

LOVING
BY
WILL

SAMPLER

Translations by Timothy Adès

Victor Hugo, *How to Be a Grandfather*

Jean Cassou, *33 Sonnets of the Resistance*

Jean Cassou, *The Madness of Amadis*

Alberto Arvelo Torrealba, *Florentino and the Devil*

Victor Hugo, *The Big Story of the Lion*

Robert Desnos, *Surrealist, Lover, Resistant*

Alfonso Reyes, *Miracle of Mexico*

Robert Desnos, *Storysongs / Chantefables*

Hans Sahl, *Hans Sahl in translation* (with other translators)

Christian Morgenstern, *Morgenstern's Magic*

Joachim Ringelnatz, *Ringelnatz the Rhymist*

Ricarda Huch, *Autumn Fire*

SAMUEL

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Timothy Ades

SAMPLE

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HIS 154
SUNBURSTS
NOW AT
LAST IN
PLAIN
ENGLISH!

SAMPLER

Introduction

This is a book of lipograms. You'll find in it all our usual consonants, plus A, I, O, and U.

What's so good about that? Words clang and bang; rhyming shifts its status from long shot to odds-on probability. Lucidity gains ground, obscurity is thrown away. And it's a lot of fun!

Why put Will of Stratford through this? Is it right for our national bard, indisputably an immortal, an Olympian, a world champion?

It is totally right. Most of us know only a tiny proportion of this moving and dramatic book of his amorous avowals, his ups and downs, his ducking and dodging as Cupid's darts crowd in. Whilst his virtuosity must win our admiration, his idiom is far from limpid. Try as you may, you just cannot follow his thoughts, cannot catch his drift. This book is a simplification, you might in fact say a translation, which you cannot afford to do without.

Buon viaggio!

SAMUEL

To Mr W. H.

SAMPLER

SAMPLER

Let's see whether he needed the letter E.



Loving

b

SAMPLER

y

Will

SAMPLER

I

*From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripener should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light'st flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.*

II

*When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse',
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.*

I With Your Good Looks, What About a Child?

Good-looking folk and animals should pup,
immortalising rosy-blooming glory.
Maturing, I'll pass on, I'll go paunch-up,
and my young sprog will carry on my story.
But you contract your troth with inward look,
nourish your glow with autophagic food,
drying to scarcity your bounty's brook,
your own worst hitman, doing harm, not good.
What! You, this world's outstanding work of art,
you, proclamation of a coming Spring,
bury in your own bud your major part,
wasting good stuff by too tight husbanding!

For our world's good, nor tomb nor gluttony
should quaff this birthright of humanity.

2 You Should Pass Your Good Looks On

With forty annual snows all round your brow
digging war's furrows in your goodly bloom,
your youth's proud swank that folk all look at now
shall shrink, a nugatory wisp of doom.
If anybody asks you: 'Ichabod,
how now, that glow of your lusty past?'
you'll say: 'Look in my hollow orbs.' Good God,
omnivorous dishonour, at what cost!
But look: you, now so fair, might fairly say
'This my fair child shall tot up all I do,
and gloss my guilt (if such it is) away,'
proving his looks drawn duly down from you.

That's how you'd bloom again whilst growing old,
your blood still warm to sight, though inly cold.

Autophagic: consuming his own body. *Ichabod* (scriptural): 'glory is lost'.

III

*Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shall see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.*

*But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.*

IV

*Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing but doth lend,
And being frank she lends to those are free.
Then, beautiful niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive.
Then how, when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?
Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.*

3 You should Start a Family

Look in your glass, inform your physiognomy
that now it ought to plump for duplication:
it's in good nick for doubling its taxonomy.
Don't disappoint us all, don't bilk a matron!
Can any girl with still unfruitful womb
d disdain your sowing-drill, your husbandry?
Shall a Narcissus flip from bloom to tomb,
blank his own birthright, foil his family?
You mirror your mama, who looks at you,
calling back youth, and April's days of spring:
so through forthcoming window-glass you too
shall gurn, all wrinkly, at your own off-spring.

But if you want oblivion, don't marry:
sign out, 'forgot for good', at mortuary.

4 You just throw it away

Unthrifty spark, to lavish, on your own
account, that bounty from your mom and poppa!
It's not an outright gift, it's just a loan:
it's rich, and you should pour your cornucopia.
Why, dazzling skinflint, do you misapply
your goods, that bountiful viaticum?
Capitalist without a profit, why
hoard unsustainably so vast a sum?
Your own monopolist, both victim and
originator of improbity,
a natural call for you to go will sound:
what kind of audit will you satisfy?

Not using it, you doom it to your urn:
only by using it you'll pass it on.

Physiognomy: a human's top front part, with optical and olfactory organs, mouth, and so on.

