poetry doesn't throw a wrench in things, I have limited myself to facts in this collection.

Our stories, they don't fit.
What does fit is our heart, full of expectation even.

I hope this collection will meet that. It is available as a free e-book in the hope of illuminating the sitting in the dark.

The notes on the poems are written in small letters. These are not the real notes, which will appear after 50 years as our friends from *Kinderreich* often do. But you can make the notes yourself, writing with light in your head.

Martinus Benders, Mierlo, 11-27-2022

Notes

Jan Mankes also died of *The Kings Touch*

Eucopalypse - After months of looking after my father and finally arranging care for him, we had driven to Galicia like diginomades, but I turned out to have forgotten my laptop, so half of this volume is handwritten. The story about the snowman is one of my earliest memories: I was lost in a corridor crying, and that memory is punctuated with the image of me as a savage destroying someone else's snowman. What is really going on here? It doesn't add up. And so this collection slowly came to revolve around dead things, things that don't add up. What is not right in Galicia are the planted Eucalyptus trees: they were planted in the idea that they would be more resistant to forest fires, but those people did not know that the Eucalyptus actually causes forest fires itself, which must really be one of the strangest phenomena in nature.

There are four brief echoes in this incendiary forest: the fucking pink gypsy moles come from a stork poem by Can Yücel, a line wandered in from Sylvia Plath's Snowmen poem, and also an image coming from Bosnian poet Goran Simić, Sunset in the Eyes of the Snowman. The Ferris wheel came by cue in a collection by Lorca.

The interlude with information on infectious diseases in which the word 'stork' also contaminates - the QR code should lead to a video where these 'stork counters' can be admired. Among other things, it serves to show how human intervention in nature (whatever those eucalyptus trees are) is bizarre and almost always disastrous. At the same time, it is a bridge to the second chapter. Opening a volume about death with birth - the two are inseparable in nature.

As for the last page: isn't every sunset essentially tyrannical?

Familine - I decided to put together the poems about my sister's death and the death of all kinds of poets, because both are forms of family for me. My sister was a rather severe asperger as it should be called. The young science that calls itself psychiatry, however, has never managed to cough up a good explanation for this phenomenon, especially about why it occurs mainly in industrial areas. Coming from a family of factory workers, my family suffered fairly severely from the effects of this money-driven industrialisation greed. Unfortunately, the stories about dead poets were not found after a long search - for just about every poet I researched, the 'story' turned out to be wrong or full of contradictions. This worries me, and I am expressing myself euphemistically.

I leave the conclusions to the reader himself. I have confined myself to the facts in the poems. It is strange, but the vulture, like the giraffe has a ridiculously long neck. And I don't want to know what that neck is for!

Slauerhoff also died of *The Kings Touch* and Anthonie Donker, who really made this nauseating statement about Slauerhoff became the designated professor to anthologise his work in the Netherlands. Anthonie Donker is the pseudonym of Nicolaas Anthonie (Nico) Donkersloot (1902 - 1965). Donkersloot was a 'professor of Dutch, man of letters, writer, essayist, literary translator and poet.' Donkersloot was appointed compiler of the Collected Works of Slauerhoff, the edition where the play about Coen was omitted, something about which there is nothing on Wikipedia.

Utopia - oy, with a title like that you already know: those are going to be dystopian poems. We start well, with the emergence of China, which I mix here with the deterioration of the forest I see in the Netherlands. After years of study, I am competent enough to call myself a mycologist, although I think the title mycophilosopher is more appropriate.

Women were given a very important role in this collection, and for good reason. From the visit to Meissen cathedral, I literally got sick - I remember putting my hand on a black, demonic dog there, and a few hours later a solid flu felled me.

In 1937, Himmler had the mortal remains of Hendrik de Vogelaar exhumed and fitted them with a new 'sarcophagus' which in the photo looks much like a solid steel grate. In a photograph taken in 1938, he lays a wreath at this spot, a place of pilgrimage for lovers of the 'true Aryan race'. Why anyone would have a 1,000-year-old corpse reburied under a steel grate is the mystery that forms the basis of this work.

John Money was an American paedophile psychiatrist who is behind the idea that gender is a form of choice. Sowing confusion among children about sexuality is part of a programme to make it easier to engage in paedophilia.

Nem én kiáltok, that's not me screaming over there, the second collection by Attila József. Antal Horger was the professor who ended Attila József's career by informing him on his birthday that, based on the content of this poem, he was never welcome at the University again. If he threw himself in front of a train at all it was crawling.

The Gezi Park poem was actually written during that uprising and circulated in English and Turkish form among students in Turkey at the time.

Ode to silence - A retranslation (not a translation) of a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950). I originally came upon this poem while skrying when I was in a haunted Hotel in Serbia working on my book on the Amanita Muscaria, and Millay died of a condition in which this very mushroom could have helped had it not been demonised.

Page 81 - a reference to Hark! how all the welkin rings, the original opening line of Hark the Herald Angels sing

Moon of Jasmine - parts here are based on the life of Unica Zürn, for whom the 'Man of Jasmine' was a kind of ideal image from her youth which embodied perfection embodied perfection. Unica Zürn used mescaline together with Michaux, which makes a nice loop with my first collection, Caravanserai.

I saw a jasmine flower in my father's eyes in a vision when, during an argument last summer, I looked deep into his eyes.

The opening of the poem (well, the saw palmetto) is taken from a poem in *Follas novas* by Rosalía de Castro.

My father died while writing this poem. I specifically incorporated that into the poem, as well as the image of St Martin sharing his red cloak, which I have provided here with a colonial image: Indian tribes were reportedly often exterminated by spreading blankets soaked in disease, and 'kaw-liga' comes from a song by Hank Williams, instigator of my father's taste in music as well as another very early memory from my childhood, as Liga is a cookie brand and 'kauw' is the Dutch word for chewing.

Sharing the red cloak in November to the poor is an image that comes from nature itself, although the cloak in question belongs to a mushroom. That that cloak knew to become the mantle of disease under the direction of a parasitic cult is still a problem point in current historiography: my information is that many genocides in North and South America were covered with the cloak of disease. So it seemed a fitting conclusion to this darkly readable bundle. If I manage to survive *Kinderreich*, perhaps the real notes will follow.

Demosnowmen are Inkling,
Martinus Benders, 2022



