

Poetry Series

Sean Godley

- poems -

Publication Date:

April 2006

Publisher:

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

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Sean Godley (17/11/81)

Sean was born in Cavan and has spent most of his life in the wild Irish Republican countryside. He was educated predominantly in England, where he gained his introduction to literature and poetry. The rough London streets turned the joy of childhood into a brooding adolescent introversion that never truly left the tortured, neurotic soul. He did not start writing poetry seriously until 2005 and is still in the process of discovering his true voice. His main poetic influences are Michael Dransfield and Dylan Thomas.

Sean is embarking on a Masters in Writing in September 2006. Aside from writing, Sean has lived a wild life of glorious times with his far flung friends, sometime degeneracy and violence, drifted to the edges of mental illness, and found God only to forget where he put him. Sean has had scrapes with death and life. When Sean found God, God showed him how to glimpse the mystical undertoes of life. Sean told God that he'd better not have anything more to drink.

In all seriousness, Sean hopes you enjoy what he has written and looks forward to any feedback.

Works:

Nil

a fathom from infinity

upon the cogs of wind and rye
a crucifixion yet to burn
the white unpampered flesh will cry
hampered by the roaming still

but the gale of flour winds
with a ripple bruising flesh
among long freedom in the fields
there the fathom from the end

the blaze of lost blasphemer burns
fire foul comes crossing into sin
cursing in her urban ire
the spittle curdles through the urn

breathing thirst the wind might choke
the black smoke of the sinners flesh
its screams are muting tears that numb
the bible fire and callous crowd

compounding brace and beaten skies
the deadwood bound to trace the lives
of calloused hands and gritty nails
and muscle grown to labour long

the workers watch and after loan
the wisdom that besots our Joan
a fathom from infinity
as flames leech at her limbs and nerves

truth withers and the lie lives on
at the fire and lapping lake
the children laugh and drown their eyes
a fathom from infinity

the mind foresees the present blind
in a wail of broken wells
quivering so close to sweat
the world perceived and since beheld

a fathom from infinity
at last the light has left the waves
and sure the shore recedes with west
its thought and drooping smile of lust

the soil is cool and beckons ill
from the mist and burns of sun
the wind will have its reckoning
when the silent reeds are still

a fathom from infinity
the trinity for facet lied

to friends of which you were so fond
for there they breathe and eat at dirt

and smile at how you feel the weak
that comes to eat your burden bones
with weariness of nothing known
than walls of flesh and trapping breath

let free the breathing of the heart
give drain to stagnant blood and gum
distil to life the fading scent
a fathom from infinity

Sean Godley

Capitulation

Fight until there is no peace to make,
Do not yield until all strength is gone,
Breathe until there is no breath to take.

Even, when with war, the ground does shake,
And dark are solemn fealties that once shone,
Fight until there is no peace to make.

When limbs are weak, and as vows threat to break,
While faith is fading, but the soul holds on,
Breathe until there is no breath to take.

We are unbeatable without forsake
Of principles for which we duel upon –
Fight until there is no peace to make.

Like warriors, whose bloodlust will not slake
Before their foes are vanquished and forgone,
Breathe until there is no breath to take.

When injustice causes vengeance wake,
And surges through the chest for vict'ry won,
Fight until there is no peace to make,
Breathe until there is no breath to take.

Sean Godley

Conkers

The leaves lent shape to the wind around the boys,
Warmed with winter-coats at autumn twilight,
Conkers tied to twine this moment's toys,
In the shadows of the trees, before the night.
A pair encircled took their equal turns,
The crowd about them watched with cheer and awe,
For it is more than points the victor earns
When smashing his foe's nut; and all before.
One boy watched, and smiled as others cheered,
His hopeful gaze not met, his thoughts not said.
To have his contest seen by all he feared,
Like speaking with the voice inside his head.
And so he watched, but dared not to partake,
And in his fist, the shell began to break.

