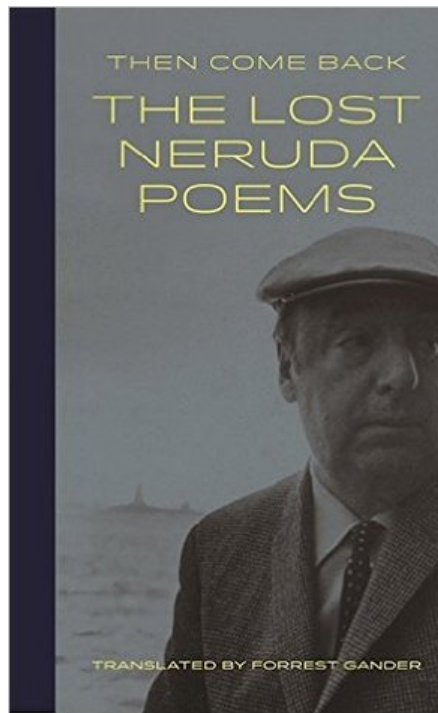




Then Come Back: The Lost Neruda Poems

Pablo Neruda , Forrest Gander (Translator)

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Pablo Neruda's lost poems—recently discovered in his archive to the delight of readers and scholars—comprise this remarkable and essential volume.

Originally composed on napkins, playbills, receipts, and notebooks, Neruda's lost poems are full of eros and heartache, complex wordplay and deep wonder. Presented with the Spanish text, full-color reproductions of handwritten poems, and dynamic English translations, Then Come Back: The Lost Neruda Poems simultaneously completes and advances the oeuvre of the world's most beloved poet.

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metaphor says

Never alone, with you
over the earth,
crossing through fire.
Never alone.
With you in the forests
finding again
dawn's
stiff arrow,
the tender moss
of spring
With you
in my struggle,
not the one I chose
but
the only one.

*

Where did you go What have you done
Ay my love
when not you but only your shadow
came through that door,
the day
wearing down, all
that isn't you,
I went searching for you
in every corner
imagining you might be
locked in the clock, that maybe
you'd slipped into the mirror,
that you folded your ditzy laugh
and left
it
to spring out
from behind an ashtray—
you weren't around, not your laugh
or your hair
or your quick footsteps
coming running

*

And yet, as they say,
the heart is a leaf
and the wind makes it throb.

*

Still
these people
scratch at their bristling

loneliness,
they steer through
sheer waves
and in the afternoon
they find
a guitar,
and go for a walk singing.

jeremy says

no mere posthumous collection of heretofore undiscovered also-rans, *then come back* is a gorgeous bilingual hardcover featuring 21 poems unearthed earlier this decade (to great fanfare) by the pablo neruda foundation as they were producing "a catalogue as complete as possible of the poet's handwritten and typed manuscripts." these poems (some unfinished) span a couple of decades, from the early 1950s until shortly before the chilean nobel laureate's death (murder?) in 1973. ranging in themes, the poems contained within *then come back* include, among other things, a celebration of the first astronauts, an excoriation of the telephone, and, as expected, odic tributes to everyday things.

kudos to copper canyon press for this wonderful edition, which also contains facsimile reproductions of handwritten poems and explanatory notes about each poem's provenance and discovery.

(21)

Those two solitary men,
those first men
up there,
what of ours did they
bring with them?
what from us, the men
of Earth?

It occurs to me
that the light was fresh then,
that an unwinking star
journeyed along
cutting short and linking
distances,
their faces unused
to the awesome desolation,
in pure space
among astral bodies polished and glistening
like grass at dawn,
something new came from the earth,
wings or bone-coldness,
enormous drops of water
or surprise
thoughts, a strange bird
throbbing
to the distant human heart.

And not only that,
but cities, smoke,
the roar of crowds,
bells and violins,
the feet of children leaving school,
all of that is alive
in space now,
from now on,
because the astronauts
didn't go by themselves,
they brought our earth,
the odors of moss and forest,
love, the crisscrossed limbs of men and women,
terrestrial rains over the prairies,
something floated up like
a wedding dress
behind the two spaceships:
it was our spring on earth
blooming for the first time
that conquered an inanimate heaven,
depositing in those altitudes
the seed
of our kind.

