

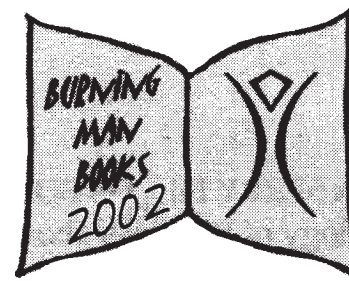
**Everything Carries  
Me to You:  
Selected Poems  
of Pablo Neruda**

Edited by Raymond Soulard, Jr.

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# **Everything Carries Me to You: Selected Poems of Pablo Neruda**

Edited by Raymond Soulard, Jr.



Number Twenty-two

This volume is for Mark Shorette

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## If You Forget Me

I want you to know  
one thing.

You know how this is:  
if I look  
at the crystal moon, at the red branch  
of the slow autumn at my window,  
if I touch  
near the fire  
the impalpable ash  
or the wrinkled body of the log,  
everything carries me to you,  
as if everything that exists:  
aromas, light, metals,  
were little boats that sail  
toward those isles of yours that wait for me.

Well, now,  
if little by little you stop loving me  
I shall stop loving you little by little.

If suddenly  
you forget me  
do not look for me,  
for I shall already have forgotten you.

If you think it long and mad,  
the wind of banners  
that passes through my life,  
and you decide  
to leave me at the shore  
of the heart where I have roots,  
remember  
that on that day,  
at that hour,  
I shall lift my arms  
and my roots will set off  
to seek another land.

But  
if each day,  
each hour,  
you feel that you are destined for me  
with implacable sweetness,  
if each day a flower  
climbs up to your lips to seek me,  
ah my love, ah my own,  
in me all that fire is repeated,  
in me nothing is extinguished or forgotten,  
my love feeds on your love, beloved,  
and as long as you live it will be in your arms  
without leaving mine.

## The Weary One

The weary one, orphan  
of the masses, the self,  
the crushed one, the one made of concrete,  
the one without a country in crowded restaurants,  
he who wanted to go far away, always farther away,  
didn't know what to do there, whether he wanted  
or didn't want to leave or remain on the island,  
the hesitant one, the hybrid, entangled in himself,  
had no place here: the straight-angled stone,  
the infinite look of the granite prism,  
the circular solitude all banished him:  
he went somewhere else with his sorrows,  
he returned to the agony of his native land,  
to his indecisions, of winter and summer.  
Lost in the forest...

Lost in the forest, I broke off a dark twig  
and lifted its whisper to my thirsty lips:  
maybe it was the voice of the rain crying,  
a cracked bell, or a torn heart.

Something from far off it seemed  
deep and secret to me, hidden by the earth,  
a shout muffled by huge autumns,  
by the moist half-open darkness of the leaves.

Wakening from the dreaming forest there, the hazel-sprig  
sang under my tongue, its drifting fragrance  
climbed up through my conscious mind

as if suddenly the roots I had left behind  
cried out to me, the land I had lost with my childhood—  
and I stopped, wounded by the wandering scent.  
In the center of the earth...

In the center of the earth I will push aside  
the emeralds so that I can see you  
you like an amanuensis, with a pen  
of water, copying the green sprigs of plants.

What a world! What deep parsley!  
What a ship sailing through the sweetness!  
And you, maybe—and me, maybe—a topaz.  
There'll be no more dissensions in the bells.

There won't be anything but all the fresh air,  
apples carried on the wind,  
the succulent book in the woods:

and there where the carnations breathe, we will begin  
to make ourselves a clothing, something to last  
through the eternity of a victorious kiss.

## The She Bird

With my little terrestrial bird,  
my rustic earthen jug,  
I break out singing  
the guitar's rain:  
alleged autumn arrives  
like a load of firewood,  
decanting the aroma  
that flew through the mountains,  
and grape by grape my kisses  
were joined to her bunch.  
This proves that the afternoon  
accumulated sweetness  
like the amber process  
or the order of violets.  
Come flying, passenger,  
let's fly with the coals,  
live or cold,  
with the disorderly darkness  
of the obscure and the ardent.  
Let's enter the ash,  
let's move with the smoke,  
let's live by the fire.  
In mid autumn  
we'll set the table  
over the grassy hillside,  
flying over Chillan  
with your guitar in your wings.

## **We are the clumsy passersby**

We are the clumsy passersby, we push past each other with elbows,  
with feet, with trousers, with suitcases,  
we get off the train, the jet plane, the ship, we step down  
in our wrinkled suits and sinister hats.  
We are all guilty, we are all sinners,  
we come from dead-end hotels or industrial peace,  
this might be our last clean shirt,  
we have misplaced our tie,  
yet even so, on the edge of panic, pompous,  
sons of bitches who move in the highest circles  
or quiet types who don't owe anything to anybody,  
we are one and the same, the same in time's eyes,  
or in solitude's: we are the poor devils  
who earn a living and a death working  
bureautragically or in the usual ways,  
sitting down or packed together in subway stations,  
boats, mines, research centers, jails,  
universities, breweries,  
(under our clothes the same thirsty skin),  
(the hair, the same hair, only in different colors).

