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Poem, Swim

Forrest Grail Cole

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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POEM, SWIM

by

Forrest G. Cole

Bachelor of Arts
University of Utah
1999

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

**Master of Fine Arts
English Department
College of Liberal Arts**

**Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Master of Fine Arts, Creative Writing

Examination Committee Chair

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ABSTRACT

Poem, Swim

by

Forrest G. Cole

Claudia Keelan, Examination Committee Chair
Associate Professor of English
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Poem, Swim is a collection of my poems written during the past year while I was living in Spain. They encompass my experiences in a foreign culture as well as bringing together all that I have learned about in poetry in the classroom. Influenced by certain poets like Charles Olson and Robert Creeley, this manuscript is my attempt at writing a publishable book of poetry. A cohesive flow is maintained throughout the manuscript with reoccurring images such as sunshine, water, women and the longing for all of these things, and my attempts at breaking open the construction of the poem, this done by exposing the mechanics of the thought process and writing process.

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ocean.

Poem Take Communion

Inside church spot
of holy water on forehead
felt fresh stained

birds circled fresh
stained glass array
reminds me of Hindu

chirping minstrels
interior gardens tolling
bells slyence

I've known water
dries bells
sing in the garden

The Big Screen

light light
 a top the urine
 filled streets
 fight disguised
 lonely afraid to take a bath

or afraid
 afraid of the water
 dabbed upon your forehead
 from the leaf of a lotus

“change your diaper” change
 for a dollar
 you haven’t the money
 this priest this jukebox
 holy roller coaster

sent a dime in a letter
 poor jack
 jack in the crack
 of the root
 riddle

seat forgot to call his parents
 they wanted bacon
 with their eggs

eggs fresh
 fresh from the chicken’s
 ass

 ask for them to run
 outside by the wolves

or by the sheep
 a sheep disguised
 internet star
 star light
 light disguised

please send photos of missiles
 and ten more cents

I have to warn my parents
about the eggs.

The body is as we lay
in each other's
borders

on a grossness
similar to horror
movies

I watch you skip
the beat in a little
Japanese straw hat.

Self-Portrait in a Convict's Mirror

Tree
Swing fastened
 to a live oak
 there in front

Young girl
Plays tea bears
 tiger one out
 of water dolphin

Enjoy mud
Moss sprinkles
 your breath
 is warm against

Glass your
Hand soft
 against my back
 day we met

Was green light
Against sheets drying
 in backyard spot
 brown from use

Swing swings.

Posh Accent

“Must watch her diet,”
she sd.

Travels cafes an art
Historian is her friend
Teacup shakes slightly
In her hand

“I remember pictures
of Mussolini,”
she sd.

A very good time
her laugh is what poem
knows most
I sd.

Poem Wail

Why you're a big

 Fin (<)

 Whale sunk

 to depths

I feel pity

 perhaps

I should tell you

 about it.

Old Man

a top my lofty
park bench
curves support

my tattooed back
train moves
leaving them

to talk away
afternoon I'd
like to stay

there beside
the blue
green see.

Pass the Morning
for Pablo

Each letter was patient
with his pen
had to perfect

Always seemed that way
his office
a space

Space traveler's cockpit
a corpus of wiggling
stars

Poem perfect

Distance between benches
swaying swaggering
pigeons eat

The crumbs crumbs
of an old starry old man
sandwiched between

Clean bleach a cigarette
burns his lips
ah () you

You again wade by
tall black boots
skirt scarf

It's your scent scent
he remembers lays down
sleep devoured by pigeons.

Poem Undress

Ruin (D) piece
of carved stone
a counter weight

To a fisherman's
platform standing
there next to road

I see work trucks
drive by with nude
calendars in window.

Peaches (Plums)

Wait wait
 but you said
 they were delicious cold

I read your note
 there there
 on the table

it was in my pocket
 that day
 like any other day

I watched the rain
 outside the car
 window

Grass gently blown
 waves crash against

the walls of that hospital
 hospitable place
 for crying babies

My son
 pulled an apple
 from the brown bag

 eyes his grandmothers

wide wildly watch
 a train of shopping carts

In front long hair
 prophet peddling homeless
 lead their rebellion
 out to sea

He giggles as they drop
 off cliffs their screams
 muffled by paper bags

“In my paper bag
 I have a peach, they are delicious,”
 he says.