*translated from the spanish by novelist and poet forrest gander

Byram says

I know, I know, it's another collection of Neruda. You've read his love poems, his political poems, his sonorous verse, his tangible suffering with call to arms, his pleas for his people and his country, his weltschmerz for the people of Chile. So when a collection of his "lost poems" comes to light, you wonder if you should see this as monumental or just flagrant bandwagon rallying of some B-sides written and cast aside.

Well, I just finished it (after having seen/heard a reading of it performed at the ACE Hotel rooftop bar when AWP was in Los Angeles). And to this layman, it's indeed a revelation. The whole book speaks to context: the context of how the poems were found, how they were translated, what poems and chapbooks they abut. Scanned copies of the handwritten notes are sprinkled throughout to see the handwriting of a poetic master. Then, of course, the original Spanish typewritten transpositions and preceded as a section en bloc of the English translation.

Although this collection of poems never saw the light of day by his own hand, there is no mistaking that if he indeed did consider this an inferior representation of his craft, then even his most inferior output still rivals its cousins in mastery. Spanning his various muses, from the risqué to the idyllic to the poetically patriotic, the many faces and voices of Neruda are all represented in this collection of 21 lost and found poems, each with the imagery and the lyricism that we associate Neruda. It's beautiful, it cuts to the core, it uplifts and evokes. When poetry this beautiful is around, it's a wonder we don't all lay our troubles aside and see the world with the eyes that Neruda wants us to use. More than a worthy addition to his remarkable compendium of work, it could just be a postmortem part of his accepted canon. Thanks to Kickstarter supporters, thanks to

Copper Canyon Press, thanks to the translator. It is all for me, for you, for us, for them.

David says

Bravo to Copper Canyon Press for bringing these twenty-one beautiful poems to press with their recent Kickstarter campaign. Forrest Gander, the translator has seen this several times, "The last thing we need is another Neruda translation." So a new book published some 40 years after his death may seem like, at worst, a cash cow; at best, something unique. Maybe this is somewhere in the middle, although being a big Neruda fan, I have been excited about this new book.

First, the book. Sized almost like a bound notebook with some copies of the actual poems written on the actual notebooks, or in one case, a menu, makes it nice to hold. The text and fonts are beautiful to read and although it's a bilingual edition, the English and Spanish are in separate sections. A most useful notes section by Darío Oses, director of the Pablo Neruda Foundation, details everything from where they found the poems, to poetical references and other interesting points. I really liked this section. There is a donor list as well as two good introductions essays the translator and Darío Oses.

Forrest Gander does an excellent translation but I went to the heart of the poems, Neruda's Spanish. Simple, clean, elegant, playful and insightful. The poems span from the fifties to the seventies and themes range from his great muse and third wife Matilde, to simply being a Chilean - love, politics and everything in between.

Neruda believed in the simple things, so bread (pan), wheat (trigo), as well as many natural images, bees (abejas), rocks (piedras) and fire (fuego) are abound. But so are odd things like telephones - an abominable, black instrument (instrumento abominable y negro, 20) and cosmonauts (Estos dos hombres solos, 21). Guess this dates him (and myself).

Most poems are short, a couple of pages, but the longest poem reflecting about life when he turned 60 (4) is pure beauty.

Quién eres amigo, enemigo de mi paz errante?
Who are you friend, enemy of my wandering peace?

Or beautiful in design such as 15 "A los Andes" which is a long, narrow poem reflecting of his native Chile:

Cordilleras
nevadas,
Andes,
blancos,
paredes
de mi patria,
cuánto
silencio,
rodea
la voluntad, las luchas
de mi pueblo.
(it carries on...)

Mountains,
snowy

Andes
white
walls
of my homeland,
how much silence
Rounds
the will, the fight
of my people.

For a small book, the poems pack a small punch. Something for everyone. Something beautiful to read in a world that often seems like ugly things keep happening. Neruda is timeless.

Ivana says

Mi querido Neruda.... Es como hallar tesoro después de tantos años. Poemas conmovedores, siempre regresando a Chile y su amor a la patria. También, hay soledad, y hay amor. Hay un poco de todo.

Poema número 20 me gustó más:

[...] desde antes de nacer, entre el orgullo
Y el terror de vivir sin ser amado,
Pasé a darle la mano a todo el mundo

También los poemas 14, 17, y 18.