## **Absence**

I have scarcely left you  
when you go in me, crystalline,  
or trembling,  
or uneasy, wounded by me  
or overwhelmed with love, as when your eyes  
close upon the gift of life  
that without cease I give you.

My love,  
we have found each other  
thirsty and we have  
drunk up all the water and the blood,  
we found each other  
hungry  
and we bit each other  
as fire bites,  
leaving wounds in us.

But wait for me,  
keep for me your sweetness.  
I will give you too  
a rose.

## Your Laughter

Take breath away from me, if you wish,  
take air away, but  
do not take from me your laughter.

Do not take away the rose,  
the lanceflower that you pluck,  
the water that suddenly  
bursts forth in your joy,  
the sudden wave  
of silver born in you.

My struggle is harsh and I come back  
with eyes tired  
at times from having seen  
the unchanging earth,  
but when your laughter enters  
it rises to the sky seeking me  
and it opens for me all  
the doors of life.

My love, in the darkest  
hour your laughter  
opens, and if suddenly  
you see my blood staining  
the stones of the street,  
laugh, because your laughter  
will be for my hands  
like a fresh sword.

Next to the sea in the autumn,  
your laughter must raise  
its foamy cascade,  
and in the spring, love,  
I want your laughter like  
the flower I was waiting for,  
the blue flower, the rose  
of my echoing country.

Laugh at the night,  
at the day, at the moon,  
laugh at the twisted  
streets of the island,  
laugh at this clumsy  
boy who loves you,  
but when I open  
my eyes and close them,  
when my steps go,  
when my steps return,  
deny me bread, air,  
light, spring,  
but never your laughter  
for I would die.



## Always

Facing you  
I am not jealous.

Come with a man  
at your back,  
come with a hundred men in your hair,  
come with a thousand men between your bosom and your feet,  
come like a river  
filled drowned men  
that meets the furious sea,  
the eternal foam, the weather.

Bring them all  
where I wait for you:  
we shall always be alone,  
we shall always be, you and I,  
alone upon the earth  
to begin life.

## White Bee

White bee, you buzz in my soul, drunk with honey,  
and your flight winds in slow spirals of smoke.

I am the one without hope, the word without echoes,  
he who lost everything and he who had everything.

Last hawser, in you creaks my last longing.  
In my barren land you are the final rose.

Ah you who are silent!

Let your deep eyes close. There the night flutters.  
Ah your body, a frightened statue, naked.

You have deep eyes in which the night flails.  
Cool arms of flowers and a lap of rose.

Your breasts seem like white snails.  
A butterfly of shadow has come to sleep on your belly.

Ah you who are silent!

Here is the solitude from which you are absent.  
It is raining. The sea wind is hunting stray gulls.

The water walks barefoot in the wet streets.  
From that tree the leaves complain as though they were sick.

White bee, even when you are gone you buzz in my soul  
You live again in time, slender and silent.

Ah you who are silent!

# Ode To the Sea

HERE  
Surrounding the island  
There's sea.  
But what sea?  
It's always overflowing.  
Says yes,  
Then no,  
Then no again,  
And no,  
Says yes  
In blue  
In sea spray  
Raging,  
Says no  
And no again.  
It can't be still.  
It stammers  
My name is sea.

It slaps the rocks  
And when they aren't convinced,  
Strokes them  
And soaks them  
And smothers them with kisses.  
With seven green tongues  
Of seven green dogs  
Or seven green tigers  
Or seven green seas,  
Beating its chest,  
Stammering its name,

Oh Sea,  
This is your name.  
Oh comrade ocean,  
Don't waste time  
Or water  
Getting so upset  
Help us instead.

We are meager fishermen,  
Men from the shore  
Who are hungry and cold  
And you're our foe.  
Don't beat so hard,  
Don't shout so loud,  
Open your green coffers,  
Place gifts of silver in our hands.  
Give us this day  
our daily fish.

# **I Like For You to be Still**

I like for you to be still: it is as though you were absent,  
and you hear me from far away and my voice does not touch you.  
It seems as though your eyes had flown away  
and it seems that a kiss had sealed your mouth.

As all things are filled with my soul  
you emerge from the things, filled with my soul.  
You are like my soul, a butterfly of dream,  
and you are like the word Melancholy.

I like for you to be still, and you seem far away.  
It sounds as though you were lamenting, a butterfly cooing like a dove.  
And you hear me from far away, and my voice does not reach you:  
Let me come to be still in your silence.

And let me talk to you with your silence  
that is bright as a lamp, simple as a ring.  
You are like the night, with its stillness and constellations.  
Your silence is that of a star, as remote and candid.

I like for you to be still: it is as though you were absent,  
distant and full of sorrow as though you had died.  
One word then, one smile, is enough.  
And I am happy, happy that it's not true.