

INTERVIEW

Manji Kobayashi

For a modest identification

Of after all a shaky being,

What you needed, I feel,

Was a little too much.

When those black cheating hands

Pull your legs with smart decency,

You complain to the void only.

A pinch of dry mud.

PICASSO

Manji Kobayashi

Before his rebellious figure

Shadows your eyes

His inconstant soul ventures

Into another darkness.

Husks of a big name in the sunlight

Left for others to take.

POEM

Manji Kobayashi

After another summer
The wind rests cool
Upon the window sill.

In the lucid air
Where the heat has left,
Ripeness is without motion.

POEM

Manji Kobayashi

Self-composure of the age
Civilized to no end
Is balanced on a quivering top.

Painted emotions
No more substantial
Than contentless words

Hands groping low
Hands thin and feverish
In a lengthened pollution

Clattering voices
Are heard and lost again
Into the horror of the air.

A BIRD OF PREY

Hisao Takemura

1

My father had many strange hobbies,
Such as keeping unusual animals as pets.
There was a time when he had an owl
In a big cage kept in the backyard.

I don't know why it should've been an owl,
For an owl was, then, but a bird of weirdness
For me, only a little boy of eleven.

And, oh! it was I that had to feed it
With live frogs, lizards, and snails!
Now, I cannot recollect
Without making my blood run cold,
How I executed the job that I hated so much!
The instant I threw a frog into the cage
To leave it at the mercy of the fiendish bird,
The ogre descended, without a single flutter of the wings,
From the bar onto the sacrificial floor, and
Catching the prey under its frightful talon
Cut open, with its terrific beak,
The frog's fat belly right in the middle.

2

I don't know why my father liked an owl.
I even don't know if he really liked it or not
But I remember now with a strange feeling
That I was terribly moved by the sight
Of the bird perching upon the bar
With its closed eyes and without moving
For a long, long time.

Even so, I still don't understand
The involved meaning of my father's hobby, and
Since he's been dead for quite a long while
There's no way of asking him why.