

Because Manifesto: We are So Lame

because oaks don't bend to catch you
while you stumble near their limbs

because roads don't point the way
when you can't read maps of places you don't know

because you don't feel compassion in light
blinding you while you check your rear view
mirror

because mountains show no passion
as you scrape away their skins

*we are so lame when we want to say anything
full of gravity or significance
I am the apprenticed jester
my mentor's gone astray*

but ----

I'll love you until
my arms can't hold you
lines invisibly converge
darkness slows me down too far
loving makes me raw

The crow dances for the ancestors

the crow on delicately burnished feet
daintily circles on tarnished torn flesh

road kill splattered under slash of rising sun
splays jagged surface onto dew-faced gravel

a tail flatly poised sends signals eastward
while the smooth shaman with sharpened beak
lacerates the inert pulp below cocksure claws

he dances for the ancestors who wait
in the mists of wings

THE PK POETS

The PK Poets is a series of free to print poetry leaflets highlighting the poetry of a single poet. It is intended to be a sample introduction to the work of a poet who is also a member of the PK Poetry List. The PK List is a free to join community of poets who share their work using email and the internet. Information about the PK List can be found on the front page of the Poetry Kit Website at www.poetrykit.org. We are grateful to acknowledge that this series is inspired by "The Bards" leaflet series from Atlantean Publishing.

ABOUT BARBARA PHILLIPS

Barbara Phillips is the author of five chapbooks: **Tympanic Mysteries: Love Is A Tympanic Mystery; Shadows In The Echoes; Confessions Of A Sybaritic Puritan; Blue Sails Haiku & Not; and Gold Fish Sings Cherry Blossom Songs.** Her work has been published as well in various print and electronic publications, such as *Transparent Words, Caught In The Net, Ygdrasil A Journal of The Poetic Arts, Poemata, Verse Afire, Quills Canadian Poetry Magazine, Canadian Writer's Journal, Poetry Canada Magazine, Ars Medica, beside the white chickens, Malleable Jangle, hammered Out, Bywords Quarterly Journal, Zimmerzine, Poetry Super Highway, Writer's Hood,* and *Ottaw Arts Review.* Her work has appeared in anthologies such as **Oval Victory: The Best of Canadian Poetry, A Time Of Trial: Beyond The Terror of 9/11, No Love Lost, EOA And West: London Poems Part II, Seeds6: An Anthology of Poetry, and Handprints On The Future.** She has been a featured poet and was a recipient of the Ted Plantos Memorial Seed Money Fund.

Copies of this poetry leaflet can be downloaded and distributed free of charge provided no change is made to the content. Copyright of the contents remains with the writer.

For further details, to make comment, or to contact the poet or the publisher please email: info@poetrykit.org

THE PK POETS

#12: BARBARA PHILLIPS



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Aquafish Memory

I still think of you sometimes, the way you were
then
the day freshly warming up from rains
heat scrubbed away but still smouldering
on the back of my neck where your restless
kisses linger, caress

your hands will not let go of me
arms tanned, with hint of sunburn
flushing from elbow to fingers
long, slender, sure, strong
against faded blue of a worn shirt

chest hairs summer bleached taunt me
until I want to undo the buttons
to reveal taut muscled skin
lose myself in your scaled splendour
surrender to the blueness of it all

it is the ending that trips me up
the part in which I see you beside
shining blackness and shimmering chrome
one hand holds a helmet, the other holds my hand
and you tell me you will be back in a couple of
days

even the grey headstone on the parched grass
can't erase the spell in the moment
which lures me back over and over again
to the cameo in which I see you smiling,
amused at my wonder,
sun in your hair, blue eyes laughing

Belly Dreams

Belly sighs to dreams of lake yesterday
when you and I kissed knowingly
as flames enticed air
into sinuous pantomimes
painted crazed heat signatures
on skin of deeply sated night

Like Basho In Glory of Mornings

I sit on the broken steps
my coffee gets cold as I watch
robins feeding their young

in a cacophony of yellow-corded throats
their beaks stab heat-streaked skies
heads jabbing for wriggling rubber bands

burning smell from inside the house
rouses me back to thoughts of breakfast
obligingly immolating itself

like Basho in glory of mornings
I run for the kitchen ignoring the falling
sandal, worm cast earth crushing my heel

The universe expands

when you give me that look
I shiver because I begin to turn into some
Mata Hari or venus flytrap with land legs

but when you leave my side and your heat
lies still upon the pillow and on the sheet beside me
my universe begins to dwindle, becomes
needle eye narrow until I fear I will slip through

space receding into perspective exercises
in notebooks left by the mudroom door
soon to be forgotten until the next great revelation
when passion whirls back for them in panicked
searches

to set down in pencil lines what is too good
to forget, too sad to lose in memories
folding in upon themselves like roses
clutching onto petals that must fall

but when you return, a not so whispered sigh
rises through the chaos in the space you left
I step into places moving out beneath my feet
and while you touch me
the universe expands

After Shave

you were my man
so you said, and I believed you
even when my man came less frequently

then you revealed you were doing your duty
"you deserve to be serviced properly"
I imagined the car in for repairs

you couldn't stay because you needed a cigarette
or two or three or more
our intimacies became briefer

a sign of aging, that was your line
but I wondered when you told me
in a room of ogling guests, my cleavage turned you
off

when the Victoria's Secret catalogue came
you tried to keep it from me, grabbed it off the pile
annoyed me no end

the cleavage comment dragged itself through
my mind, a torn limb from a bear attack
and I never saw it coming

until I walked in on you kissing him
one hand stroking his butt, the other in his crotch
passion a gasoline fire

you hid yourself so well
in all your little rituals
the shower, the shave

Red Canoe

boat house roof
gleams

lamp post lights
clouds of bugs

red canoe on deck
flames

so much like
life without you