Playa de Zurriola

Feet dig burms in sand
 sep are ate
 An ocean view from the surfers
 onshore travel

X otic beaches

Warmer it becomes It becomes
 I push my feet
 into the damp

layer beneath the surface
 consistent waves put me
 towards sleep

I hear stories

X aggerated for the sake
 of a few Spanish girls.

Plaza de San Marcos

pigeon feathers fall

miniature helicopter

blades

1

(+)

1

and another.

Poem Swim

puffy see
gull

spreads tale
feathers

into squawking
beak of A

nother fish
disguised

garbage bobs
up down

a Cuban beat
behind

me the carnival
drunken

teenagers try to win
stuff (D)

animals for their
lovers.

Poem Speak

Outside the café
on the boulevard
with sounds
I identify
a daydream
in English
cloud of you
passes on small
bicycle leaving
whiffs of Spanish
in your mist.

Poem Swallow

Empty soda bottle
bobs in the salty
green waves crash

Pockets worn in stone
trickle clean
mussels my poetry

Falls from my hands
washes onto the rocks
misses a pocket

Skirts soda bottle
barnacles sing
bubbly gathered

Into mouth I taste
something sweet
my tongue knows

You sing in a language
I have only
tasted.

Semana Grande

Big bangs

quiet ()

inhales between eye
sparkling

Golden palm trees

stream into w

e

e

p

i

n

g

willows

[] BAM []

BAM

BAM []

Red Pants

walk alone to the beach
naked bodies follow southern
sky tanned breasts intimacy
a room for sex u Al easily
cars that drove me to the dance
forgotten sold I wlk to find

you amongst bodies treasures
that wash to shore small casks
of lifedeath our kitchen sun
shine where you write your
little black book of poems
I could find you anywhere.

river.

Puente La Reina

At just before
mid night
they ate twelve
grapes to my seven

Sang pastoral songs
from the village
old bridge

Where they grew
to brothers
sisters

To the Queen they said
caps on their head
we'll sing
sing these songs

For you they pointed
a cigarette
but why
should have been

The question I smiled
nodded laughed
a little
to the left

Left there with kisses
I could have fallen
in love
with her mother.

Poem (>)

Breath (<)

lotus flowers float
in a Mennagio fountain
older people stroll by
afternoon along
boardwalk

Population (□).

Galicia at Night

Galicia gallego your flag
 was once white
 here it is Christmas

bound presents lie
 lifeless under your lighted
 trees

here it is Christ missing

There I see him behind the sea
 wall

he cries with regret
 after a bad dice roll

a ponytail draped to the left
 shoulder

“You must wait for me in Baltimore”

zipper down his curly chest
 hairs are white

White your dirty always
 have been

add lemon juice
 To sun bleached presence

here it is masses of Christ
 black to the touch

hair slicked
 the yellow warm-up suit
 a present from last year

“Virgins always give the best
 presence,” he said

Galicia gallego your virgins
 were once white.

Highway 101

Every town room

I pass through
reminds me of a girl

I knew Each
a progression

from one to language word
to word

transition bathroom
to bathroom.

What is [it] that happens
in between(?)

poem know this.

Poem See

Tanned body asleep
sheet covers
your right thigh

It is these mornings
sun shining
through bed

Down pillow trail
of sand from beach
tea tastes fresh

Smoke dances in sun
after my mouth
a kiss a dance

To my desk there
the sunflowers you
brought from Spain.

I Forgot

to tell you something
in the note I wrote

the other day. I love
avocados soft green

flavor rests on my tongue
I watch you take the milk

from the fridge Poem
drink photograph skips

in the background.

Poem Play-Do

I watch Spanish people
sing English songs

sound lip
ped

X sight meant words
become ghosts

in the car

This Basque highway
to a co stall town

I sing café bar language
for pintxos and beer

Smile nod
play with your hands
upon the old wood end bar.

I realized the other
 or other
 could have been
 another

Day in a reflective
 window

There that
 I was bottled
 on property

Tall glass vineyards
 delicately vined
 third pair of eyes

Shouts yells
 I can't understand
 noise there
 other noise

O! the ears
 broke rules
 set down
 crashed amongst brutal
 stone what

A pissed off old man
 where did you get
 that white beard (?)

