



# **Sharks of Mary Shelley**

Jeff Harrison

*Argotist Ebooks*

Cover image by Rich Curtis

Copyright © Jeff Harrison 2010  
All rights reserved  
Argotist Ebooks

Some of these poems first appeared in Anny Ballardini's *Poets' Corner*, and in *EOAGH*,  
*Coconut, Eratio and Reconfigurations*.

# **Sharks of Mary Shelley**

## Sharks of Mary Shelley

ROGER DODSWORTH: THE REANIMATED ENGLISHMAN

Sawsharks: 5 species  
in a single family.

2 long barbels  
before the nostrils.

locales: western Pacific  
western North Atlantic  
southeastern Atlantic  
western Indian oceans

\*

FRANKENSTEIN

Bramble Sharks  
(Echinorhinidae) reach  
a length of over 10 feet.  
they eat bony fishes, illegible,  
smaller sharks, octopuses,  
squid, crabs & eggcases of  
sharks y chimaeras - tangled  
to lambs, to books' mopes

\*

THE HEIR OF MONDOLFO

Dogfish Sharks, sunk, watchful,  
guilty, und num'rous / when  
they want to rise, they're oary then

\*

PREFACE TO THE POETICAL WORKS  
OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Frilled Sharks look unto eels, with heads  
as a snake (Herr Bibliothekarius has remarked  
that these may be the "serpents" in "The  
Snake Polisher's Shorter Paradise")

among the others ever  
this claim may be ascertained personally:

they are the falcons of the gulf stream

\*

MATHILDA

Finback Catsharks are similar to true  
catsharks (Scyliorhinidae), but reveal  
their fictitiousness via their first dorsal fins  
positioned in front of the pelvic fins!!

\*

A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN

Thresher Sharks (order Lamniformes)?  
precaudal pits, yes. caudal keels, no.  
20 feet long... caudal fins nearly as long  
as the body... sunk 1,650 feet beneath  
the watery floor... Parnassian... ..

\*

THE FORTUNES OF PERKIN WARBECK

Longtailed Carpetsharks frequent contemporary  
shipwreck. on land (where mountains turn, event-  
ually, pleasant) they'd be more playful, mariners  
request, but even thru Herr B's thickest care comes  
the recall (gliding blithe as thru reefs) of L.C. indecorous

## Roller Coasters of Phillis Wheatley

### ON BEING BROUGHT FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA

The Kingda Ka at Six Flags Great Adventure (Jackson, New Jersey) is 464 feet & 3118 feet long, with a drop of 428 feet. a top speed of 128 miles per hour, Kingda Ka's passengers, handfast meadowlarks born for the sake of falling between fingers, are not black-thorn, nor oh awake they are from some indomitable hue

\*

### GOLIATH OF GATH

The Top Thrill Dragster goes from zero to 120 mph in 4 seconds. at zero mph it's a hand inactive and unwary next to a threat'ning maw -

a wounded, sick, or aging brown bat inches away from an attentive grey-striped cat

\*

### TO S.M. A YOUNG AFRICAN PAINTER, ON SEEING HIS WORKS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Thunder Dolphin passes thru the middle of a ferris wheel, and, like a poem, is within the horizon of universal apology with

pagoda abruptness; her (T.D.) money all workable, a second-best peep otherwise or, even, mosque

\*

### A HYMN TO THE MORNING

Steel Dragon 2000 is the tallest coaster to use a traditional chain lift (due to the lift hill's length 2 chains are used) & cost \$50 million, more than a Goya

do you know how Goya died?



mad in a dark wet house  
he drew on the walls  
every monkey on a tree  
was his story

he began losing the brain  
misanthrope suddenly  
he refugee in his house

\*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON

Gravity Pleasure Switchback Railway, built by  
LaMarcus Adna Thompson, was the first roller  
coaster in the United States (roller coasters  
originated in Russia, then made their way to  
France, stealing away under cover of darkness)

5 cents a ride

a nickel  
could ne'er help unknot any loftier prize

\*

ON IMAGINATION

The Russian Mountains opened in 1804.

The Russian Mountains was  
the first roller coaster in Paris.

The Russian Mountains would  
dump most its carriages as it  
carried them to the bottom.

