International Poetry Festival
Thursday April 9, 2015
Solomon 001
6:00-8:00 P.M.
The Center for Language Studies Presents the 3rd Annual

International Poetry Night

Please join us and experience poetry from around the world, read in the original language (with translations provided). Refreshments to follow.

Thursday, April 9, 2015 • 6:00-8:00 pm • Solomon 001
Three Languages
Poem by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu
Translated from Turkish by Erdinç
Recitation by Ercan Balci

You need to know at least three languages
At least in three languages
You need to swear like a sailor
You need to know at least three languages
In at least three languages you need to dream and think
At least three languages
One your mother tongue
It's yours as your arm and foot
As sweet as mother's milk
As free as mother's milk
Besides it's yours like lullabies, fairy tales and oaths
The other ones unfamiliar like a rooster in a hen house
Each word in a lion's mouth
With your nail and teeth
You need to pull out each word like getting blood out of stone
With each word you will rise a brick higher
With each word you will grow once more
At least three languages you need to know
In three languages at least you need to know
To say, my sweetheart
To say, never a rose without the prick
To say, one might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb
To say, it is a pinch of weed that makes a goat forget its lover
To say, it is the biggest shame
Man exploiting others
For God's sake, forget saying things
You need to know how to boom like a thunder
You need to know at least three languages
At least in three languages
You need to swear like a sailor
At least three languages
Because you are neither history nor geography
Neither this nor that
My little Mernuş
You are the child of a nation who has missed the bus
Faces
Poem by Xue Di
Translated from Chinese by Janet Tan
Recitation by Xue Di

When you stop thinking and trembling
your face like a piece of
cowhide scorching curls inward. Time
like mice runs through the ceiling beam. You
hear its quick and cautious scurrying. Your face
grows older in the silence. Inside your
body, you feel something quick and cautious
running through
A feeling like cowhide
curling inward slowly as it burns
light suspended along with
the curvature of things
In the surrounding dark and my
body’s peace, I watch human
faces curled outward by a hundred years
peel like the bark from tree trunks
dessicated and resin-parched. Human faces
twisted and lost, peel away from the spirit
Violence creates a quiet in existence, fear
curved layer by layer into the heart of silence
Something quick and
cautious runs through human memory
bearing traces of burning, the grief
of things gone

So you feel when you stop
thinking and trembling. Morning late
you lie on your bed. Sun crosses your pillow
inch by inch. The room grows brighter
You're hearing the cry of things
irrevocably twisted
The Passage to Heaven
Poem by Xue Di
Translated from Chinese by Wang Ping and Keith Waldrop
Recitation by Xue Di

I see him from a distance. Sleep is a long narrow train with many empty seats. I see myself sitting, traveling somewhere. Along the way, on my left I see unfold, meticulously, a mysterious orange and ochre scape. I almost wake up. Heaven is just back of my eyes, almost as if—the train moving just a bit faster or stopping—I might become the first person to see heaven and return. I can't tell you how that passage woke me at midnight and made me happy. The train reaches its destination in the tropics. I'm waking slowly and longing for two women I love.
Hotel Viking
Poem by Xue Di
Translated from Chinese by Hil Anderson
Recitation by Xue Di

In the wake of a prefabricated passenger ship
the ocean, as if with an old cotton blanket
weighs deeply on a body wide awake
The sky in the eyes of a scattered school of fish
grows brighter and brighter. The bridge that spans the
brine crosses also the opaque middle-aged mind
dark path between two precise terms
My mother grieving
writes to her faraway son
Waterbirds, lonely, follow the lights
toward regions of cold where they hover
This evening the hotel room’s thermosystem
thundered without rest. Number 634
said the key in the unlit hallway

In my homeland some valuable
persons are disappearing
Elytis  
Translated from Greek  
Recitation by Elsa Amantidou

III.  
In this way I speak of you and of me.  
Because I love you and in love I know  
always to approach like the full moon  
towards your tiny feet under the endless covers.  
I know to pluck the jasmine  
and to take you asleep and show you  
moondrenched paths and the sea’s hidden caves  
and enchanted trees, silvered by spiders.