Sean Godley

dusk

distant stillnesses
the crows and sparrows
screech and scrape across
the sunken sunlight
oblong orange dyes with purple
dying into older black
they shriek and shriek their sure remembrance
sounds they screech and scrape across
the sunken sunlight
that makes a black and broken fence
of once lean trees
whispering wailing carries through to cirrus
wedding screech and scrape across
the sunken sunlight
that is dragged away from dandelions
and fields of ferns and grass
all given the sheet to grind
the colour from the corpse of the land
inside the copse and cusp coming stars
with winters wind
within the flowers fields
and loft without the weight
that weighs his wearied gait
they shriek and shriek their sure remembrance
sounds they screech and scrape across
the sunken sun

Sean Godley

Finding Ladybirds In Spiderwebs Above My Bed

Peeling from the death of sleep, and dead in all but breath,
A grinding glue doth wench my teeth, abrading contact coarse,
As though they fight in groups and for sole ownership of gum.
The pressure of the war makes tight the flesh, thus broken are
The bones that make to move, and eyes are frost and freeze to rest
Upon a single lively crack of roof.

If wind now rattled windows in their creaky pane of shards,
The sill would break into the wall and yet no sound would soar.
If lightning blasted at the skies, and tore into the trees,
The room may fill with starking blues, and yet no thunder might
Surpass the rising wails that try to steam their east escape
From aches that crack within my pressured skull.

As I sink into the coffin of myself, and tight
The wood is nailed into my nerves, and quick the level for
The sweat that recommenced about my bony back gives rise,
As half my sunken body lies and saturated, yet –
I am too limp to save myself from drowning dirges or
To hold aback weight-wrapping, sinking sheets.

The sweat and covers tickle at my gagging throat, and bleed
The blood and life from terminals in lungs and waist and legs.
My mind alone is sharp, and darts from instant fears up to
An unkeen knowledge of the creeping fact that soon too now
The door I'd left ajar, in sober-lost complacency,
Will slowly eke its custom present path.

The opened hatch will welcome in the all-pervading white,
Which brims the room in quiver lots, and lost is what I'm forced
To breathe, like smoke that racks the ageing mucus of the heart
Through crinkling eyes, which cough inside their stillness and their awe.
It bounces softly with dark lines, and then the weather spurns
The buckling cloud of black, which rages true.

It rapes the purity that whiteness had, in all its twist,
And yet to heap and dive inside itself, and out again
With lofted arms, just like the man who rages in his suit
Composing dire Rachmaninoff, with aches to burn the dark
She quakes the room unraw, and as this swirling swarm doth growl,
Two ladybirds burn giant her dismal eyes.

Their red stare bores into my mouth, as it doth drown submerged,
This creature menaces my frozen form, and breathes the waves
That storm the ocean of my saturated sheets and limbs,
And then there comes the booming of her oscillating drones;
A ripping laughter ripple-rips the notion I'd possessed
Of freedom known, and, Christ, she banshees on.

When it seems I cannot hold my breath a second more,
And have to breathe inside the body of this grimly ghoul,
My second eyes are stark once more, and everything is still.

The storm has vanished with the ghost, and breath comes like a rush.
Echoes of my screaming bound the walls, and within them
The spectre is still sniggering a smile.

Blocking ears, I simply breathe and lay back down my frame
Upon the sheets as dry as my bare throat, and then I move
My body and my limbs – I clasp them so I know I live.
I curse with breaking vowels a wetness gathered `pon my face.
The oceans just traversed; a dryness that foresees and fills
The fear to breathe again with windy dusk.

Sean Godley

generation

when pollen perfumes with the wind
the rooms and chests of fleeting loom
have met it sweetly frowning twinned
unable to imagine not
per petal's sickly death

the young girls will be still yet not
the paintings of the past may fade
the flame between the fires lost
a blur that dyed into a dark
and blacker yet was gone

thus the reek within the wind
of weeks unstirred to tap the chase
of putrid petals made to shush
the crying child inside the womb
and scraping of the breast

Sean Godley

Kronoz

When he came to sing,
As though about to cry.
- I took him for a fool -

he ripped me from the womb,
We wage a failing fight
he'll live on forever.

