



100 Verses at Sebastopol

A 100 Verse Renga Dedicated to Sogi

by Dharma Jim

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100 VERSES AT SEBASTOPOL

1

This April morning, before the sun has risen; brief, cool, spring showers.
I walk through the silent house, a shadow among shadows.
Birds migrating north, find their way between the clouds, and the horizon.
Picking up friends on the way; clusters of young schoolchildren.
The waitress pauses, scanning the new customers, then fixes her smile.
At the end of the long day, by herself on a park bench.
A first-quarter moon, hovering near Jupiter, caresses the sky.
He clears the dinner table; it is son number two's turn.

2

Blue Jays repairing, the same nest they used last year, and the year before.
The entire forest bows, to the mountain deity.
He observes the time, "Wish me luck," said in a rush, as he leaves for work.
The sun on its journey south, is crossing the equator.
Autumn in the sky, but the leaves have not yet turned, though the grass is brown.
But there is a hint of cold, particularly at night.
The days grow shorter, and the shadows seem darker, and life feels faster.
Do insects at night know, they are singing their last song?
Libra holds the moon, which seems to halt on its path, until a cloud clears.
She just can't make up her mind, which courses to take this year.
A dog starts to bark, then hears its owner calling, turns and runs inside.
"On the other hand," he says, "I do not see it that way."
Thick golden yellow, the Acacia in bloom: allergy season.
She's planting native species, in the redesigned garden.

3

Cutbacks by the Board, a public corporation, leads to more litter
dvd's fill the bookshelves; Star Trek, Buffy, TNG . . .
Mom raises her voice, "Have you finished your homework?" "But it's Friday night!"

Finally free of parents, they meet, as planned, at the mall.
They were friends of friends, they didn't know each other, the first night they met.
It's such a delight to see, the face one loves approaching.
An awkward moment, one has nothing left to say, boredom in her eyes.
Into the silence one speaks, and right away feels regret.
Now we have to part, it didn't start out that way, when did things go wrong?
Fired from his job today, he feels oddly elated.
All those pairs of feet, on the stairs of the subway; where are they going?
"But if you ask me," she says, "you can't trust any of them."
May evenings are cold, and they sure last a long time, waiting for the bus.
The barest sliver remains, just before the new moon's time.

4

Bats in ghostly flight, across the star covered sky, to the farmers' fields.
Creatures of the realm of night, a world hidden by our dreams.
Trucks in the distance, a highway through the valley, from places unknown.
Snails leave tracks on the window, traces of their wanderings.
In the summer heat, I saw the mayflies dancing, in a ray of light.
Two dogs napping in the sun, their owner waters potted plants.
"Good morning neighbor. I brought you some cucumbers, and some tomatoes."
In the refrigerator, there's enough food for five days.
Counter cat watching, as canned tuna gets added, to the tossed salad.
Brisk winds pushing the thin clouds, past the face of the full moon.
Bathed in the moonlight, rabbits are bowing deeply, to the sky above.
Autumn evenings are quiet, compared to spring or summer.
"A vase of flowers, seems especially fragile, at this time of year."
"It's not the vase that's fragile, it's the flowers in the cold."

5

So many acorns, from the branches of the oak; two or three may sprout.
Just halfway across the field, a cluster of red Madrones.
"Do you think that trees, are conscious of each other? Do they have feelings?"
She asks her neighbor and friend, as they watch their children play.
"I wonder if I should work. We really need the money."
Fertilizing the garden, from the kitchen compost heap.
Tea leaves harvested, on the Himalayan slopes, and farms in Taiwan.
A warm cup of Darjeeling, served in a London Tea Room.
Two old friends sit down, sharing their respective weeks; the time of their lives.
At the local garden club, showing off their best flowers.

These Gemini days, everything is fresh and full, new and different.
Pine incense, purchased today, slowly fills the quiet room.
While moonlight gathers, in deep pools in the corners, a child sings a rhyme.
The Goddess of Summertime, dances in the solstice night.

6

Clear December skies; scientists take careful notes - vanishing glaciers.
Mountaintop meadows are dry; wind blows dust to the valleys.
The sluggish river, gossamer clouds in the night, and no August wind.
It is grandmother's birthday, time for family history.
But these two cousins, only see each others' eyes, hear each others' breath.
Behind the wooden garage, experimental kisses.
Twenty years later, at grandfather's funeral, memories bring smiles.
"I remember it clearly, it was a night just like this."
A full summer moon, seems to race across the stars, beside the airplanes.
Heat in deep February, yields long and dreamless evenings.
Magnolia blossoms, their intoxicating scent, saturates the room.
A cup of warm spearmint tea, after the meditations.
Thick blankets piled high, on frigid August mornings, are such a comfort.
She'd really like to linger, and put a few hours on hold.

7

What would it be like, to remember all the things, seen by a mountain?
Yet even they are like dust, in the cosmic tides of time.
Almost all lifeforms, that have breathed upon the earth, have become extinct
I met the God of Rivers, he was thousands of years old.
Yosemite cliffs; two lovers walk hand in hand, on the valley floor.
The steady October wind, bends the long grass in the fields.
Rocks in the garden, watch day and night come and go, and the season's flow.
Earthrise on the distant moon; an astronaut stands in awe.
A small pale blue dot, the mother of all of us, sails through the void.
Sand dunes in a vast desert, shift a little month by month.
Buried in a jar, during a time of turmoil, an ancient codex.
In the middle of the night, the slow chanting of the psalms.
Rippling silver light, from the half full waxing moon, cools the summer air.
A content coyote strolls, past the suburban houses.

8

It is 3 p.m., the light of the sun seems harsh, in a traffic jam.
“Isn’t technology grand?” while putting on sunglasses.
Sometimes we forget, the world is more than human, more than you and I.
Darkness of a full eclipse, while dragons fly through the sky.
Falling from heaven, celestial flowers rain, upon those who love.
Suddenly a strong spring breeze, melts the snow and warms the air.
Overnight they’ve bloomed, the cherry trees have blossomed, a dazzling display.
“What are you listening to?” “The song that is sung by time.”