V

*Those hours, that with gentle work did frame
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell,
Will play the tyrants to the very same
And that unfair which fairly doth excel:
For never-resting time leads summer on
To hideous winter and confounds him there;
Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where:
Then, were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor no remembrance what it was:
 But flowers distill'd though they with winter meet,
 Lease but their show; their substance still lives sweet.*

VI

*Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
In thee thy summer; ere thou be distill'd:
Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place
With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.
That use is not forbidden usury,
Which happies those that pay the willing loan;
That's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee:
Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
Leaving thee living in posterity?
 Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
 To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.*

5 Warm days turn to cold, you know

Did passing days with handiwork round out
your glorious gazing orbs, a sight much sought?
Such days will turn tyrannical, no doubt,
and bust that wondrous triumph down to nought.
Chronology ticks on and brings July
to January, strands him in a fix:
sap shrunk by frost, no foliar jollity,
boughs thrwn with snow, stark nudity of sticks.
But distillations of July still stand
as liquid jailbirds caught in walls of glass:
without which, glory couldn't stay at hand,
nor it, nor any sign of what it was.

Such blooms, dript into jars, in months of cold
last with looks lost, still fragrantly on hold.

6 As I said: go to it, lad!

Don't allow storm and snow with horrid mitt
to smirch your warmth. Bring on your distillation:
fix up a bonny phial, go stashing it
in a good spot. No auto-immolation!
Using it is no sin of usury:
it's joy for all who pay you voluntarily;
and it's for you to spawn and multiply,
in singular or plural, far from sorrily.
Go triply tripling, tripling too your joy,
triply, your body's cloning copyist:
your burial, though sad, shall not annoy,
by grandsons' warrant, a survivalist.

So stubborn! Thou art much too fair of form.
Don't bow to Doom! No bounty for a worm!

VII

*Lo! in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract and look another way:*

*So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.*

VIII

*Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering,
Resembling sire and child and happy mother
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:*

*Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: 'Thou single wilt prove none.'*

7 Suns can fall from glory: so can you

Look towards dawn: you know that gracious light,
day in, day out, lifts up his radiant crown;
all minor orbs do honour to his sight,
submitting to his kingship, bowing down.
And on his climb towards his topmost hill,
outwardly young and strong, though fairly old,
all mortal lights look on, and worship still
as vassals on his pilgrim-path of gold.
Soon from his summit-point with failing car
that poor old man falls fainting from bright day,
and all who dutifully stood turn far
from his low transitus, and look away.

You too, outgoing proudly in your noon,
who'll watch you dying? You should spawn a son.

8 Thou art Music! But Sad and Unharmonious

Music, that's you! But you sip music sadly:
sugar is sugar's pal, joy's fond of joy:
you go for it, but don't absorb it gladly,
you absorb joyfully what must annoy.
If a good concord of harmonious sounds,
by unions conjoint, annoys your brain,
your manhood is shown up: it fails, confounds,
singly adrift, that part you should sustain.
Mark how a string plays husband to its ally:
this string plucks that, in mutual harmony,
Just as a mum and dad and child might rally
to sing in unison, a family

singular-plural, shunning words, this thought:—
'You on your own will just add up to nought.'

IX

*Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die.
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,
And kept unused, the user so destroys it.*

*No love toward others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murderous shame commits.*

X

*For shame! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire.
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind!
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.*

9 *Worrying about a widow crying for you?*

Is this your worry – might your widow cry?

O solitary soul, autophagous!

What if you pass away without small fry?

This world will mourn, your consort azygous,
this world, your widow, constantly shall sorrow

that you laid down no copy, as you should,

whilst any two-bit widow's apt to borrow

husband's old form from orbs of growing brood.

All that an unthrift in this world lays out

stays on in circulation, to our profit;

but good looks, thrown away, won't hang about:

not using's losing; lord it, don't lay off it!

No kind compassion in that bosom sits

that such a suicidal wrong commits.

10 *So you don't want anybody? Think again!*

Shocking! You say you do not go for any

of us; you don't look out (you mug) for you;

grant, if you will, you light a lamp for many:

you fancy nobody, that's what you do.

Your animus is full of odium,

it's mortal: what an arrant autoblast!

You aim to smash that glorious atrium:

you should maintain it: that ambition's apt.

Adjust your thought, and I'll adjust my mind:

should loathing's domus vanquish that of loving?

Match your good looks: act gracious, turn out kind,

philanthropist or autophilic proving.

Run off a copy of your glory, do,

just for Will, saving it in yours or you.

Azygous: having no yoking, no consort.

Blapto, I harm; *philia*, loving; words known to Plato. Latin words: *animus*, spirit; *odium*, loathing; *atrium*, high hall; *domus*, a building for living in.