That Kronoz is life's king
Shows me love will die.
Try to fight his rule.

dictates us destine doom,
Fret about our plight,
He's all alone, however

We will mean nothing -
The aura of his eye
Fate knows he is cruel,

he throws us to the tomb.
that fades into the night.
but we are here together.

Sean Godley

mandate to the gales

beat with me beat with me til ive told you of
the western skies and how its there that lies
two maidens one with wrath and one with glee
call them day and night if you so please
but beat with me beat with me like the wind in trees
theyll curse you dylan with their fierce tears and
they have no time for blessings not these sisters
spinsters would apt them best for they take the souls
of living men and bite them scratch them til
they are nought but whispers in the wind
whispers in the wind my friends are
whispers in the wind
and the wind is wild

Sean Godley

Quiescence

He makes quick moves to take his victim's voice,
And often, too, their darting hands and eyes,
Among the minds he makes his silent choice;
And what once seemed alive then seams and dies.
Watch them close: the old, accustomed mates,
You'll see him make his ruminating rounds,
Amidst the pouring drinks and quick debates,
Attentive ears and scraped-in gambler's pounds,
Passing on perhaps between their breath,
Floating in between that like an air,
Debating, hovering, and then like death
Go creeping into one more closing lair.
Yet sometimes with him comes a distant smile;
The joy that silence holds death back a while.

Sean Godley

red tears of witness

with a smile and wide eyes while
he eyed the dying beech and
breaking bark he best beheld
some small stain behind
beneath the billboard scab
sap leaked and dried
as blood burned from his eyes
boiling peppered

blind he shrieked and cried
his red tears of witness
stained his soul
and mauled his mind
he cried
he cried
his red tears of witness
stained his soul
and mauled his mind
and moled into his sockets blind

as the bark sipped back its sap
red rotting remains
were reclaimed by soil and roots
and the beech grew strong
buds blooming blind

Sean Godley

Sitting Still

Shadows cast by moons will blaze with light,
And sunlight's shine will darken all therein,
The stars will burn to bronze upon your sight,
And Gaia, too, will tremble through her skin.
Those born blind will cry with what they see,
The deaf and dumb will sing with what they hear,
The lame will dance to cure their malady,
The scared will laugh to frighten off their fear.
Within, your dark will flare to roaring flame,
The rage has waited long; you'll see it ravage,
Wildness does not bow and turn to tame,
But sits still until its master's ripe to savage.
When you break free, the world will break free too,
Sitting still, this is my plea to you.

Sean Godley

sixty summers

when pollen perfumes with the wind
the rooms and chests of fleeting loom
may meet it sweetly frowning twinned
of weeks unstirred to tap the push
of putrid petals made to shush
the crying child inside the womb
and darker yet some sixty summers gone
it made the youngsters shrill with fun
a will rekindling back my whiles
to younger years and frowning won
unto the guiltless child who will
before it looks to night have smiles
that shy away from meeting nil
and darker yet some sixty summers gone
possessed of cold and laying stark
till every laugh will end unmade
by smiling time so cherish cost
the paintings of the past will fade
the flame between the fires lost
a blur that dyed into a dark
and darker yet some sixty summers gone
unable to imagine not
thus the reek within the wind
to the growth of gentle forms
their troubles laughter lanced and glance
the dear that wait them here but when
the young girls will be still yet not
per petals sickly death
and scraping of the breast
toward their woes and days
the stare within the teeth
and darker yet some sixty summers gone