The Russian Mountains slew  
many lovely courtesans.

\*

NIOBE IN DISTRESS FOR HER CHILDREN  
SLAIN BY APOLLO, FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSIS,  
BOOK VI. AND FROM A VIEW OF THE PAINTING  
OF MRS. RICHARD WILSON

Millennium Force was the first roller coaster  
to utilize a magnetic braking system. like

most roller coasters, it is taller than the statue  
of liberty. golden the pace of Millennium Force --

golden the pace of all roller coasters,  
silver speaks the water to their eyes

they move as a glass stream - the grass  
has burned down & the water gets dry

in love they are with this short planet

sunwards you streams to what sunshine? I'm  
fearful that my pace could be thus golden

## Wasps of Zane Grey

### WILD HORSE MESA

Cuckoo Wasps (aka Gold Wasps, Ruby Wasps, & Jewel Wasps) are parasites (have they 7 flowers?) that lay their eggs in the nests of other insects (they've, Cuckoo Wasps, 7 flowers, would you believe it's about the finish of the Process? see the Crowned King when Flamel had the stone for the Red).

\*

### RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

Gall Wasps paralyze plants, causing the plants to form galls that feed & shelter the wasps' larvae.

among the Pitjandjara such a transfer is made.

The first description of a gall wasp's life cycle was published in 1675 by Pope Innocent XII's personal doctor (Marcello Malpighi)

\*

### THE REDHEAD OUTFIT AND OTHER STORIES

The White-faced Hornet is (attention! implicated again --) about 1.2 inches long & is black w/ white markings on most of its segments & on its face. its grey nest is oft suspended from a tree limb

attention White-faced Hornet Implicated Again, underlying planets are making themselves known and making known injury rubric + mending alignment = nest preserved in part & tree limb preserved entire

\*

### THIRTY THOUSAND ON THE HOOF

Paper Wasps eat nectar & kill caterpillars  
to feed the larvae. plant & wood fibers are  
collected & chewed into papier-maché to make  
nests under dense vegetation or eaves of buildings

the sound of their assembling is the hooves  
of fauns that rattle in a drained fountain

\*

### RAIDERS OF SPANISH PEAKS

Organ Pipe Wasps make mud nests, resembling  
organ pipes. potters follow them to rich clay  
deposits. were you to break up their nests,  
you'd find plenty of spiders incapacitated to  
this world, they don't live for air anymore

## Geological Time of Aphra Behn

### THE FEIGN'D CURTIZANS

the Quaternary (which is further  
divided into Pleistocene epoch  
& Holocene epoch) was a period  
(the 2nd of the Cenozoic era)

of successive ice ages, flat ice  
outside to magnify the malady w/in  
so's skies suspect calendar'd dead

those dead, those  
seven, were ruined by lightning

lightning,  
what of you that stuck around,  
suffer my, the 8th?, sickly steps

\*

### A FARCE CALL'D THE FALSE COUNT

the Tertiary is termed the age of  
mammals. flowering plants, grasslands,  
& - deciduous trees widespread - &  
aloud softly with harvest & remorse:  
a proverb a day for their pains. tears  
misted them on, onward, in general bowed.  
ask never the day again, the Tertiary, oh

\*

### ORONOKO: OR, THE ROYAL SLAVE

Cretaceous: thunderous lizards ruled  
the land, the skies, the seas;

thus, obedience. thus, writing  
rescues theory, the skies, seas,

insects, crocodiles,  
& tortoises  
continued to evolve

\*

POEMS UPON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

Jurassic with brambles anew, birds  
first appeared. dominant: cycads,  
conifers. more than a fair share  
of ammonites, brachiopods, bivalves.

thus let the crown hold; pierced  
is every fetter with Virginia's limbs

\*

THE YOUNG KING: OR, THE MISTAKE

the Triassic is termed "Portrait:  
Headless, with Mirror" when, as  
in night, mammals & giant marine  
reptiles are bent to black & grey,

hideous, forlorn.

