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Poems by William Oandasan

THE JANITOR

for John Nims

Late after work a man sweeps an office.
He can't go home until the floor is finished:
swept, mopped, waxed. The brush with the long metal handle
is pushed around the filing cabinet and under the desks and chairs.
He mumbles now searching still for dust
while pushing it toward the door.
A draft in the hall raises some dust
and pushes it back at him.
He keeps the beat of the soft sound of his sweeping,
but now furiously, back and forth, as he
bumps the desk and bangs a wall leaving a dent.
He mutters: "Dust, dust, dust." He raises the broom,
shaking it at the surrounding silence.

DESERT FLOWER (II)

You and I, flower of my eye,
Face alone this place of dust and stone.
You and I, my desert flower,
Stand together in this moment,
This moment set against
The silence of the evening sky
And closing darkness.

The Poet is Dead

across the room, near the window, where the
last wren chirped, on the pine bed, under the
quilt spread, solemnly his body, his domain, remains

The Poet is Dead

without sound, without breath,
without sense, poems are created no longer

The Poet is Dead

the last truth he wrote, the last feeling his wrote,
the last wisdom his wrote, the cold writing, hand rests

The Poet Is Dead

return, he will not; return, to earth he has;
return, she lets him not; the bright fire is out

The Poet Is Dead

no warm eyes to see, no secret smiles to share,
no words to muse, the death chant is drummed

The Poet Is Dead

the swan sings no more, the swan flies no more,
the swan loves no more, the night journey begins

The Poet Is Dead

across the room, near the window, where the
last wren chirped, near the pine bed, beside
the quilt spread, solemnly his poems, his power, remains.

THE MARVELOUS BLUE FROG

when the blue frog flies through rock
the marvelous is convulsing between dream and reality:
a hand of faint light
pulsating in a flame at high tide
red as blood

the blue frog flies through rock
and the hand
is a green tassel of corn

the blue frog flies through rock
milks from the heartland those rivers
of affectionate fire
bursting from the calculus of desire

a marvelous blue frog
could not be a carbon copy
unlike marigolds and the leap between
the dreams of desire
the cement of reality

the blue frog flies through rock
extracts from its melodious breast
the hunger for leaping marigolds, green fire,
a riverbed of flaming buds like orange stars,
silk ribbons of the iridescent marvelous
fluttering through the white breezes of night,
fusions of dream and reality, red hope