Sean Godley

soul

and the lovers look so happy as
they walk the smiling streets and holding hands
and gaze into each others eyes like love
has found a mirror with which he can regard
himself his looks his curling hair which falls
just as she wants it yes out in the streets
they walk and warm they say their little things
that give rise to smiles and almost laughs
and a movement closer arm in arm
they are together and I watch them with
stomach turning jealousy that chides
the way I wake alone and try to fight
the nagging fear the day will never come
when I have a woman at my side
and I am looked upon with jealous eyes
by some lonely soul that fears his death
will go unnoticed and be unremembered
but maybe this soul will lack the guile
to forge within his thoughts as i do now
a thousand arguments that intervene
with cold intensity and homely truth
with shouts and slaps and doubts and brooding rage
between the seldom moments of warm love
that these lovers share in public realms
if so i fear for this poor lonely soul
his heart will never heal if he does not
see all the broken violent roads that love
has to traverse before it can lament
for one short night before another year
of hardened travel through the moonlight fear

Sean Godley

Stark Branches

As a youth this man climbed through a tree,
It rubbed his fleshy knees with smile and groan,
Red cherries balanced clear above the lea,
Akin the leaves and branches softly blown.
But, in time, he broke the serene scene,
When he carved, with sweat and tiring arm,
The short word; 'Love, ' into the trunk's demean,
In itching impulse, meaning little harm.
Long years later he looks down with awe,
Growth has almost overgrown the wound,
But not quite; he cut around a core,
And caused an early death, core half-cocooned.
Cherries had lain decaying on the ground;
Stark branches; far forgotten, what he'd found.

Sean Godley

Stormsong

Across
way over
the lake up
the far hill
trees shrouded in
like mist.
not mist
light rain –
in further distance
was thicker.
storm was coming.
the dog could tell,
We can feel beyond
touching.
Afterwards
sky growled
with darkening brows
flashed in anger
passion, white
purple bolts crack
the torrent sky,
God taking photographs
of all the terrified people

Sean Godley

the backward roads

take the backward roads the lady said
her face a sheet of moonlight 'pon her head
and wrapped in rags that had once held her sons
they were all dead and gone she was alone
on the mountain in the swaying house
upon the steep ravine of icicles
that teetered so it seemed it might as well
just fall and crash at any second moment
and yet it never did and she did not
give this imminent catastrophe
a second thought as she had been there for
eighty six long years and as the house
had drifted from a place where it was safe
and on its way been beaten by the wind
that whipped and cracked to shatter flimsy walls
but managed only to take several bricks
and several sons who all fell to their death
into the crashing sea that stormed below
with waves that surged into the stormy sky
and crest with white spawned clouds that lit the night
like giant sheep safeguarding all the men
who lived in neighb'ring towns and villages
but none of whom would dare to even pass
along the beaten road that passed her house
where at the intersection lay the car
that one son had bought and never drove
because he fell into the crashing waves
but before he broke his supple neck
the car had rusted red and lost its wheels
and never moved far from that sacred spot
a younger brother caught a younger fox
and tied it with a chain to the back doors
it ate the weeds and kept the garden well
until one day it bit right through its chains
and ran amok and bit the sleeping sheep
that trawled across the sky in single file
they departed and were never back
but were remembered by the frosty nights
that were made cold by all the fiery stars
that kept no watch over the careless men
and when the last son fell unto his death
she rose her hands and jumped off after him
but the wind this time was kind and put
her back into her home but oh she knows
another cliff out by the backward roads

Sean Godley

violet flowers

I.

people put on black Expressions blank
and grave nods meet sure sober frowns no one
escapes The Butcher's cleave lays at the meat
The Baker's dough is rough and hard The Butcher
holds the Baker's baby As the Baker
makes a speech they mourn inside not every one
holds in the tears from some they make
a single roll a drip to glacier

II.

they stream strive like a river like a dream
back home they go alone and All but one
And life rolls on The Butcher cleaves the meat
The Baker kneads the dough The babies cry
The people meet In lively streets And laugh
and smile and talk a while within unspoken
memories the funeral plays again

III.

