



THE SHACK OF DESOLATION

The shack of Desolation is dirty, with broken boxes of wood
gathered by me like a Japanese old woman gathers
driftwood on the beach or on the mountainside,

Full of mice, fat drops, chips, ancient chewed up fragments
of religious tracts, crap, dust, old letters of other lookouts
and general unsweepable debris too infinitude to assemble
and sweep

Paniaw Powder Olympic Pawmanow

And Mt Hozomeen—most beautiful mountain I ever seen—
frights me acme out the morning coffee window,
blue Chinese void of Friday morning,

And I have an old washtub covered with a wood door of sheds
that when I saw it made me think of oldtime baths
of bathnight New England when Pa was pink—

Patiat rock mounts snow spomona'd that I drew at ten
for Kuku and Coco everywhere, hundreds a miles of,
and clouds pass thru my ink

Jack Kerouac ♥

Not wishing to stop
his chirping the whole night long,
Cricket never does

There goes Sun, again,
just beginning to slide down
the eucalyptus

Peeking from her room,
parting thin white cloud-curtains,
Lady Moon smiles

Here we are, Winter,
just you and I in the snow,
freezing together

- Myra Cohn Livingston

The taste
of rain—
why kneel?

- Jack Kerouac

I could feel the world rolling toward the moon. At night while I was in my bag, the deer would come up from the lower timber and nibble at leftovers in tin plates in the yard: bucks with wide antlers, does, and cute little fawns looking like otherworldly mammals on another planet with all that moonlight rock behind them.

Then would come wild lyrical drizzling rain, from the south, in the wind, and I'd say "The taste of rain, why kneel?" and I'd say "Time for hot coffee and a cigarette, boys," addressing my imaginary bhikkus. The moon became full and huge and with it came Aurora Borealis over Mount Hozomeen ("Look at the void and it is even stiller," Han Shan had said in Japhy's translation); and in fact I was so still all I had to do was shift my crossed legs in the alpine grass and I could hear the hoofs of deers running away somewhere.

*- Jack Kerouac,
Dharma Bums*

The Highland Widow's Lament

Oh, I am come to the low Countrie,
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!
Without a penny in my purse,
To buy a meal to me.

It was na sae in the Highland hills,
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!
Nae woman in the Country wide
Sae happy was as me.

For then I had a score o' kye,
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!
Feeding on yon hill sae high,
And giving milk to me.

And there I had three score o' yowes,
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!
Skipping on yon bonie knowes,
And casting woo' to me.

I was the happiest of a' the Clan,

Sair, sair may I repine;
For Donald was the brawest man,
And Donald he was mine.

Till Charlie Stewart cam at last,
Sae far to set us free;
My Donald's arm was wanted then
For Scotland and for me.

Their waefu' fate what need I tell,
Right to the wrang did yield;
My Donald and his Country fell,
Upon Culloden field.

Ochon, O, Donald, Oh!
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!
Nae woman in the world wide,
Sae wretched now as me.

SONNET 18. 2 *temperate* even-tempered, mild. 3 *May* In Shakespeare's calendar May would extend into what in our calendar is the middle of June. 4 *date* duration. 5 *eye of heaven* sun. 6 *dimmi'd* covered with clouds. 7 *every fair . . . declines* every beautiful object must at some time cease to be beautiful. 8 *untrimm'd* stripped of its beautiful ornamentation. 10 *fair* beauty. *thou ow'st* which you possess. 11 *shade* place of oblivion. 12 *to . . . grow'st* become a part of time, are grafted to time, as a shoot becomes part of the tree to which it is grafted. 14 *this* i.e. the poem.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date. 5
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade 10
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
 Nor shall Death brag thou wand'rst in his shade
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

