



In Riskdom where I lived

Ali Abdolrezaei

Acknowledgments

The publication of these translations has been made possible by the support of Exiled Writers INK Translation Scheme sponsored by the Arts Council. We would like to thank EWI for introducing well known poets from other tongues into English and especially Nathalie Teitler for her helpful management and editorial input. We would also like to acknowledge the valuable review comments from Tessa Dummett who very much helped with the final result. Our thanks also go to Babak Vandad for his cover design

**In Riskdom
Where I lived**

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Dictation

I was brother to all walls in the world
and my wife a window with dusk in its panes
was tearing onions
with tears upon tears

Full stop.

Children! One gets full marks for writing life in truth and lies...

At a juncture where neither the face of green becomes
pedestrian
nor the traffic warden has any act of kindness for
resident drivers
nor that magic lantern at the face of green and
amber...
to the woman who alone spoiled my married identity
Nevertheless what relevance
to the one indoors who went loose on the streets?
Stop!

*Try to write without lies my son! Except, be careful no strikethroughs, the
rubber won't always stop anywhere you want.*

The one who writes a poem
always rubs out other poems
Poets! Stop writing hands up

Grasp

Whatever I put my hand on
dims me
and no telling remains in my poem
I always pass through few walls
to get home
I see the nothing they wrote
 on the palm of my hand
The kite I started as a boy remains unfinished
and I've learned to say life signifies
why do we find it hard to believe
 that today is September the eleventh?

*Neither the blue sound of the brook
nor a conversation's quietude
Man alone is a vast loneliness
for all this
 sometimes close to tears
he gives up his sorrow to the heavens
as he sees the sky
with its black clouds
has no shoulder to cry on
the sky is a vast loneliness*

White Reading

Read this line white

A bit black this one I'm reading white

I am all dressed in black

Please return to the first line

Confess you heard something from Nothing Write!

When you return to the next line cross it out

In the notebook that ended last night

The rubber is on the last line

of the poem that composed the old readers pick it up

Rub out this whole page white

And the next few pages also oh I don't know!

If you could dress me in white

Rub out all my lines

Then you could white-read me

Alone, when you reach the dead end

of this notebook

Again write Nothing!

I'm all in black

Just rub out all the rubber

Only on my last remaining line please write me

No! cross me out No! I cross out

At “The Priory”

I am writing this letter for the girl who lived lonelier
than the moon

the girl who one day alighted in the mirror
and with a little smile pulled a stone slab off my chest

Have you walked in the shoes at the foot of the stairs?

Why don't you saddle the horses' neighing?

It must be your eyes

that sometimes sound a few galloping neighs have
horses

Our last happiness was the wind that's gone with the wind

Even cows don't lick at the river photo in these newspapers
nowadays

God's legs have stuck out of the clouds' skirts

These beds have come through women of old

Attack! Row your oars!

The sea always has so much more swimming than boat
rides

We are human again

I have heard, from this very line you are hearing, at the end of the poem I am writing, at first dusk descends a little, then it rains and in the end the sound of the unsaddled neighing of a herd of horses, is running in my shoes.

The clatter of my feet in the stretch of my shoes by your side
dies today

I don't know what wool to pull over I don't know
I don't know?

Like a woman who lived two years in my eyes
isn't it a sin to drag me so from bed to bed?

How can I command these trembling soldiers facing you, O life
to fire?

From the shoes at the foot of the stairs
comes the sound of galloping horses
don't you believe me?

You! Standing there beyond the end of this letter
just send me two eyes
so I can cry

Banished

On this side of the world even if you had a living son
it would be a son on this side of the world
who went in the direction of the water that you spilt¹
behind the tears
Never mind!

Pointlessly, you walk across my mind
If you were here
 you would no longer be the one over there
 you would be like me over here

¹

A ritual in Iran where relatives, usually females such as mother or sister, see off the travelling family member by spilling water behind them.

If I returned

I would no longer be the one over here

I would be like you over there

I no longer laugh

nor even go off

I only exercise my own loneliness

like now that I feel fine

and I imagine I am imaginatively alone

Never mind!

