

Tempestas¹

By Sofiya Berman

Those simple days I do remember —

The memories they flood into my brain

The winds they holler ; I sit and ponder,

Good Apollo², what have I left to gain?

If it be a sign you send, be direct,

Now I see leafs and leaflets, all's the same,

Are lifted, mixed, and blown away — Impact!

Great Tempestas knocks at my door; Child's game!

I let her in, she takes my rustic chair,

I see the fields, the moors ; how glad were we

When finally breath of industri'l air,

Dropped bait ; a chance for us to pay our fee.

For countless moons this labor we consume,

Until one day this tree grows on your tomb.

¹ Roman goddess of storms

² Greek god of knowledge and truth

Sweet May

By Sofiya Berman

Where have you gone, my dear? I pray

The bustle can't stand much delay—

Let not the swarm lead you away

A new Job³ for my brilliant May.

Why have you gone, my dear? I pray

Not for great fortune or display

Lest for the stocks⁴ to lead your way;

To see again my dear sweet May.

It must be said, today's the day!

Do come back home, my dear sweet May

Without you life's in disarray

Do come back home, my dear, and stay.

Will you come home?

She said, "I may."

³ The eponymous protagonist of a book of the Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures, taken as the type of extreme poverty, destitution, etc., or of patience and endurance (*OED*).

⁴ A tree-trunk deprived of its branches; the lower part of a tree-trunk left standing, a stump (*OED*).

Summa⁵

By Sofiya Berman

I sit and watch the day's events unfold:

While by my window flees canary,

O'er pleasant hills who shine as bright as gold,

The children skip by, so light and merry.

You sit at your desk, rap-tapping away

Immersed and dull, your days go by'n a whirl

Surrounded by noise from every which way;

Engulfed by changes to yesterday's world —

When you get old, what will you have to show?

Your efforts gray into the New Age⁶ pool.

When I get old, what will I have to show

For my calm life? — I pray, Lord, don't be cruel:

Bring answers to our mind, so tortured and divine.

⁵ Latin for "in sum"

⁶ A new era of human history ... believed to signal the beginning of a new spiritual awareness and collective consciousness (*OED*).

A Day

By Sofiya Berman

I hear the birds chirp at my windowsill,
While you sit on your mighty chair so still.
I think the simplest things make life pleasant;
You're scared to live the life of a peasant.

I take a stroll down to the river bank,
While you decide to go and fill your tank.
The current flows as swiftly as I am;
You find congestion on the Hoover Dam.

The flowing river carries scents so fresh,
The car emits a fume that eats your flesh.
See I am not afraid of what's to come,
But you who are, hear Colorado⁷ hum.

The wind brings whispers: answers, lies, and truth.
Someone behind you honks, be on your way forsooth⁸!

⁷ Colorado River, on which the Hoover Dam is located.

⁸ (a) In truth, truly.

(b) Now only used parenthetically with an ironical or derisive statement (*OED*).

Behind the Veil

By Sofiya Berman

O simpler days I do recall

The memories they flood my mind

My question is now for you all:

What has become of human kind?

Cott'nopolis⁹ sets your routines

Laboring you all; you all as one.

“In your fields packed like sardines,

How can you say you feel alone?”

I tell you, by my very eyes

Has been observed a thing so strange;

And it is not a mere surmise,

That stemmed from isolated grange¹⁰.

More oft than people, birds I see

My friends and theirs are far away —

They flutter by so merrily,

The distance can't keep links at bay.

Dispersed we are among the hills

⁹ Cottonopolis; 'Cotton City': a sobriquet for Manchester as the centre of the cotton industry (*OED*).

¹⁰ A country house; An outlying farm-house with barns (*OED*).

We are so far yet feel so close.

When you go labor at the mills

What strangers reside at a nose¹¹?

¹¹ Referring to a small distance