



3-15-1987

Selected Poetry

Joe Cross

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Recommended Citation

Cross, Joe (1987) "Selected Poetry," *Westview*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 3 , Article 24.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol6/iss3/24>

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modern settlers; interesting interchange

SELECTED POETRY by Joe Cross

I am not a Viking, nor were my parents,

or generations in the grave.

I am not one who can suffer pain

without flinching, nor death without

a word to God.

I am not of that harsh Teutonic

blood--to whom love is conquest.

I am a Celt, as were parents and

ancestors far, far back.

We adore the unicorn, favor it above

the raven or the lion.

We are gentle people who could not

defend ourselves from the Scandinavians

and Anglo-Saxons--fierce people--

warlike and unmerciful.

We have a history too, mythic now.

We are still here--we remain in the

mists--Iona--first and last.

Yours is the face in my dreams.

How long will you be in my dreams?

They are not usually good dreams.

Last night was an example:

I would have to call it a nightmare--

interrupted into a serial--

one after the other--

the same story.

We are together.

It is not going well.

I begin to become defensive.

You are hurt and hurt.

You fly home--I die.

ISLAND

6 P.M.

9-8-86

IN TRANSIT

I fly home, you die.

Dead cargo

I died before you

500 times

Before you

Before your shuttered eyes

Over and Over

I keep dying

And you, oh gentle Celt,

Can't find poison quick enough

to render mercy to the unmerciful

The face became Mithridates

I die. You die

With the poisoned horn of a unicorn in my heart

I inch toward the hall of Odin

Ravens cawing overhead

I die. You die

With the ripping spear of a Teuton in your soul

you careen in the mists of Iona

Doves cooing overhead

And so we go

You and I

Killing and dying

In Transit forever