On that side of the world even if I had a living mother

it would be a mother on that side of the world

Great Men

It had gone to your head

that being a poet needs a tall stature

A tall shout

which the faster they ran, the harder they'd reach

when there was no rooftop there isn't one to stand on

you had no roof ladder didn't want any

you were a little child

like all great poets

you had little pains you have

anywhere you went you go

People blew your horn they blow your horn

like all great men!

Go as the go that I went

It's no longer becoming of me to come with me beside myself
When you have no occupation
It's untoward with no direction

Go towards the go that I went, don't go so you're left behind
for wherever I didn't leave, there I stayed
wherever I reached, there I was
I've taken many a strolling step in the past
a goner from now, a haver of tomorrow

Go to this and go to that and drop this very this and that, for
this between you and me's that between you and me, just
You belong straight ahead

and I who threw myself away to myself
am loose at the beginning and the end...

You cannot overtake a street,
Get the tick out of here to find a new tock
for the gates of progress,
progress in the pet hates of others

No more rest
Runaway has nowhere to run

Go towards the go that you went, don't go so I'm left behind
that from the direction of both hands, two friends,
and you with no me standing

I drive

Always without wanting, I was taken
to the place where I was taken from
I looked for you in the lines I had not yet written a lot
I still write because I'm sorry
the one who has to if she comes she's not coming anymore

The journey won't adjourn me
I'll always sojourn in the journey

It's enough to see my trace in the sky
the sheen is extra

that cloud, walking with a stick, is my uncle

the sea is tall,
the blue, vertical.

Held my hands and step by step died of sorrow

Whatever I think about either isn't or was.

Such important things!

How would the salaried truth of bureaucratic lies know?

Still, blessed are the meek

My sister who read many palms

Has another brother that I have not

My father suffers door to door by an ardour

that opened doors to these

door to door days

And my friends...

My friends?!

By the way, who were they?

Why don't I remember?

I only worry these days about she who was
who no longer is

*You alright my son? Got money? Don't you catch cold all of a
sudden. Sleeping well?*

Soon as I wanted to coo out a mate
And celebrate she aged
Mother was the early seat of my voice
 which as I drifted further away from
 became late

Mother...

Mother?!

Foolish is the poet
 who tries to pin this with the pen

Cloud

When Night appeared
the shape of time when it got away was a spectacle
Facing up from the morning pillow
The day paused a little
Tomorrow didn't know it has to come
and night that took a bite of light
fell on a piece of apple that came third in the world

Cold sound tumbled down the mountains
and
green clambered up the ravines
and
Man stuck at the cross roads, became pedestrian
in the same path that afterwards led to many
Picked the sun off heads of days one by one

and hoarded it
so when water became a deluge to
leave the ark to Noah
make the sword a bare necessity
having to discover sulphur
and gunpowder to add to life
still to make no difference

still the day comes
the night like a dark cow breaks out of the manger
the day gets lost behind a brown calf
and the nimbus that is the mother of a missing son
revolves round the sky
and keeps looking
not to find a quiet spot
to cry her heart out

Album

This is my Mum Isn't she beautiful?
This is my brother and this, my father
If only he knew how door to door I am now

Poor innocent thing

This one is Sara the youngest
this smiley face also...can't remember the
name!

Exile, exile what havoc it wreaks on the memory
She's my eldest sister
She used to pass out laughing
when shooting pictures

I'm at a loss how these pictures of lips that have smiled
are movies of eyes that have cried

Leave it!

But how mixed up I am

Poor dear my peasant Mum

If freedom ever pays Iran a visit

You'll become my father's new bride

and after breakfast my sister

will burn frankincense

to smudge around my head and dispel the bad eye

on my having a Leila in the night most

and my Mum while boasting

will be throwing confetti and ululating in the paddy at
the bottom of the garden

so her son may eye up the lap of this lass and be
turned on - I'm turned on

Now that we're enthralled shoulder to shoulder in the
hall of this house

why not make believe we're wrapped in the bliss of rice
paddies? Let go

Rain

In the sky of a town that turned so decrepit
When I put up my umbrella
I arrive at those village days
To a girl bending under the rain
Planting rice
Who abruptly became a woman
A woman in the rain still standing tall
Who said time and again to a man
Whose name she did not know
‘Why run away?
 Why the umbrella?
Only iron men rust in the rain.’