Father I lost your
 mirror
 I was 14
 young young

There amongst others
 wine tasted
 tasted dry

I sat on the sofa
 look
 look at you passing

cocktail
 In hand cigarette

your beautiful
 beauty full of
 full of

Smell of grass
 after rain lamb was four

hours old weak
 stuck beneath the feed box

Boxed in cries
 mother waited
 she said didn't know

know if it would survive

Poem die
 you were
 beautiful
 beauty full
 of a glow you're

Pregnant shy eyes
 tired smile
 days seem longer

dawn approaches
 sheepishly you approach
 the toaster

"The sun looks good
 on toast
 toast," I said

beautiful you smile
 music over eggs
 cooking before breakfast
 breakfast
 wine.

I Want to Yell

to you about the piece
of bamboo I discovered

after the storm

amongst driftwood
garbage and other lost
things from blowing winds

slanted rains.
I'd like to think
it came from China

(remember the peaches
delice) bobbed
up across waves

of a blue darkness
here it must move late

to unshaved mountains

of sea weathered pine
oak against
its smooth body

"I am green
you are brown,"
it said. "Ahsi

Ahso," hummed the sea

it was quiet
for a while.

I watch you walk
the rainy street cobblestone
umbrella cartoons
dubbed in French

For you John sterile white
sheets scratch my head
dandruff plots a period
in the poem

I think of you
walk closely to the rain
stone umbrella
wine by the bottle

Dirty glass bowl
I hear you
under a rain
umbrella.

If you find this
I apologize

Two days I've watched
you undress

Under a towel the tide
it's way with the sand.

Vacancy

no place to put flowers

(+)

poets in Paris vow poverty

Where is she (?)

In cafes musee

I find small verbs

missing from my language book

(+)

the soft quiet one

at the next table

reads a Paris love

story into my poem

(+)

communicative smiles

sometimes the wolf

wants to be itself

(÷)

poem decide.

Safaris

Wild beasts
have fun outside

dirty windows

vultures buzz cross
winds above

cows

eating

Get fat

I see graffiti on a train
loader next
town hides prison

behind trees

a man 25

years to life He loves the smell

of garlic

hundred miles away

Says it in his letters

I've moved away
from a girl I love

The smell of the ocean
reminds me
of many things Today

it's her walking
calf high
through the poem.

Poem Pay a Quarter

young homeless and their wannabes
sit on the hill open-air market
audience hip couples push leopard
skin strollers it's good to see them
tattooed pierced raising a family
The carnival starts next week
after market city by the river
everything arrived by semi tech
nical in discovery no weight guessing
Ring-tossing children in strollers
know this poem on the grass.

In Sections

the cobbled sidewalk
 passes my feet
 scent of fruit
 shakes with little
 butterflies

on the beach thousand
 mostly naked
 bodies it is there
 that I discover
 so close

I had forgotten
 how to taste sweet
 air cameras click
 and flash tongues
 clatter I see

The road that has brought
 me here cracked
 plaster falls to street
 picture in the store
 window fades

Woman farm horse
 (my) youth glides
 accurately poem click
 photo above washing
 machine childhood

Apart ment
 mother tickling son
 poem flash.

My Impression
for Lola

Twice [in] different cities

Twice I found
his missing hair

Twice I was awakened
by sweet perfume

she carried a rose
the color of his hair

Damn maybe it was
by the fountain
their food so colorful
in the sun
swaggered with sanity

Twice she carried a sunflower
from vase to street
I followed the curves
to the center watching
an old lady pick the seeds

spitting the shells to the dirt.

$$2 + 3 = 23$$

Each train car is comfort
 pass through small Italian towns
 language is what I read
 in looks

+

holes punched in ticket

*

fresh smell of cut grass

÷

by Grandpa's house

= Poem jump.

Poem Get On

Sat on bench

next to bus stop

for one hour

People got on

Off a women

behind tinted

glass spoke

to a dozen

daisies bangs

cut above eyebrows.

I lost the blue
 marble watched
 it warble under

The stairs Furniture:
 modern orange
 and steel

I thought about the living
 room sun
 a breath there

In the kitchen
 mirror in the hall
 "I'm going to write

A bestseller," I said
 a breath there
 in the kitchen

"Dedicated to ewe,"
 he he thought
 above a field

Field of sheep there
 a breath there
 in the kitchen.

pool.

A Touch

ing moment
epiphany riddled,
 sharpened
in two or one
 pencil shavings,
returned
from before last night,
 an answer belittled
with trinkets,
 accessories.

A Fancy Car Show

in town

I think of ice cream

(x)

black headed seagulls

scream at my poem

perhaps

read slower

a bit of ()

old men in argyle

socks see women

white pants

black underwear

next to magnolia trees

nothing but a ()

between their big

white flowers and water.

