

Tea On A Rotted Log

On the broad, early-afternoon lawn
 I played alone, watched amazed
 A spider use my hand to travel on,
 Saw the leaves an airplane grazed,
 Taught a praying-mantis to shadow-box,
 Alarmed our slumbering collie dog,
 Examined crevices in planting-rocks,
 And served tea on a rotted log.
 All this I did with elegance
 Beyond my years, and being alone
 I lived a life of high sentence,
 Was Hadrian in imaginary Rome.
 The price for such luxury was small:
 Sheltering youth behind a wall.

Skimming An Anthology

De La Mare and Mansefield wrote poems
 On pillows: soft, fleecy things
 That immobilized their listeners.

Sassoon had a few ideas Henry James
 Would have discarded, so we weren't
 Upset when he died chasing foxes.

Davies was beat, a better man for it,
 And Hodgson's Linnet Swallowed a Bull:
 Choked, died young from indigestion.

Houseman was sweet on Wilfred Gibson,
 Though a few of his ambiguities
 Were unintentionally Stupid Stuff.

Lord Noyes' Barrel Organ blew up
 Into the Highwayman like a balloon,
 And burst in Russell's Irish Face.

A regular fellow, Graves is still
Classical; and The Curtains Now Are Drawn
On the Oxen's happy Hardy.

So that leaves Yeats, again, and just
As well he's alone: who could sing,
Bellow, whisper, and beautifully moan.

-- Lee Jacobus

Danbury, Conn.

The Magician

'When poor children are shown coins
they later recall the coins as much
larger than they really are: rich
children do not make the same error.'

Tell me three wishes never gained,
I will show you three Goliaths
likely of these things made;
of flesh, of gold, of bread
and something more that has no name.
Your need is a glass that magnifies
and wanting is a mirror
as you see reflected here
behemoths for your pleasure:
of bread, flesh, gold -- and something more.
Lead out the giants and I will read
your fortune in their palms,
in strange coins great and small
of gold, bread, flesh and shadow
that nameless form that holds them all.

-- Joanne de Longchamps

Reno, Nevada