IV.  
I’ve seen an island in paradise  
your twin, and a house in the sea  
with a great bed and tiny door;  
I cast an echo into sea’s depths  
to catch myself each morning as I  
rise,  
half to watch you passing in the  
water,  
and half to weep for you in  
paradise.

The waves know you,  
how you caress, how you kiss,  
how you whisper your “what” and your “oh?”  
around the neck of the bay,  
we are forever the light and the shadow.

You ever the little star and I ever the dark ship,  
you ever the harbor and I the strong-side lantern,  
the damp sea wall and the glimmer above the oars,  
high up in the house, the climbing vine,  
the bound roses and the water growing cold,  
you the marble statue and I its lengthening shadow,  
you the tilting shutter, I the air that forces it open,

because I love and I love you,  
you ever the coin and I the worship that cashes it in:

So much is the night, the cry in the wind,  
so much the dewdrop in the air, the stillness,  
the tyrannous sea all round,  
the starry vaults of the sky,  
so much your last breath

that I have nothing to call  
In these four wall, the ceiling, the floor,  
but you, and my voice strikes me,  
I catch your scent and the men begin to rage  
because mankind cannot stand the untested  
or the foreign, and it’s early, do you hear me,  
it’s still early in this world my love

It’s early to speak to you and of me.
**Japanese Poem (Haiku)**

1. 古池や蛙飛び込む水の音  
Poet: 松尾芭蕉 Basyo Matsuo (1644年 - 1694年)  
An old silent pond... / A frog jumps into the pond, / splash! Silence again.  
Harry Behn

2. 閑さや岩にしみ入る蟬の声  
Poet: 松尾芭蕉 Basyo Matsuo (1644年 - 1694年)  
What stillness! / The voices of the cicadas / Penetrate the rocks.  
Reginald Horace Blyth

3. うつくしや障子の穴の天の川  
Poet: 小林一茶 Itsa Kobayasi (1763年 - 1828年)  
How beautiful / The Milky Way / In the hole of the paper door.  
Hiroshi Tajima

4. 名月をとってくれろと泣く子かな  
Poet: 小林一茶 Itsa Kobayasi (1763年 - 1828年)  
Gimme that harvest moon!” / cries the crying / child.  
David G. Lanoue
Hafez of Shiraz
Translated from Classical Persian by Liz Grey
Recitation by Iraj Anvar

Saqi, make our cup blaze with winelight.
Sing, minstrel, the world has become as we wished.

O you don’t understand our joy in perpetual drinking,
in our cup we have seen the image of his face.

There are the winks and flirtations of the slim ones only until
our graceful cypress-pine sways into view.

He whose heart has been revived by love will never die.
In the ledger of the world we are marked “Eternal”.

I fear that on Resurrection Day the sheikh’s holy bread
will be worth no more than our damned wine.

To his eye drunkenness is good,
so they have entrusted our reins to drunkenness.

O wind, if you should pass through the garden of beloveds
be sure to give him our message,

say, “Why do you try to forget our name?
That time when no one can remember will come on it’s own.”

Hafez, keep scattering the grain of your tears,
perhaps the bird of union will fly into our snare.
Leili
Poem by Malekjan Nemati
Partial translation from Kurdish by Iraj Anvar
Recitation by Iraj Anvar

In Wapraman, in the land of Baktar
Everyone is mesmerized by Leili.

Leili, what country do you come from
that you annihilate all religions?

You are Layla from the land of all Leilis,
You are soft some time and some time, sharp like a blade.

Leili, whoever saw the wave of the lock of your hair
Became insane and abandoned his religion.

No one ever has known Leili,

Doesn’t know what she is made of.

Put your hand in the box of your medicinal herbs
And bestow me with your awakening medicine.

Bring awareness and light to my mind,
Give light to the darkness of my being like the sun.

Do not take me to the gallows, like Mansour
Do not stone me with your wrath and rage

Leili, why are you frowning, what have I done?

What did I say which made you cover your face?