Quizás el verso más bello, para mí, es el verso del poema 14:

Está ocupado el hombre ahora
Y no mira el bosque profundo
Ya no investiga en el follaje
Ni le caen hojas del cielo
El hombre está ocupado ahora
Ocupado en cavar su tumba.

Siempre mi poeta favorito. Un antídoto contra la pésima realidad

Raeleen Lemay says

Read for Book Riot's 2017 Read Harder Challenge: #23 Read a collection of poetry in translation on a theme other than love

I'm no expert on poetry, and I really only read this because of the reading challenge I'm doing this year, but even so I found this to be quite dull. It just wasn't the sort of poetry I like *at all*, but the poetry I like is pretty limited so that's not all that surprising. I loved poem #18, but none of the others were really my cup of tea.

18

*Comes back from his blaze, the fireman,
from his star the astronomer,
from his disastrous passion the obsessive,*

*from one million whatever the ambitious,
from the naval night the sailor,
the poet returns from his slabber,
the soldier from fear,
the fisherman from his wet heart,
the mother from Juanito's fever,
the thief from his nighttime high,
the engineer from his frosted rose,
the native from his hunger,
the judge from fatigue and unsureness,
the jealous from his torment,
the dancer from her exhausted feet,
the architect from the three thousandth floor,
the pharaoh from his tenth life,
the hooker from her Lycra and falsies,
the hero comes back from oblivion,
the poor from another day gone,
the surgeon from staring down death,
the fighter from his pathetic contract,
someone returns from geometry,
stepping back from his infinity, the explorer,
the cook from her dirty dishes,
the novelist from a web of lies,
the hunter stamps out the fire and returns,
the adulterer from rapture and despair,
the professor from a glass of wine,
the schemer from his backstabbing,
the gardener has shuttered his rose,
the bartender stoppers his liquor,
the convict takes up his plea again,
the butcher washed his hands,
the nun quit her prayers,
the miner his slick tunnel,
and like the rest I take off my clothes,
inside the night of all men, I make
a smaller night for myself,
my woman joins me, silence bears down
and the dream spins the world again.*

Michael Feehly says

First off: this is a handsome book, bound beautifully with good paper and packaged with great introductions and archival details (facsimiles of the notes and poems Neruda wrote).

However, the poems are uneven. Stronger poems in the collection has fuller lines. But many are tedious strings of one word lines that drag themselves across pages or parachute too quickly down the page crashing into a forgettable jumble.

I appreciate the Spanish originals included in this edition. Much much stronger than the English translations,

which are for the most part accurate but without much of the flavor or feeling of the original.

Kut??n Sancakl? says

Neruda bir zamanki gençli?ine ö?ütler veriyor..
'.. ?a?aal? cümleler
ve etraf?n? saran bo?luk aras?nda
gidip gelen trapezci olma,
senin görevin
kömür ve ate?,
ellerin kirlenmeli
yan?k ya?larla,
kazan?n duman?yla,
temizlen,
yeni bir elbise giy
ki o zaman
ak?l erdirirsin
tasas?na zambaklar?n,
hizmet eder sana
portakal çiçe?i ve güvercin..'

James says

Twenty-one previously unpublished poems discovered by the Neruda estate. Any book like this is always questionable, as the translator points out, as it could simply be notes or ideas marketed as lost work, but that's clearly not the case here. While Neruda may not have felt these poems complete and a couple of them indicate that by ending in commas, the poems are beautiful and touch on Neruda's themes. The book includes the poems in both English and the original Spanish, along with some scans of some poems in Neruda's own handwriting. A very worthy addition to Neruda's oeuvre and highly recommended.

Shel says

Did we need more Neruda? Why, yes, yes we did.

tortoise dreams says

A collection of 21 poems recently retrieved and never before published, by the Chilean poet and Nobel laureate, Pablo Neruda (1904-73), translated by Forrest Gander.

We don't know if Neruda wanted the poems in Then Come Back - The Lost Neruda Poems, to be published; we know that some are unfinished. They are odds and ends written from the early '50s to 1973. We know that he didn't consider them so indispensable that he published them during his lifetime. But just as the executor for Kafka did right not to follow instructions to burn his works, so we are better off having these

poems. Imagine if an unfinished Shakespeare play was found -- wouldn't the scrap be better than nothing at all? And although insufficiently famous in English-speaking countries, Pablo Neruda is considered by many to be the world's greatest poet since Shakespeare.