It

After tourists leave
Jesus turns his lights
down low

After this I walk
by the beach
drum beat

under feet Beach
has become a place
for lovers

After this the clock
is a meeting place
“Late,” it says

After this women walk alone
sit by the wall
“Weight,” he said

After this IT occurs to me
in a blue elevator
in a blue shirt.

Poem, Sleep

Asleep on the train

I send you a metal basket
 plastic fruit
 dream of me

overnight is four
 small walls
 Empty dreaming fruit
 With Kodiak cameras

silver forms brought
 down to the frozen
 Steps of a metallic pocket
 Watch swings from ceiling

over pages of ancient
 battle time to leave
 That behind for children
 And their ice cream carols

Sung with voices of frogs
 sweet little chirps
 of lasting prayer
 small movie

of living species
 empty of past road
 Signs lights in the cars
 Clash Clitter metallic

reflections lose danger
 after I develop the photos
 We took at Christmas mountain
 Of gifts left only for pictures

I can't identify
 tastes of metallic garlic
 Broken sorrows of a crying
 Sunflower I fuck

Ed up my song with words
 poem sleep

in the basket

lay the head

of a Nine Day Queen
her lover with metallic
Heart carves ten lines
Deep in stone I hum

a ballad of future
shallow shoes walking
Towards the axe bash
And smitter I arrive

to drying fruit
in a sky raining
sun upon metallic hearts
in a lunar battlefield.

Barnacle

days amongst the rocks
pinch crabs between small

fingers, words become lost
perhaps mis placed

as waves wash over
our seats we fish

all day a spool
of string a hook

live bait nothing
caught Grandma and I

walk home to roast
mini marsh mallows

over a candle.

Beloved Music

A big brown chair

it's there by the window

sun shining

desert shines

its spotlight

On heaven

prophet you

lucky steel studded

belt

my pants profit

From your ability

to conform with form

and breath holes

Tongues hither and slither

"It's a blustery day

there in the garden,"

hummed my son

sun shining

by the window it's there

a big brown chair.

Poem Here Prelude

Seven bubbles
 hug the center
 slowly POP

POP POP POP

to three

I drink and am left

with one

the Kalea is full
 of people on their way

to work

“Marta,” I sd.

 “Hola,” she sd.

reciting her tongue
 meeting people on the st.

 Here I am
 and you
 are there Easy
 to read I tell you
 these things

BLAH BLAH
 BLAH
 yo dije.

Sound of Saw on Getaria Kalea

Father is home in the garage
Making cabinets smell of saw
Dust softness of hands is what

I watch from behind camping
Supplies *I walk the street*
Want to find a tattoo parlor

Was missing the other day
It was raining people stopped
Working Poem hear the hammer.

Electricity

Electric city

he sat on the sand
 sea side door
 to the cottage

Cried to the creek
 hummed a ballad
 about a sacred

Burro hard worked
 Mexican mammal
 upside down

Your starry dynamo
 corner lost its edge
 crumbles to ashes

Birth set upon the fire
 where he cried
 cried loud until his sea

Shell washed to shore
 a Carpsian beach
 laden with jewels

Forgotten by the lonesome
 pirates drunk on their mother's
 couches ships sunk

Offshore wild whirly
 streets where the music
 floats through street

Light essence of cardiatic moments
 recognized now maybe
 then through hot

Sweats cry
 cry damn you
 I need to hear you

There must slow
 down process recess
 puts us in a space

Ship out of the hotel
hotel room where they found
you alive

Alive
and writhing
or was it writing.

Fear O'Txin Phenk

There that small bookstore
Frank I read smoked
filled the ashtray

with butts of cigarettes

Darkness ashes books brought
down from the burning
building smell

of fire the glue

Sticky the cigarette
in ashes forever
I think of

Frank, the phoenix.

Power Line Park

I pick up broken
glass.

Pieces are sharp
and cut

my finger skin, tears
and dirt

and blood mask play-
paint on my day.

In the field, under
the power lines

yellow jackets
hungrily buzz

sweet smell
of wounded

child, I let one drink
blood

watch the fuzzy
yellow, black

hairs twitch, a nectar
by no other

place than by the hands
of a good deed

doing Cub Scout.
I am not

afraid of the bumble
of the bee. I am

afraid of the blood.
I am afraid

not of the buzzing
of a bee,

but of the large
insects

who buzz my blood
around the power

lines. Thousands
of feet tall,

silver. Alone
under giants,

my eyes squint to see
into the sun.