Rescue me, Leili, rip the veil from my eyes,

Let me smell the fragrance of the spring
Look how sorrow in my eyes melts to water drop by drop,
how my rebellious shadow falls captive to the sun.
Look. Sparks ignite me, flames engulf me,
carry me high, trap me in the sky.
Look how my universe now streams with shooting stars.
You came from far, far away, from the realm of perfume and light,
seated me on a canoe of ivory, of glass and clouds.
Take me now, my hope, my solace, to the place of desires,
carry me to the city of rapture and rhymes.
You draw me up a flickering path, seat me higher than all the stars,
but look these stars scorch me, burn me, and I, like a feverish red fish,
nip at them in the pool of night. How distant did our world once lie
from these chambers of the sky, but now your voice reaches me,
the sound of angels' snow wings. Look how I've soared to galaxies,
to shorelessness, eternity. Now that we have come so high,
wash me in the waves of wine, fold me in each silky kiss,
crave me through the lingering nights. Don't release me, do not
part me from these stars. Look how night along our path
melts like wax in drops, in drops, my dark eyes drink sleep's wine
from your cup of lullabies. Upon the cradles of my poetry
you waft your breath and look, the sunrise floods us with light.
Crazy
Poem by Laxmi Prasad Devkota
Translated from Nepali by Keshab Thapaliya
Recitation by Riwaj Thapaliya

Oh yes, friend, I’m crazy!
That’s just the way I am.

I see words!
Hear sights!
Taste smell!

I have not touched heaven but things from the underworld.
Those things,
whose existence people do not believe,
whose shape the world does not know!

Stones I see as flowers,
lying the water,
smoothed by the water’s edge,
rocks of tender forms
in the moonlight!

While the heavenly sorceress smiles at me,
softening, glistening, throbbing,
they rise up like mute maniacs
like flowers- a kind of moonbird’s flowers!

I talk to them the way they talk to me,
a language, friend,
that can’t be written or printed or spoken,
can’t be taught or told.
In the moonlight comes in ripples
their language along the river banks
friend, ripples, by ripples!

Oh yes, friend, I’m crazy!
That’s just the way I am!
You’re clever, quick with words, 
your exact equations are right forever
But in my calculations, 
when one is subtracted from one 
there still remains one!

You get along with five senses, 
I with a sixth, 
You have a brain, friend, 
I have a heart.
I rose is just a rose to you, 
in it I find Helen and Padmini 
You are a forceful prose, 
I’m a liquid verse!

When you freeze I melt, 
When you get purified, I get muddled, 
and exactly opposite to that! 
Your world is solid. 
Mine is vapor!

Yours coarse, mine subtle! 
You consider stones as a reality, 
harsh cruelty is real for you! 
I try to catch a dream 
just the way you grasp 
the cold, sweet, rounded truth!

Sharpness of the thorns I possess, friend! 
But thine is that of gold and diamonds! 
You think the hills are mute, 
I call them eloquent.

Oh yes, friend! 
I’m free in my inebriation. 
That’s just the way I am!
The One Ignorant of the World Should Look to the Sea
Poem by Khamis Nassor Al-Nabhay
Recitation by Joyce Okango in Kiswahili

If you don’t understand the world, watch the water at the shore (where the tide ebbs)
Which goes out and comes in, in waves at the beach
Don’t think the tide rises for you, is ebbing an effort?
It all returns to the deep (and) the wide-open beach remains

Breakers comes suddenly as they will, breaking on the reefs
Their roar spreads along, with turbulence in shallow water
As the mass of water increases, at full tide against the breakwater
You would never think, you cannot conceive, that it will never dry up

When you have a new field you have hopes in it
When you dig and get rid of the weeds
Then the plants will flourish, and look lovely in the field
It will not last my friend, you will be left with a barren land

If you have money and cash in boxes
Don’t strut along boastfully and arrogantly
Many who come before, then so long ago?
You will get as far as Qaruni, at the end he perished

Remain at ease and be at peace in your heart
Consider carefully, good and evil, understand their secrets
Be careful of slipping, let Satan not deceive you
He’ll put you in a pit, and then flee from you
Do not carry your remembrance.
Leave it, alone, in my breast,

tremor of a white cherry tree
in the torment of January.

