

Date: January 12, 2017  
From: Lisa Blas  
To: Dear viewers, dear readers  
Re: Two poems for you

### Pablo Neruda / The Citizen

I went into the tool shops  
in all innocence  
to buy a simple hammer  
or some vague scissors.  
I should never have done it.  
Since then and restlessly  
I devote my time to steel,  
to the most shadowy tools:  
hoes bring me to my knees,  
horseshoes enslave me.  
I am troubled all week,  
chasing aluminum clouds,  
elaborate screws,  
bars of silent nickel,  
unnecessary door-knockers,  
and now the tool shops  
are aware of my addiction —  
they see me come into the cave  
with my wild madman's eyes  
and see that I pine for  
curious smoky things  
which no one would want to buy  
and which I only goggle at.  
For in the addict's dream  
sprout stainless steel flowers,  
endless iron blades,  
eye-droppers of oil,  
water-dippers of zinc,  
saws of marine cut.  
It's like the inside of a star,  
the light in these toolshops —  
there in their own splendour  
are the essential nails,  
the invincible latchkeys,  
the bubbles in spirit levels  
and the tangles of wire.  
They have a whale's heart,  
these tool shops of the port —  
they've swallowed all the seas,  
all the bones of ships,  
waves and ancient tides  
come together there

and leave behind in that stomach  
barrels which rumble about,  
ropes like gold arteries,  
anchors as heavy as planets,  
long and intricate chains  
like intestines of the whale itself  
and harpoons it swallowed, swimming  
east from the Gulf of Penas.  
Once I entered, I never left  
and never stopped going back;  
and I've never got away from  
the aura of tool shops.  
It's like my home ground,  
it teaches me useless things,  
it drowns me like nostalgia.  
What can I do? There are single men  
in hotels, in bachelor rooms;  
there are patriots with drums  
and inexhaustible fliers  
who rise and fall in the air.  
I am not in your world.  
I'm a dedicated citizen,  
I belong to the tool shops.

### **Seamus Heaney / Exposure**

It is December in Wicklow:  
Alders dripping, birches  
Inheriting the last light,  
The ash tree cold to look at.

A comet that was lost  
Should be visible at sunset,  
Those million tons of light  
Like a glimmer of haws and rose-hips,

And I sometimes see a falling star.  
If I could come on meteorite!  
Instead I walk through damp leaves,  
Husks, the spent flukes of autumn,

Imagining a hero  
On some muddy compound,  
His gift like a slingstone  
Whirled for the desperate.

How did I end up like this?  
I often think of my friends'  
Beautiful prismatic counselling  
And the anvil brains of some who hate me

As I sit weighing and weighing

My responsible tristia.  
For what? For the ear? For the people?  
For what is said behind-backs?

Rain comes down through the alders,  
Its low conductive voices  
Mutter about let-downs and erosions  
And yet each drop recalls

The diamond absolutes.  
I am neither internee nor informer;  
An inner йmigrй, grown long-haired  
And thoughtful; a wood-kerne

Escaped from the massacre,  
Taking protective colouring  
From bole and bark, feeling  
Every wind that blows;

Who, blowing up these sparks  
For their meagre heat, have missed  
The once-in-a-lifetime portent,  
The comet's pulsing rose.