Neruda wrote hundreds of poems, and these won't change our opinion of him, but it's a good if slight collection. He was a magician when writing about love:

You and I are the land full of fruit.
Bread, fire, blood, and wine
make up the earthly love that sears us.

Neruda was also known for his odes, and some of the poems in Then Come Back - The Lost Neruda Poems seem to be from his series of odes (odas). He writes often and fondly of his native and beloved Chile. The set closes with two distinct poems, one a humorous "ode" to the horrors of the telephone (what would he have made of mobiles?), and the other a worthy tribute to the first astronauts, noting that:

they didn't go by themselves,
they brought our earth,
the odors of moss and forest ...

All in all we are lucky to have this lovely collection, Then Come Back - The Lost Neruda Poems. That said I have two small complaints. First, terribly picky: usually the untranslated and translated poems are on facing pages. Here, the poems are first printed as a group in English, and then later the poems are printed together in the original Spanish, making it difficult to read both at the same time. Second, the translation is uneven and at times awkward. Sometimes Gander perfectly captures Neruda's meaning, but at other times he varies wildly, often picking a more colorful or evocative word over Neruda's simpler choice. Every translator can be unfairly nit-picked to death, and that's not my intent, so I'll give just a single example. Gander translates "la prostituta de su traje falso," as "the hooker from her Lycra and falsies." "Traje" can mean suit, clothes, dress, apparel, costume ... but regardless, I'm unsure whether Neruda ever used the word "Lycra." Every translator has to make difficult choices, but some in this collection were, to me, awkward and off-putting. I'm sure others would disagree with my choices.

Other than these two nit-picks, Then Come Back - The Lost Neruda Poems, is a solid addition to the master's legacy. [3.5 Stars]

Özgür Da? says

...

*Ama yine de, derler ya hani,
kalp bir yaptırır
ve rüzgâr?r onu çarptır.*
(s. 50)

Berfin Kanat says

"unutmadan geldi?in yeri:

sivri ta?lar üzerinde yürü,
sertle?
ve dön geri."

NAMIK SOMEL says

?air Adnan Özer 'in ?spanyolca asl?ndan Türkçeye kazand?rd??? bu ?iirler Neruda'n?n ölümünden sonra ortaya ç?km???.. ?iirleri çok be?endim. Kitapta ?iirlerin orijinal yaz?mlar? ve ilginç yaz?l??? öyküleri de yer al?yor..

"Asla yaln?z de?ilim
seninle yeryüzünde,
ate?lerden geçerken bile.
Yaln?z de?ilim asla..."
/E?i Matilde' ya yaz?lm??

"..
kökler ve at nallar? aras?nda
?u anda me?gul olan adam
bakm?yor orman?n derinliklerine
art?k kar???rm?yor yapraklar?
zaten yaprak da dü?müyor gökten,
bir u?ra?? var adam?n,
kazmakla me?gul mezar?n?.
.. "

Bir gemi yolculu?unda (31 Mart 1967) müzik program?n?n arkas?na yaz?lm?? ?iirin ana temas?
ba?kalar?n?n ölümüdür. Büyük ?ili depreminden birkaç y?l sonra yaz?lm??t?r.

Grey853 says

This is collection of 21 poems in a book which includes pictures of the actual handwritten poems. It also gives the original language and the translation.

Neruda is one of my favorite poets and some of these poems are quite impressive. In particular I loved numbers 6 and 14. Six is about how an ordinary day, one about to pass between yesterday and tomorrow is transformed by the arrival of his lover.

6 Excerpt

...
"but then
you plucked it up
with your hand
a fish
fresh from the sky,
a huge drop of freshness,
brimming

with living fragrance
and moistened
by that
morning bell
like the tremor
of clover
at dawn,"

In poem 14, he talks about how his life and the lives of his countrymen have changed, though not necessarily for the better as when he says:

14 excerpt
"he no longer checks the leaves
nor do the leaves fall from the sky for him
now the man is hard at work
hard at work digging his grave."

Neruda's brilliant imagery and use of metaphor is as strong as ever. I'm always truly inspired by his words.

My only negative about this publication is that I think the type size is a bit small, but that's a little thing compared to what the book gives the reader.