There divides me from the dead
a wall of difficult dreams.

I give the pain of a fresh lily
for a heart of chalk.

All night long, in the orchard
my eyes, like two dogs.

All night long, quinces
of poison, flowing.

Sometimes the wind
is a tulip of fear,

a sick tulip,
daybreak of winter.

A wall of difficult dreams
divides me from the dead.

The snow covers the gray valley
of your body in silence.

On the arch of our meeting
the hemlock grows.

But leave your remembrance,
leave it, along, in my breast

(From Diván del Tamarit)
Rain is falling in Santiago, my sweetheart.
A dull white camellia in the air glimmers under the sun.

Rain is falling in Santiago in the dark night.
Silvery and dreaming herbs cover the hollowmoon.

Gaze across the rain in the streets, moan made of stone and glass.
Gaze across, on the faded wind, your ocean’s shadow and ash

Your ocean’s shadow and ash, Santiago, far from the sun;
Water of an ancient dawn trembles inside my heart.
Sigh
Poem by Stephane Mallarme
Translated from French by A. S. Kline
Recitation by Edwige Crucifix

My soul, towards your brow where O calm sister,
An autumn dreams, blotched by reddish smudges,
And towards the errant sky of your angelic eye
Climbs: as in a melancholy garden the true sigh
Of a white jet of water towards the Azure!
– To the Azure that October stirred, pale, pure,
That in the vast pools mirrors infinite languor,
And over dead water, where the leaves wander
The wind, in russet throes, dig their cold furrow,
Allows a long ray of yellow light to flow.
Sing to me, o Muse, of the man much traveled, who wandered through many places
After he sacked the holy citadel of Troy; and who saw the cities of many men
And who learned their customs, he who suffered many pains in his heart while on the sea,
Striving for both the lives and the homecoming of himself and his companions.
But he did not save his companions, try as he might; for they perished by their own recklessness,
Fools, who ate up the cattle of Hyperion the sun god;
For he took from them the day of their homecoming.
Tell us of these things, o goddess, daughter of Zeus, from wherever you've gotten them;

And now all those, as many as escaped sheer destruction, were home,
Having fled war and the sea.
But this one, deprived of his homecoming and his wife,
The holy nymph Calypso, a beautiful goddess, detained
In her hollow caves, longing for him to be her husband.
Passport
Poem by Mahmoud Darwish
Recitation by Saif Najjar

They didn't know me
in the shadows that
absorbed my color
into the passport
and my wound was for them like an exhibition in a gallery
for a tourist who loves collecting pictures

They didn't know me
don't let the palm of your hand under the sunshine (at a woman)
because the trees know me
even all the songs of the rain know me
because the trees know me
all the songs of the rain know me
don't leave me pale like the moon (to a woman)
like the moon..

all the birds who followed the palm of my hand to the door
of the far away airport
all the fields of wheat
all the prisons
all the white graves
all the borders
all the handkerchiefs that waved
all the eyes
everything was with me but they
had let it all fallen to be not in the passport!
forced to be ashamed of my name and my sense of belonging
in the dirt which I had formed with my own hands

Hiob's patience calls into the sky of the new day:
don't make an example of me - second, second!*

Gentlemen, gentlemen and prophets
don't ask the trees what their names are!
don't ask the valleys who their mothers are!
from my forehead a sword of light comes out
and from my hand sprigs the water of the river..

The hearts of all humans are my nationality!
so free me of this passport..
Catullus #5  
Translated from Latin by C. Valerius Catullus  
Recitation by Chiara Repetti-Ludlow in Latin  

Let us live, my Lesbia, and let us love,  
and let us judge all the rumors of the old men  
to be worth just one penny!  
The suns are able to fall and rise:  
When that brief light has fallen for us,  
we must sleep a never-ending night.  
Give me a thousand kisses, then another hundred,  
then another thousand, then a second hundred,  
then yet another thousand more, then another hundred.  
Then, when we have made many thousands,  
we will mix them all up so that we don't know,  
and so that no one can be jealous of us when he finds out  
how many kisses we have shared.