\*

THE EMPEROR OF THE MOON

1223 1443 5226  
5446 7889 7449

108811 10121211  
138814 13121214

15161617 15121217  
18161619 18202019

{Palaeozoic} 21161622  
{crimson,} {that channel}

\*

THE CITY HEIRESS

quoth the Ordovician  
("age of graptolites"

is analogue of "tempting")  
period "Am Dust", was Foil'd, Was it

Go Down, Star (Ordovician; far), the day's  
Up, Closer Sun: this lyric, graptolite else,  
is another Good Samaritan of the Dawns

## Poisons of Felicia Hemans

### CASABIANCA

the fatal dose of arsenic  
is 200 milligrams. It was  
Albertus Magnus, waistcoat  
unbuttoned, mouth gorged  
with bread, who isolated  
this element (1250).

yet another show  
to strike earthly love,  
it's found in fish &  
crustaceans, in ores,  
coal, & soil. it is toxic  
by copying creature light

\*

### TALES, AND HISTORIC SCENES

Strychnine: the deathly qualities  
of Nux vomica, a berry, was known  
to the Arabs as early as the 5th century.

Strychnos nux vomica  
undid Alexander the Great,  
among others. like any labyrinth,  
Strychnine, no cup of rain,  
mangles its corners, & like a labyrinth's  
beast, mangles its comers

\*

### THE VESPERS OF PALERMO

I.

Hemlock  
doesn't affect  
larks & quails

II.



Socrates,  
will pity  
ever summit triumph?

\*

#### THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD

Cyanide is found in laurel leaves.

Livia Drusilla soaked  
the figs of Augustus  
(hitherto dusty, &  
ordinary, hitherto)  
in this poison.

Augustus,  
is it true the spaces  
disbursed between breaths  
weigh memory as worthy this  
unworthy this retention  
for relocation's keeping?

\*

#### A MONARCH'S DEATH-BED

Aconite, hailing from saliva hailing  
from Cerberus, is hailed as Queen  
of Poisons. also hailed as wolfsbane,  
leopardsbane, devil's helmet, &  
blue rocket. walking along that portico  
to the double doors of wolfsbane, you  
may see the green column  
is "parch", the red column  
is "flay", the blue column  
is "deafness", the yellow column  
is "convulse", the white column  
is "the 1000th-most head of Cerberus"

## Ducks of Cotton Mather

### THE WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD

the Laysan Teal has  
a dark head & neck,  
fourteen plumes (&  
seven are of gold),  
a white ring around  
the eye, a blurred blue  
ring around the bill,

the same

blurred blue ring around  
Cotton's incapable sleep

thievish is the Laysan Teal,  
&, as such, surreptitious

seven of the plumes: hopeless  
(the same that are of gold)

the Laysan Teal resembles  
the female Mallard, but  
more reddish-brown

\*

### BRONTOLOGIA SACRA

the female Mallard is  
mottled  
buffy-brown in color  
a pale eye-brow  
a dark stripe through the eye

she peruses darkness  
her raptures are unprinted  
(raptures imperfectly corrupted)

the male Mallard has  
a metallic-green head  
& neck separated from  
a purplish-brown breast

by a white ring

the same

white ring around  
the Laysan Teal's eye

their bodies generally go  
unburied, male & female

\*

#### HUMILIATIONS FOLLOW'D WITH DELIVERANCES

the Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)  
is the sole representative of its genus. it's  
marked like a harlequin & is also known as  
the Rock Duck, the Mountain Duck, the Squealer,  
& Lord and Lady. a mountain duck that frequents  
swiftly running streams. hunters often hang rhymes  
on their wings. always there's a line about rain-haunted  
skies. "Come, barren Graces", while improbable, is  
a traditional beginning to these rhymes.

\*

#### NARRATIVES OF THE INDIAN WARS

the Ruddy (Spine-tailed, Heavy-tailed,  
Quill-tail, Stiff-tail, Bristle-tail, Sleepy,  
Fool, Deaf, Shot-pouch, Daub, Stubble,  
Twist, Blather, Scoot, Hickory-head,  
Paddy, Noddy, Dinky, Hard-tack) Duck is  
equally fond of salt, brackish, & fresh water.  
its flight is rapid, with a whirring sound,  
occasioned by its wings' concave form.  
they ease to whatever the dawn requires.

