

Lyrical Fragments

by [Jeffrey Burghauer](#) (January 2024)



A Reading from Homer— Lawrence Alma-Tadema, 1885

We so much love to love our love,
 To those of common mind,
A poëm *is* a poëm of
 The amatory kind.

A book of them is like a cold
 Facility whose bins
Accommodate sublimely old,
 Exotic specimens,

Each marvel filed side-by-side
 In pale, synthetic juice,
Preserved for some unspecified
 Experimental use.

Since granite needs no mortal heed

For its survival, give
It nothing. Hatred cannot need
A man's preservative.

*If there be Justice, soon you'll see
Your body and your brain
Repaid in simple misery
That never ebbs again.*

I've learned from Dante's manifold
Devotion to the She
How accurately to behold
The force of chivalry,

Contriving, as it did, to churn
A total worldview of
Erotic love. The world, we learn,
Entwines its way through Love,

And Love must be to Chivalry
What Hatred is, I fear,
To something that, against my plea,
I shall discover here.

For each discrete disaster is
A sympathetic string...
Pluck the troubles that are his;
The whole of life shall sing.

*When she was mistress of the grove,
And I, a callow swain,
I tendered vows, and then, my love
Returned the like again.*

Untutored heathens love to write.
The child slits his wrists.
The marble colonnades grow tight
With insurrectionists.

Pulsating Saracens behead
The flabbergasted Jew.
Pandemic viruses are spread.
My lover is untrue.

*When she is missing from a tree-
And vine-embowered lane,
A park, or my biography,
The Desert comes again.*

My body loosening its seals,
I die amid my debts;
It feels as fretless rosewood feels
To fingers used to frets.

*Come wrap me in my winding-sheet.
Amid the dire rain,
Conduct me sadly through the street
That slowly floods again.*

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Jeffrey Burghauer is a teacher in Columbus, Ohio. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo and the University of Leeds. He currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Appalachian Journal*, *Fearsome Critters*,

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