Trionfo di Bacco  
Poem by Lorenzo de Medici  
Recitation by Chiara Repetti-Ludlow in Italian  

How beautiful is youth,  
that is always fleeing!  
Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:  
there is no certainty for tomorrow.  
This is Bacchus and Ariadne,  
beautiful, and burning for one another:  
because time flees and deceives,  
they are always happy together.  
These nymphs and other folks  
are nevertheless happy.  
Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:  
there is no certainty for tomorrow.  
These happy little satyrs  
In love with the nymphs  
Through the caves and in the forests  
They set 100 traps for them  
Now warmed by Bacchus  
They dance and they leap  
Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:  
there is no certainty for tomorrow.
These nymphs are happy
To be deceived by them:
There is no defense from love,
Except for rough and ungrateful people:
now they are mingling
they play, they nevertheless sing.

Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:
there is no certainty for tomorrow.
This burden which comes from behind,
On the ass, is Silenus:
So old he is drunk and happy,
Already full of meat and years;
If he can’t stay upright, at least
He nevertheless laughs and is joyful
Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:
there is no certainty for tomorrow.
Women and young lovers
Long live Bacchus and long live Love!
Let everyone play, dance, and sing!
Let hearts burn with sweetness
Don’t strain, don’t suffer!
That which has to be, will come to be
Whoever wants to be happy, be happy:
there is no certainty for tomorrow.
On Love
Poem by Behçet Necatigil
Translated from Turkish
Recitation by Mediha Toraman

You held back your love for tomorrow
Timid, shy, considerate
All your friends
Misunderstood you

Never ending things were the reason
(You never wanted it to happen that way)
Just one glance was enough to tell everything
Feelings, crowding your heart
Remained in your heart.

You were hoping for more time
It was undesirable to utter your love in insufficient moments.
You never expected the years pass this rapidly in a rush.

In your hidden gardens
You had flowers,
Blossoming at night and alone.
You thought they were not enough to give
Or somehow, there was not enough time.
Agneeapath
Poem by Harivansh Rai Bachchan
Recitation by Vandhana Ravi

Even if there are mighty trees all around you,
Let them be shady, let them be huge,
But, even for the shade of a single leaf,
Beg not, beg never, ask never!
The path of fire you shall tread! The path of fire! Yes, That Path of Fire!

You shall never tire,
You shall never slow down,
You shall never turn back,
This oath you will take today!
This oath you will fulfill in your life!
Take this oath!
And walk the Path of Fire, every single day!
The oath of fire! Yes, That Path of Fire!

What greater spectacle,
Than to see such a man walk,
Who in tears, sweat and blood,
Is soaked, covered and coated;
And still walks on in the Path of fire!
Walks the path of fire! Yes, That Path of Fire!
Then You are Alive
Poem by Javad Akhtar
Recitation by Riya Raj in Hindi

If you are walking with impatience in your heart
Then you are alive!
If you are walking with the sparks of dreams in your eyes
Then you are alive.
Learn to live freely like the gusts of wind
Learn to flow in waves like a river does
Embrace every moment of life with open arms
Let your eyes behold a new horizon every moment.

If you are walking with amazement in your eyes
Then you are alive!
If you are walking with impatience in your heart
Then you are alive!
A Faraway Room  
Translated from Arabic by Karen McNeil  
Recitation by Miled Faiza

I couldn’t sleep last night.  
I tossed and turned in bed for hours,  
thinking of my faraway room,  
closed up these last fifteen years.  
I didn’t open the door of the room  
so as not to bother the spiders, busy building new bridges  
or the dried flowers.  
I didn’t shake the dust off Gorky’s The Mother  
Or take a pencil and change Rimbaud’s hairstyle that I sketched  
when I was a child dreaming of the Orient  
and of trading cheese and weapons.

I didn’t realize, back then, that an American wolf was howling in my veins,  
seeking refuge from my burning suns in the snow  
And that a women was contemplating her nakedness in my language on the  
California coast  
And praying in an old church for god to let me go.