\*

#### A VOICE FROM HEAVEN

tho web-footed, Mandarin Ducks  
have the power of perching.

branches of trees overhanging ponds.

the tunefulness of iron clasps.

the Chinese, who use these ducks  
in marriage ceremonies, are loathe  
to part with them to visitors.

Herr Bibliothekarius, in April 1836, wrote  
William Wormswort, "I could more easily  
send you two live Mandarins  
than a pair of Mandarin. Ducks."

they are the only ducks that prefer captivity,  
"longing," in Herr B's words, "at the chains' clarion"

## Comets of Edward Albee

### WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

Comet Hyakutake was spotted by  
Yuji Hyakutake (January 30, 1996).  
its closest approach was 9.3 million  
miles away. it wished to kiss the rust  
off of Yuji's nose. but that nose, Comet  
Hyakutake, is a scoundrel, outliving 1000s  
of fires. crackle, sniff. their warmth was pale!

\*

### THE DEATH OF BESSIE SMITH

Comet Halley is from one of the cities  
that ape the Earth's knowledge.

Gamaliel & Yehoshua were on a boat;  
the former had prepared bread for food  
the latter had prepared bread & flour for food

when Gamaliel's bread was consumed by him  
he relied on Yehoshua's flour. to the question  
of Gamaliel, were you aware of a delay  
in the journey, that you took much food,  
Yehoshua replied, there's a star once a 70 year  
that makes the captains of ships err.

said Gamaliel, you possess so much wisdom & still  
you're compelled to go on a ship to make your living.

\*

### THE AMERICAN DREAM

Comet Wild 2 is known as The Six-Year Worm  
due to the number of years between sightings.

Comet Wild 2 is to the eye as a cat is to a grape.

Comet Wild 2 is a cruel take on a cat, on a grape;  
Comet Wild 2 is a conte cruel to the literary eye.

\*

BOX / QUOTATIONS FROM CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG

before 1840 Comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko had an orbit that kept it far from our Sun (a cow during her milk).

In 1840 Comet C-G neared Jupiter, whose gravity moved Comet C-G closer to our Sun (a cow during her milk).

a close approach near Jupiter in 1959 moved Comet C-G even closer to our Sun (a cow during her milk). since

Comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko was distant from our Sun, a cow during her milk, until recent times, it hasn't

melted a lot: Comet C-G's looks are more anciently, maybe. what did our Sun (cow, milk) look like when she was young?

\*

TINY ALICE

Comet Linear  
September 27, 1999  
Threatening the World  
with Famine, Plague, & War:

To Princes, Death  
To Kingdoms, many Crosses  
To Woods, Cold the First things  
To all Estates, inevitable Losses  
To Aromas, a Surcease of gentleness  
To Herdsmen, Rot  
To Burning mysteries, the Coolest guess  
To Plowmen, hapless Seasons  
To Mathematicians, Arrayed letters  
To Sailors, Storms  
To Years, An hour Each Minute  
To Cities, Civil Treasons

\*

THE ZOO STORY

Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9  
was snared by gravity &  
plunged into Jupiter's atmosphere.  
some of the debris had diameters  
larger than that of the planet Earth.

guestless today  
the path of Shoemaker-Levy 9

## Seven Wonders of Max Beerbohm

### THE PERVASION OF ROUGE

the Great Pyramid of Giza precedes  
the maples, the oaks, some hold.  
located at the necropolis of Memphis.  
at the point of the Pyramid is the regard  
of 42 centuries. heaviest shroud on earth.

\*

### GROUPS OF MYRMIDONS

overlook the full surroundings  
& sink into Scheherazade's satchel  
bubble up carefully & come forward  
bare-handed as the brow of Amyitis

now each off-hand phrase  
has at least some warmth  
intermediate enough,  
Nebuchadnezzar enough

yes! yes! send me any flounce  
from any scene! the trifles open naturally,  
now even the sharpest use  
Observatory telescopes to see 'em,

though they still come to us stooped  
& obsequious, bubbled up to come forward  
THIRST - my first vicinity was a tolerably warm  
boot upon a road lately removed, a cynical hold upon

the lurking tearfuls... N E B U C H A D N E Z Z A R  
finding prey with his forefinger, just another snake shifting &  
craning to come forward out from the full surroundings, this  
perseverance is a centaur hueless beside remains of fair weather

anchor to swim blood-dyed in intonation, blood to vindicate a  
dog short of hands, some day I'll lay a pair of gloves on her brow  
until then, the whole story is vigorous as ever... the story is  
the Hanging Gardens of Babylon (never existed outside fiction)

