

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING LONELIER

There is absolutely nothing lonelier
than the little Mars rover
never shutting down, digging up
rocks, so far away from Bond Street
in a light rain. I wonder
if he makes little beeps? If so
he is lonelier still. He fires a laser
into the dust. He coughs. A shiny
thing in the sand turns out to be his.

LE MACHINE ATE HIMSELF

Le machine ate himself the card that is mine
I said, and I have need of the card
now, and thank you, I have a grand problem.
She said *le blah blah blah blah blah*
to which I nodded and gave thanks.
Come back in the afternoon, she said
and I said thank you, and I'm dead.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ALLEN GINSBERG
AT THE GREY GALLERY, NYC

Photographs of young people
growing old are like lights on
in a tall building
and the sun still in the sky.
It is a very special melancholy
to be replaced on the streets
surrounded on all sides
by windows
— a break to text
are you high?
— good — the Ginsberg
photos are great —
they are much better
than this poem —
where a traveler takes
a self-portrait
beneath the arch.
And yet there is something
about a photograph
that poisons the heart.

POEM WRITTEN WITH BASHŌ

After drinking last night
I climbed into the air
and slept badly, a stiff neck
a bridge of flowers
led me into the morning
high above the skylarks.
The children ate cereal
under a gloomy sky, and sadly,
the girl loves her mother
more than she loves me.
I drink from a downpour
and choose her socks
with tiny whales.
I wrote her a song
about our pressing need
to grocery-shop
until it was clear, the mirror
showed a few more years
and a disappointing doughnut.
Let that be my name.

TRANSLATIONS FROM HAFIZ

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Might as well spend money
on wine instead of new clothes

Might as well pour all the wine on these books

Might as well get drunk in a bar

Might as well pour myself
a tearful glass of fire

Might as well stop dreaming
of heaven, legless

Might as well unlearn
the smell of your hair

I am old