I couldn’t sleep last night.  
I touched the key with a trembling hand  
and stood for a moment in front of the door,  
eavesdropping on the hushed wailing coming from the wardrobe.  
My fingers weren’t strong enough to turn it  
and the key fell from my hand.
Forgotten by Time
Poem by Farzaneh Khojandi
Translated from Tajiki by Narguess Farzaed, Jo Shapcott
Recitation by Nathan Vanelli

There was a boy. He would spread his wares
in our alley. The strength of the hero, Rostam,
roared from his shoulders,
he had the features of a Joseph,
his hair was the torch of Zoroaster,
flaming with ancient times.
The young boy sat on an old stool,
saying goodbye to his rose-scented time.
His sweets had no takers,
sweating in their paper wrappers;
his cheap cigarettes knew
that the point of their lives was to burn;
his soaps longed for the day
they would lather in beautiful hands and die.
The boy turned his eyes
towards passers-by and, pondering the to and fro of cars,
he didn't think of spring coming and going.
The summer of his youth was
dissolving into sunset and winter would wrap him in snow.
Happy? Unhappy?
For he was oblivious to love,
for the margins of his life were rusting,
for he mistook the moon's halo for the moon.
Ruthless life had sat a young boy
on an old stool and forgotten him.
Cielo d’Alcalmo
Translated by Lorna de’ Lucchi from Italian
Recitation by Giorgio Savini Zangrandi

He

O LOVELY fragrant rose, born on a summer’s day,
Thou dost both damozels and dames with envy sway,
Out of this furnace flame, Sweet, rescue me, I pray;
From thoughts of thee Madonna, I ne’er cease,
And day and night I am bereft of peace!

She

If I be thy desire, foolish indeed art thou,
Easier it were by far to strip of bark and bough
All forests in the world, and sow the seas and plough,
Than to subdue my heart, for ere ’twas done
I would have shorn my hair off like a nun.

He

Before thy hair be shorn in death let me lie low,
For solace and delight forthwith from me would go.
Flower of the garden close, whene’er I see thee blow
Soft balm of comfort soothes my hours anew;
Ah, if thy love were added thereunto!

She

It cannot be, though I may change my mind one day.
If father, kith and kin should chance hereby to stray,
Thy body in the swift stream would be whirled away.
Therefore I counsel thee straightly to flee
By the good road that brought thee unto me!

He

If father, kith and kin of thine passed by, I parry
They’d take for this my life two thousand agostari;
Thy father would not strike for all his wealth in Bari.
Long live the Emperor, unto God be praise!
Dost ponder well, Sweet, what thy lover says?

She

Then neither morn nor eve thou willest I should rest;
I too have precious coins piled high in a great chest;
Could’st thou give me for dower the richest and the best,
Twice over Saladin’s vast hoard of gold,
I vow to-day this hand thou should’st not hold!

He

I’ve known full many a maid and obstinate no doubt,
But man by flattery may wheedle her about;
He presseth her so close her strength must needs give out.
Love, bear in mind against a future day,
Man is the strongest and will have his way!
She

    Art fain that I relent? Nay, better 'twere to die
    Or e'er a modest maid be scorned by such as I!
    Last evening hitherwards I saw thy footsteps fly:
        This is my answer, flatterer, know withal
        Such words from thee belike me not at all!

He

    Alas, how many bonds hast cast about my heart!
    I weep remembering thee in loneliness apart!
    No lady in my life was cherished as thou art,
        Was half as well-beloved, O rose divine,
        And I believe one day thou wilt be mine.

    [...] 

She

    Since thou dost love me so I need no more repine,
    Of passion deep doth burn this whole body of mine;
    Though I mistreated you lay thou my hand in thine,
        Then let us our passion share in bed
        For this is our destiny, as you said.
Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,

As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

“'Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—

Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
“'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Lenore?”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Lenore!”—

Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
“Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—

’Tis the wind and nothing more!”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said, “art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian shore!”

Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.

Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—

Till I scarcely more than muttered “Other friends have flown before—

On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.”

Then the bird said “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,

“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and store

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster

Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—

Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore

Of ‘Never—nevermore’.”

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking

Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore

Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”
This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o’er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloat ing o’er,

*She* shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!”

Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!”

Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.”

Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked, upstarting—

“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!”

Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore!