



California State Poetry Society

Post Office Box 7126, Orange, California 92863

2018 No. 4 *Poetry Letter*, a publication of the California State Poetry Society

CSPS Poetry Letter

Dear Lovers and Readers of Poetry:

Although spring has sprung (it comes I think with the new green grass after our first heavy rain), we Californians still receive continued showers and downpours with a stoic patience and perseverance. Yesterday, for instance, my son ran in a soggy Huntington Beach marathon. So here is some reading, and rereading, for you on a rainy day, to inspire your own poems, which you will of course submit through our website, CaliforniaStatePoetrySociety.org, for the next **CQ** editor. ☺

And please keep sending me via email or through the website your own best published poems for possible republication here, including information as to any prizes they won, and where and when they first appeared. Please remember, also, that starting with 2019 issues of the **CQ** (Vol. 45 No. 1 and beyond), the *Poetry Letter* will no longer be available in hard copy mailed with the **CQ**, but will be published only on our website.

As a fond *homage* to our most active CSPS champion for years and years, President (Acting), Treasurer, Managing Editor, Editor, and Webmaster John Harrell—who will retire from the President, Editor and Managing Editor jobs but remain as the Treasurer and Webmaster—you will see some of his previously published poems in this issue of the *Poetry Letter*.

Until next time *on our website*, I remain

Your *Poetry Letter* editor,

Margaret Saine
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Orange, February 2019



CANARY

Glorious songster,
Bursting yellow tuxedo,
Little bird singing.

PERSPECTIVE

One man's trash glistens
In the silvery moonlight;
He found no treasure.

John Forrest Harrell, Yorba Linda, California
First appeared in *The Hand of the Midnight*
Moon, 2017 (Brendan Printing House)

RECOVERING WHAT IS UNCLEAN

The words slip glibly, cleverly from my lips
And I am therefore sure I have won the day;
But my words are like feathers
From a pillow cut open in the wind.
They go off down corridors, paths and highways
On journeys so tortuous and tangled I can never follow.
If the words are true and just, and wise and kind,
I am fine with never knowing where they wander;
But if they are not true and just and wise,
Or especially not kind,
How will I ever snatch the feathers back to me?

John Forrest Harrell, Yorba Linda, California
**First appeared in *CQ*, Vol. 43 No. 2 (Spring
2017)**

This lovely poem is a contest winner by *CQ* contributor Diane Lee Mooney:

VERANDAH

On your verandah even summer noons
stand down, and hide their glare behind the vines
of honeysuckle filtering in deepest
green and gold the weather far beyond
your railings. Lacy scrollwork's painted white
by men in overalls and spattered shoes
who tip their hats and call you ma'am. Weather's
slowed. I float as if in underwater
shimmer, green-ness flickering in an ocean
heavy with the purple scent of heliotrope,
reminiscent of the quiet
years between two wars. And then it's time
to go. I drain the last of ice and tea,
press your hands, resume my darkening streets.

Diane Lee Mooney, Half Moon Bay, California
**2nd Prize Winner, 2017 Soul-Making Keats
Literary Contest, Sonnet Category**



This one by John has appeared in a previous *Poetry Letter*, but I include it here because it was first chosen for publication in the 2008 issue edited by the late Russell Salamon, our dear friend, long-time *CQ* editor and *very prolific poet extraordinaire*.

GENTLE CARESS

The hand of the midnight moon paints quiet shadows
 around the cares
 and concerns
 of the city's busy denizens,
 boxed as we are into squares
 of noisy sameness day by day.
For a few nights every month the beacon light tugs softly
 at our hearts and souls
 and pulls them with its mystery
 into the infinite variety
 and elegant calm
 of eternity.
In the respite, if at all, there is remembrance
 and new resolve.
But human memories fail after repeated muggings,
 and what is out of sight
 becomes in time
 beyond the mind as well.
So every month the beacon light returns
 to leave us reminders.
And the hand of the midnight moon paints quiet shadows.

John Forrest Harrell, Yorba Linda, California
**First appeared in *CQ*, Vol. 34 No. 1 (Winter
2008)**

DAY'S END

Noisy minds settle,
Melting golden orb reclines,
Glow's rose and beams peace

John Forrest Harrell, Yorba Linda, California
**First appeared in *The Hand of the Midnight
Moon*, 2017 (Brendan Printing House)**



Finally, here is an interesting poem that was first published in an English-language literary journal printed twice annually in Berlin, Germany. The journal features prose and poetry, as well as translations, art and photography. This reminds us that English is the most common second language of poets world-wide. Anglo-Saxon and other native English speakers regularly submit to these international journals—indeed, just as poets from other countries writing global English habitually submit to the *CQ* and the other 1,000+ literary journals published in the English-speaking world.

The pause of the wake

sometimes I tend to speak
to that half self leaning
to myself, as seeming
as the skin on my bones,
hanging from the sleepless
body by the thinnest nerves
and always in my reach
as the glance in my eyes

that half staring through
my darkness into the empty
corner of the mirror,
restlessly emerging
from the other side of the self,
like an inward waning moon
of which I am neither one
quarter, nor the full

for I cannot say how deep it will
fade under-skin or beyond
when it catches my last breath
in struggle with the air
and whether that is what
some call soul, whose sleep
is the pause of the wake

Federico Federici, Berlin, Germany
First appeared in *Sand*, No. 10 (2014)

Enjoy the rest of the winter, and once again I urge you to make room in your life for some *good writing!*

Margaret Saine