Another drip rolls from the ice the people
wash those clothes had lain ignored For months
as life rolled on. they congregate Whey face
and dye dead eyes sheep's head On butcher's slab,
In empty shop Where clock still ticks And door's
Unlocked till now they are together again
Together in the rain don Different speech
dig different men old Older but the same
Grey takes the sides of some some Death did mark
them As some scolded children laughed yet Still
the hymns are sung as All the people hold the tongue
As the next is lowered down and down
entombed renown. They make their single ways
From Churchyard gates Into new days fresh Fresh
again And life Rolls on Like those last hills,
And life goes on The drinks The cries The work
The meat The bread We eat Think of the dead
And how We come together Time to time
In uniform To mourn to pick our violet flowers
That soon rot Into that ground Maybe

IV.

After death has marked me with his silver
Brush and maybe maybe After my life's
work is done My life's half drink is drunk
My babies cried to people And they cleave
the meat And knead the dough And listen to
the babies though well In their heart of hearts
they know Soon they will be the marked Soon they
will be the one For whom the silence takes
the day For whom the workers leave their work
For whom the lovers lay asleep For whom

the dripping seems to stop Although those drops
They never cease And, although forgotten,
forge A river that erodes a gorge
Before it's taken back by death And swallowed
in one breath

Sean Godley

When The Gaze Confesses What The Mouth Belies

I'd love to know the dream that brushes eyes,
And lends that briefest flicker of truth repressed,
When the gaze confesses what the mouth belies.

Where sighs at final beds have turned to cries,
As sorrows there will never be expressed,
I'd love to know the dream that brushes eyes.

It thunders loud through taciturn goodbyes,
Kisses missed and wishes are undressed
When the gaze confesses what the mouth belies.

As passion craves and rationale denies,
When woeful faces fix on pleas professed,
I'd love to know the dream that brushes eyes.

There's daylight or darkness behind those cloudy skies,
And cold eclipses make our thoughts near-guessed,
When the gaze confesses what the mouth belies.

Guilt observes the colours that pitying dyes,
And as I try to fathom those redressed,
I'd love to know the dream that brushes eyes
When the gaze confesses what the mouth belies.

Sean Godley

Whispers From Yesteryear

The shape of life and love that lived in yesteryear,
Those days that glowed with tragedy undone,
Sing nothing now but whispers in my ear.
Tomorrow's yesterday does not draw near
To the wild young nights in which were spun
The shape of life and love that lived in yesteryear.
Our laugh, our chant, our song, our joke and our cheer;
These glory-sounds, we sang them to the sun,
Sing nothing now but whispers in my ear.
We shiver now, but in those days, we had no fear,
So I try to smile upon, and not to shun,
The shape of life and love that lived in yesteryear.
My long-lost friends, once so close, I held so near,
Their loyal cries and our shouts of blood as one,
Sing nothing now but whispers in my ear.
Still age is a constant path, and I walk on from here,
But my hope is dulled for future fealties won.
The shape of life and love that lived in yesteryear,
The shape and love of life in yesteryear,
Sings nothing now but whispers in my ear.

Sean Godley

Whisp'rings

In the woods at night two ghosts make love,
Invisible by day, they fly the skies,
Looking down with woe, they're just above,
Releasing, from their souls, near-silent cries.
They whisper winds, and when the water falls,
It is not rain, but spectres' tears for death.
They try to convey secrets with their calls,
Yet to our ears it's quiet as their cold breath.
We shout and weep among these swirling gusts,
If silent for a moment we would hear,
And they'd inform us from the settling dusts:
We ought to cherish life, as death is near.
So when storms growl to meet your darkest night,
Lay still, you'll hear the whisp'rings and take flight.

Sean Godley

Wild White Hair

The odd time, when I trawl these country roads,
I see the same two women walk along.
Time, like a chip of wind, lives and erodes,
And here has sung his springtime-autumn song:
The road is full of potholes worn with mud,
The farmer's sheds and tractors brown with rust,
Hedges grow too wild; the sometime ditches flood,
And even trees are flecked with misty dust.
Through this, and in their Sunday best, they walk,
The two old ladies, looking neat and trim,
But for their wild white hair, slow solemn talk,
And weathered gait - like trees; they are too slim.
Like time we pass each other, returning waves,
As time takes all, and with his hands, he paves.

Sean Godley