\*



ZULEIKA DOBSON

his right hand alofts Victory ivory & gold  
his left hand alofts, by sceptre, an eagle:  
the statue of Zeus at Olympia, who Caligula  
wished to carry to Rome. empty, this dawn,  
the hands of Zeus, the hands of Caligula.

\*

WHISTLER'S WRITING

"when I saw the sacred house of Artemis  
that towers to the clouds, the other Wonders  
were placed in its shade; the Sun has never  
looked upon its equal outside Olympus."

- Antipater de Sidon

St. John Chrysostom tore down  
the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus.  
the day still has her robins. Ephesus  
too had its robins before & behind  
Herostratus. Chrysostom's demise  
likewise robbed no nests.

\*

NO. 2 THE PINES

the monument at Halicarnassus was built  
for King Mausolus by order of Artemisia,  
his queen, who drank his ashes to become  
Artemisia A Breathing Mausoleum. funerary  
notions are red in the ear as green's in grass.

\*

A CLOUD OF PINAFORES

the Colossus of Rhodes was 56 years whole.  
an earthquake left it strewn a millennium, then  
900 camels transported this Helios statue to Syria.

incompletion, that faithful zero,

sometimes waits long past your finishing touch.

\*

ENOCH SOAMES

an earthquake also ruined the Alexandria lighthouse.  
until then, it was a gathering-hall for spectres, 45 in  
number, who, bold & bright as they were in their  
ghostly prime, wouldn't, in the opinion of many,  
make a sound if they all flew off at once, which  
they did (depart), which they didn't (divulge)

## Henry Green of U.S. Civil War Battles

### CHICKAMAUGA

O, the jollity  
pleasures mask!  
the jollity masked,  
also with a dustjacket  
of "Pack My Bag"

\*

### GETTYSBURG

the waters of Nanterre  
(translation of two passages  
from Madame de Créquy's  
Souvenirs), yes, but there's  
turf 'neath your tent,  
same as any camper

\*

### MURFREESBORO

"Caught" (1943) was designed  
to put a lantern in your face -  
ah, your face was already day!

\*

why abhor surprise  
when it's the sole chimera  
Fate provides us?

~

is not forgetfulness a surprise?  
could not oblivion be the pounce  
on that monolithic exposed nerve?

~

all surprises should be filthy with dust

\*

CHANCELLORSVILLE

falling stars never look for me,  
though "Arcady or A Night Out"  
would have them do so

\*

VICKSBURG

before "Concluding" was  
Nature's palmist, this 1948  
novel was artifice's psalmist

\*

BAYOU FORCHE

...besides, "Mr Jonas",  
I silent away among names

## Hummingbirds of Louisa May Alcott

### ARIEL. THE LEGEND OF A LIGHTHOUSE

Calothorax lucifer, the Lucifer hummingbird, is 3.25 inches long, with a thin decurved bill & a white spot behind each eye. they excell in nothing, hence their name, as they cannot bear to chance a reward in words.

\*

### LITTLE WOMEN

the Calliope hummingbird prefers slothful mountains, & has been seen as high as 11,000 feet. miniscule green feathers cover a barbarous hide. it builds its nests over creeks, or over roads next to streams - to lakes. such waters cover barbarous hides. to write at length on feathers requires mention of birds, streams, lakes, bark, leaves, grass, hair, speech, financial transactions & a fl. fl.uttering & a fl. fl.apping

\*

### V.V.; OR, PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS

the Rufous hummingbird, having an ideal size to weight ratio, outflies all other hummingbirds. has the longest migration route of any U.S. hummingbird. "wanderings shall soften me," frets many a Rufous.