Story

A sky was enough to make rain.

A sunlight - to make a city awkward

Summer like a head-down elephant with a long trunk
was lifting the day

the hand of night lost its quiet like a lieutenant divorced
of his platoon

from the edge of my humming voice that lived on the
edge of a hamlet of voices

threw rips of Buddha's laughter which my mouth ripped
in Lhasa

so to have a think of my being which in Persian has
copious meaning

under the lazy moonlight which showed up as
daylight to cry a little

A sea was enough for drowning
a snare for the harpooned whale that I would be

The world like an antique rug stuck in a corner
in a piazza with a vast dizziness that was empty
a woman that in a quiet cloud took habitat
and threw a net in the deep swamp of my solitude
to net a goldfish that was my heart
we had to stay together like two uneven fingers
and love like lovers love
to go uphill with a head-down horse going down on the
chiefdom of neighing

I go!

No longer have I any long feathered dream

A sky

Only a sky is enough

To make this city awkward

.

Sausage

Her hands that were in the photograph

I held with both hands

When she got up she didn't say thank you

May I walk with you?

Didn't say no

I held her hands

we walked a picture

The one they hid in your eyes

the more I look the less I find

by the way aren't you married?

She didn't say

won't you?

Didn't say no!

We did!

Days were passing as the wind
and nights were no longer than seconds
we were two lonely photos
that the world wanted to expel from the album
Expelled! Don't believe it?
Tonight when we're sleeping obverse in another photo
pay that album a visit
open the fridge door in that shot and help yourself
to whatever

Sorry! we only have sausages!

Bandar Abbas²

What would you like?

The one in me who is still knocking at the door?

The man who puts the sea at the end of his pocket and bursts
into flames?

The sea is half done you cry the rest!

I still travel in the port City of eyes that I dreamt

I am this very bed where the day dreams

of you wrapped in its blanket!

I've lost our lord in heaven

lonelier too than the moon and I can put the pomegranate
tree in my skinny basket!

though I find you a drag I turn away from the fag

and since February walked a brand on my face

I am looking for a July bullet hid behind these walls

this wall this snail shell that revolves round Nothing

Where does it end?

You have gone and know not April fags in my pocket

² A Southern port city in Iran

became autumn
like a rock not knowing it's not a rock
For heavens sake! Why the two billion stars up there?
So that I live?
Longevity was my powerlessness
and Earth was dying under my feet
What was I? Other than a likelihood between two fags
other than that infanticidal prophet
what was I, what?

The one who went out of hand
saw the sole eye that wept on weeping
mirror-wide at times subsisted certain eyes
that archived my beauty
Why did the rain bring me here?
To believe there is an Earth?
Here in this indigo home 'once upon a time' there was none

The man who drew out the day in your eyes
whose pocket was always whimpering 5p lies
the hand that had pilfered the moon
like a white stain off god's night gown
was passing the alleys of a Northern town in chagrin

Get Lost! One day a woman suspiciously with child

Get Lost! Sometimes all the gates of the South

Get Lost! All the street girls tell me but I won't go

supped on wine to stay in Iran

O beautiful Southern flower

This heart beats for you a lifetime

upon the black beach of my chest

do the Bandari³ dance

The Caspian sipped the sap of your eyes and grew to a sea

and me in your hands to ports

I am the Caspian sea

the Persian Gulf

it's for love of you that I miss the prayers

I should remember when I'm gone to Delhi

to cry a little

³ A special dance in South of Iran.

Mother me out!