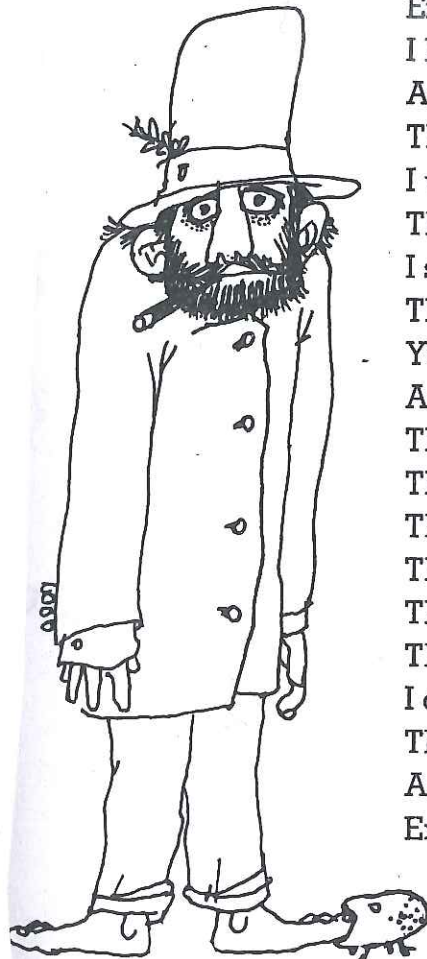
WHAT YOUR MOTHER TELLS YOU NOW 17.11.11

其母が今言ふ事
 其内々分て来る

*haha ga ima yu-koto
 sono uchi ni
 wakatte kuru*

What your mother tells you
 now
 in time
 you will come to know.

MITSUYE YAMADA



THE YIPIYUK

In the swamplands long ago,
 Where the weeds and mudglumps grow,
 A Yipiyuk bit on my toe . . .
 Exactly why I do not know.
 I kicked and cried
 And hollered "Oh"—
 The Yipiyuk would not let go.
 I whispered to him soft and low—
 The Yipiyuk would not let go.
 I shouted "Stop," "Desist" and "Whoa"—
 The Yipiyuk would not let go.
 Yes, that was sixteen years ago,
 And the Yipiyuk still won't let go.
 The snow may fall,
 The winds may blow—
 The Yipiyuk will not let go.
 The snow may melt,
 The grass may grow—
 The Yipiyuk will not let go.
 I drag him 'round each place I go,
 This Yipiyuk that won't let go.
 And now my child at last you know
 Exactly why I walk so slow.

Logs to Burn

Beechwood fires are bright and clear
If the logs are kept a year.
Chestnut only good they say,
If for long 'tis laid away.
Birch and fir logs burn too fast,
Blaze up bright and do not last.
It is by the Irish said
Hawthorn bakes the sweetest bread.
Elm wood burns like churchyard mould,
E'en the very flames are cold.
Poplar gives a bitter smoke,
Fills your eyes and makes you choke.
Apple wood will scent your room,
With an incense like perfume.
Oak and maple, if dry and old,
Keep away the winter's cold.
But ash wood wet, or ash wood dry,
A King shall warm his slippers by.

Rabbit

I don't know how I got stuck
with this job. Easter ducks
I can imagine, chickens, even bugs—
fish understand, being oviparous,
in a way that rabbits never can.
Yet here I am, scurrying around the country
loaded with hard-boiled, fragile-shelled, loudly
colored eggs. Each basket begs to be dropped.
The noses of chocolate rabbits never twitch
with interest. Their ears do not flop,
softly furred.
I find no kinship with this lot, neither cotton-
stuffed toy surprises nor waxy-grassed beds
of jelly beans. What human has
mismatched those
who leap and those who plop? Rabbits
must nest
but not lay. I am way out of my league
delivering spring.
Four legs, four feet ache, and I understand
why children
break but don't eat eggs.

The gold of her promise
has never been mined

Her borders of justice
not clearly defined

Her crops of abundance
the fruit and the grain

Have not fed the hungry
nor eased that deep pain

Her proud declarations
are leaves on the wind

Her southern exposure
black death did befriend

Discover this country
dead centuries cry

Erect noble tablets
where none can decry

"She kills her bright future
and rapes for a sou

Then entraps her children
with legends untrue"

I beg you

Discover this country.