Once my father
drove me

into the desert, I asked
about the crucifixes

along the highway.
With comfort,

I learned they carried
voices. He

called me on
the phone.

Lunch

It's cold out here on the meridian.

I shout
from the street.
silly all-stars
on my . . .

On a yellow bike
I call
the phoenix

you sit pink hair
laced
in a bun,
a note inked
on your . . .

Two p.m. buy avocados.
Six p.m. make sandwiches.

Picture frame birth, black and you,
I color
a broken canvas
from fire
beneath . . .

On a yellow bike
I call
the phoenix.

Keyhole

When the big car drives
by just before evening.
I know what to do. Upstairs,
a man and his coronet play
an opposite to serenade
On the porch, beer in hand,
day loaded in a trunk
goes by. Itself together
with streets, cross to cross,
under pieces of sky
reserved for saints. Under
the coronet, a woman lectures
her baby about walking,
baby giggles from shopping cart.
When that big car drives
by just before evening, moths
gather around candles.
Laughter leaves the dinner
table, hamburgers on the plate.
When that big car drives
by, a second sight
of you passes. I want
to follow that girl's shadow
from the beach but it's better
here on the porch, where
ecstatic spiders live in exotic
flowers, saints pray
for seven days.

Conglomerate

War. **Dot.**
Com.

two

one by one

one by nothing

rain walks through

skin—feet dry.

The Saloon

I continue to fall
for every good looking
bartender

I see. Rain;
a seven day
city blanket

She paces, back
and forth behind pock
marked bar, oldest

in San Francisco.
Saturated road sides
begin to crumble,

dirt, rock fill city
streets. I find myself
at the bar by three,

to stay dry. She
is soft. No make-up.
Simple, plain.

Blues plays loudly,
I watch lips move,
mother-like, she

says get better,
hands over a grilled
cheese, cup of green

tea. I blow on my
beer to cool it down.
She watches and smiles.

Travel Companion

He carried with him,
always,
a skateboard,
a pocket size Walt
Whitman,
forty ounces of malt
liquor.

At Home in Spring

Pebbles fall to your feet.
Pillows smell of protein
and saturated sheets speak
yellow orchids found on an island
of Kevlar. Galileo saw
heaven not a vision
of church, but a mantra
of revolution.
An end to an ecstatically divine
notion, a table, a bed
of butchered love.
I do not think about the end
of the dream, when the car
reaches the barn, sea varnished,
you lying between the picnic
blankets. Why can't I forget
the peaches you fed me on the horizon
of worship. The peaches you brought
from China, which sang
to the sparrows lost to
a vanished home.

3rd Avenue

Sun in the kitchen
before breakfast
this room

Is the warmest
our first
apart ment

I see you
curl up
on the couch

Writing in a little
black book
years of chances

Secure in the cushions
have not happened
poem wait.

Winnie-the-Pooh Would Like Rodin's Garden

Think think think children
tap their head with pencils
drawing in French
A couple, smooth, naked

Kissing pairs on the street
smooth affection in parks
metro stops children giggle
as they draw butts hidden

behind red velvet ropes
laughter and I see you dark
hair pierced lip heat
has created sweat thin hairs
stuck to smooth nape of neck.

two dozen cats doze on the rocks
 of a roman playground next to a hill
 side castle.

sit on the steps sing American
 songs silently watch dogs pass
 barking dragged on leashes

sweat drips on paper I can't believe
 history in your eyes staring
 back curious lives

by this castle know more

poem sit

sit on the rocks

little worn ragged sentries
 to doors different histories

()

sleep

(÷)

divided eyes
 look old and haunting
 watch me

decide.

Trains

Today Tuesday
are a half hour late

small child with monkey
stuffed cotton shows

me silly faces
Poem Laugh.

Hotel Room

It's not as I left it
 stained with smoke
 sidles bridge where
 I spare changed students
 for beer middle age
 crusty man his side
 kick taught me protocol

Be honest aggressive always
 always drink beer local square
 we gathered un-bathed dreadlocks
 young

I am out of place
 standing next to the bench
 where you handed me a letter

 I kiss another
 her soft skin not until
 I walk through town do I realize
 I was with you ten years
 Penelope I have wondered
 what you are doing The ice
 cream is good and the ocean

is crabby The poem begins now.

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