The alley ended in the night

You were going too fast

And the child his words couldn't keep instep with you

Those days up there in place of the moon
a woman sat squatting holding a pie

These days, Mother! I take it out on the apple

And each day I leave the house to fall in love

but to no avail

The alley ended in me

and tonight of the house I wanted to buy her

just the image of a small window remains open
See! I'm closed down
I have thrown out the windows of the house
Going to buy some salt for the wound I have
and matched some jigsaw pieces of the sea
so you come back from afar

Gone from our mother's hand,
following the end of the thread that passes through your
sewing machine we are ...Fate!

we have not walked at all
we have only trampled up
these footpaths

Circle

You are reading a poem called circle

Hold it there

Hands off the library

Arm around the windows and the doors

Bedding into the sofa

Now you may read a poem by Ali Abdolrezaie

Please open the book

You see? You are reading a poem called Circle

So hold it there

Take your hands off the library

Throw the door you had already opened

Out of the house

Tumble down the stairs

In the new park or the old one behind the Town Hall

On the same bench that sent my father door to door and
stopped my mother Sit down

Tell them off those children playing ball

Now you may read a poem by Ali Abdolrezaie

Please turn the page of this gate whichever way you like

It's a shame You are standing at the end of a poem Called
Circle

Junction

Now it goes – now it doesn't
Behind the light that lets – doesn't let
The street that passes a street that
 passes lets not pass
Let it pass up – let it not
In the same square
 that squarely arrives
 at the square
It knows not it won't arrive

It passes
Let this also pass up – by-gones are by-gone
It won't let arrive that which arrives
Leave the square open
Open the floodgates
Let go again to get rid of pass let it and...
Not allowed!
They don't let it
Which people?

Park

With the same pictures of a woman still young
in the pocket of my old coat
with hands that are thinking on my head
I am standing on my new dentures

The park is napping around quiet benches
My son is dripping down the slide
The merry-go-round turns a few clock hands
 on the heels of years gone by
and in a corner of the silence of the bench
that half unseats the old man stop
When my false-teeth falls
 The park gets busy the swing lonely
 Ring a ring of Children around me and sunlight
 twirls around the restlessness of the merry-go-round

It's getting dark son!
Don't you want us to go back?



The Translator,

Abol Froushan left Shah's Iran to live and study in London in 1975.

He received his BSc (Eng) 1st class degree in mechanical engineering in 1979. In the seven years of war and revolution that ensued in Iran, he did his Masters in social and economic studies and his Doctor of Philosophy at Imperial College, University of

London (awarded the same day Abol was granted UK Ordinary Residence). He was naturalised as British on Valentine's day 1990.

In 1983, the sudden death of a seven year old relative in a car accident set Abol off on an uncharted path of writing poetry, not in his native Persian but in English. He has since been pursuing a career in writing and performing poetry alongside his consulting career in high-tech industries.

Abol's poetry has been published in the anthology "Silver Throat of the Moon" Ed. J Langer and the Exiled Ink magazine, as well as in multimedia web based publications at www.photoinsight.org.uk and www.poetrymag.info. He has publicly performed his poetry in select London venues such as the Queen Elizabeth Hall, National Portrait Gallery, Poetry Café, New End Theatre, Arcola Theatre, Waterman Centre, Scala Theatre and Riverside Studios.

The Author



Ali Abdolrezaei was born 10 April 1969 in Northern Iran. He completed his primary and secondary education at his city of birth and after receiving his Diploma in mathematics passed the nationwide university entrance exams. He graduated

with a Masters degree in Mechanical Engineering from Tehran Technical and Engineering University. He started his professional poetic career in 1986 and became one of the most serious and contentious poets of the new generation of Persian poetry.

Ali has had an undeniable effect on many poets of his generation by his artistic concepts of proposals through the medium of his poetry as well as speeches and interviews. And he is one of the few poets who succeeded to express his independent poetic individuality. Publication of eight varied books of poetry: “From Riskdom,” “Shinema,” “So Sermon of Society”, “Improvisation”, “This dear cat”, “Paris in Renault”, “You Name this Book”, “Only Iron Men live in the rain”, endorse his poetic creativity and power. Currently he has in publication a poetry collection “La Elaha Ella Love” and a multi-textual “Hermaphrodite” that have been followed by varied critical reviews.

Nearly all well known poets and critics of Persian poetry have written about Abdolrezaei’s poems. In September 2002 after his protest against heavy censorship of his latest books such as Society and Shinema, he was banned from teaching and public speaking. He left Iran and after a few months stay in Germany, and two years in France, he’s been living in