\*

### UNDER THE LILACS

the male  
White-eared  
hummingbird  
has a purple crown

the female  
White-eared  
hummingbird  
has a green crown

were there  
a Green-eared  
hummingbird  
with a white crown,

she'd see the limits  
of a Purple-eared  
hummingbird  
with a white crown

(were there)  
as lace, as  
a lace-edged  
handkerchief

\*

#### LITTLE MEN

the Wedge-tailed Sabrewing hummingbird  
has a daylight-fine shade, she's a ribbon the  
air surveys. such liberty! liberty, to exchange  
unanxious play! despite humming wings.

\*

#### SILVER PITCHERS, AND INDEPENDENCE

Reddish Hermit hummingbirds "Sarah!" have  
a fondness "Sarah!" for Heliconia "Sarah!" plants.  
iridescence "Sarah!" in the Reddish Hermit  
is "Sarah!" rare & is limited "Sarah!" to the throat  
or crown "Sarah!". they overstep the shade.

\*

#### THREE PROVERB STORIES

the Bearded Mountaineer hummingbird  
is subtler & more heartless than other  
hummingbirds who

(ascend, arose, accord - "we accord,"  
the Night Wit answered)

tell futures  
by which wind the pines wear. most  
resemblant to shepherds standing in snow.

## Seahorses of M.R. James

### CANON ALBERIC'S SCRAPBOOK

a Knysna seahorse, sudden & solitary

\*

### A NEIGHBOUR'S LANDMARK

the Réunion seahorse has no need for a name

\*

### A WARNING TO THE CURIOUS

the wafer-thin conjectures  
of the Giraffe seahorse  
know where they're going

\*

### AN EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT

I'll sear your name with candles upon walls,  
Atlantic Lined seahorse!

\*

### MR HUMPHREY AND HIS INHERITANCE

what's this? a sample of a Bullneck  
seahorse's own flesh left to flower?

\*

### THE RESIDENCE AT WHITMINSTER

and where lives the Hedgehog seahorse,  
queries Jeff Herisson, rhetorically.  
a sea out in space some rumor's said to coat,  
replies Jeff Herisson.

\*



## TWO DOCTORS

these chariots  
you must behold, Threespot.  
the Threespot seahorse is obliged  
to face the lion-drawn audience

\*

## THE TRACTATE MIDDOTH

and you too must behold, Lichtenstein's seahorse,  
there are thirty-two letters in the line below  
and twelve syllables in the line above

\*

## THE WANDERINGS AND HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS

submarinely, the Tiger tail seahorse  
is the lamp of faraway overnights

## Firearms of Matthew Arnold

A FRENCH CRITIC ON MILTON

she-she tomb

the Arquebus is fired by a matchlock mechanism  
(a burning slow match in a clamp at the end of  
a small curved lever - the serpentine. upon pulling  
a 2nd lever - the trigger - the clamp lowers the match  
onto the flash pan & ignites the priming powder)

she-she tomb

\*

DOVER BEACH

Flintlock:

the / general term  
for any firearm based / on

the flintlock mechanism

the flintlock mechanism

produces sparks  
when a piece of flint  
held in a spring-loaded hammer  
strikes the frizzen, sending  
the frizzen forward to uncover  
a pan of gunpowder 'neath  
the frizzen. the resulting spark  
ignites the pan powder & this flame  
leaps through a hole to ignite  
the main powder charge inside  
the barrel. thine, what devils.

\*

MEROPE, A TRAGEDY

for each shot of a Pump Action Shotgun  
the shooter cycles the handguard back & forward  
(tho in some guns, such as the Russian RMB-93 or  
the South African Neostead, it's forward then back).

this movement removes the used shell, cocks the action,  
& chambers the new shell. the second shell storms  
not into complaint, but is a song along for the Spring  
\*

#### ON TRANSLATING HOMER

most of the world's recent Assault Rifles  
are designed in bull-pup configuration.  
this means if a trigger is as a word, & that word  
is as dew, & if dew's as a word then a paragraph, as  
a gun if a trigger is as a word, is rain; this means  
the buttplate is attached to the receiver & handle  
w/ the trigger placed ahead of the magazine veil.

\*

#### CULTURE AND ANARCHY

a Semi-Automatic Pistol  
uses part of the energy  
produced by burning  
cartridge powder to  
remove the used cartridge  
from the chamber,  
cock the hammer  
(or striker), & load  
a new cartridge,  
which is usually  
fed from a box  
magazine located  
in the Pistol's handle,  
into the chamber, thus  
a cut flower is laid  
upon soft living grass

## Stringed Instruments of Sheila Kaye-Smith

### ROSE DEEPROSE

the Pipa is  
a four-stringed lute  
with 30 frets &  
a pear-shaped body.

the instrumentalist  
holds the Pipa upright  
& plays with plectra on  
each right-hand finger

to heal doom with details.

\*

### THE END OF THE HOUSE OF ALARD

the Aeolian Harp is typically a wooden box  
with strings stretched lengthwise across  
two bridges. it is played by the wind: the  
play of the wind on a string forces the air  
on the leading side to move faster than  
the trailing side's air; then the pressure ahead  
is slightly less than that behind, pushing  
the string further to the side, until  
the restoring force arising from deflection  
halts & reverses the motion, a dodge, like  
weltschmerz pursued by the weltschmerzounds,  
breathless, panting, ready to drop, yet flying still  
onwards (still flying onwards were perhaps better).

\*

### SHEPHERDS IN SACKCLOTH

the Violin: a bowed string instrument  
with four strings tuned in perfect fifths.  
built by Andrea Amati in 16th century  
by order of the Medici family. the Medicis:  
plenty who swear by wishes to their wishes,  
that they may sleep off their curse if they lie.  
who else were these strings meant for, but those

whose mouths would prove thought by mentions?

\*

#### THE LARDNERS AND THE LAURELWOODS

the name "Guitarra" was introduced into Spanish  
when Guitars were brought into Iberia by the Moors  
after the 10th century. Guitars, yourselves an example  
of Apollo's tangled donkey ears; please, Guitars, you  
unbudded hearts soon blooded, haven't I more crimson?

\*

#### JOANNA GODDEN

the Clavichord's strings run  
transversely from the hitchpin rail  
at the left-hand end to tuning pegs  
on the right. towards the right end  
they pass over a curved wooden bridge.  
the keys are levers with a small brass  
tangent at the far end. the strings,  
of brass, or brass & iron, are arranged  
in pairs. when the key is pressed,  
the tangent hits the strings above,  
as mountains resolve height with woods.

## **Knots of Hilda Doolittle**

### HERMETIC DEFINITION

to tie a Bowline Knot

Bowline is tied to:  
swift thru dolorous lessers

form an eye

eye is tied to:  
ships (schooners) affrighted

with the standing part  
of the rope running underneath.

run the free end thru the  
dolorous lessers swiftly, then  
thru the eye (wide, affrighted  
by schooners), making a loop  
below said eye. take a turn  
around  
the standing part & feed  
the free end back down  
the eye & hold there.

pull standing part to tighten knot.

\*

### HIPPOLYTUS TEMPORIZES

the Double Fisherman's Knot  
is made by looping a rope  
into a figure-8 in order to tie  
two ropes together. since beyond  
rope, as in breath, is almost certainly  
tyranny, it is recommended the  
ropes be secured by their ends.  
endless amounts of rope is desired.  
practical is to tie two ropes into a loop.  
the Double Fisherman will make another  
knot secure when tied with the tag end  
of the rope behind another knot, in other  
words, when half of the Double Fisherman

is tied around the standing line of another knot.

\*

#### HELEN IN EGYPT

to make a Clove Hitch, make a turn  
around a post with the free end  
running underneath the standing part,  
not exactly artistically. was Virginia's idea.  
take a second around in the same  
direction and feed the free end thru  
the eye of the second turn /. pull tight.

It was Virginia's idea to make a Clove Hitch, but Neaera was ready to fall  
in with it. It was to be done thoroughly and lastingly but not exactly  
artistically. Virginia and Neaera were war widows and had made a solemn  
compact to remain widows forever. Ianthe had confessed... As for Appius, he  
tied very few knots and very few people asked him to tie anything. O, he  
felt to the full the lure of treading WHERE NO HUMAN FOOT HAD EVER TROD.  
Ianthe had thrown her wedding-ring at him and flown out of the house. How  
Virginia and Neaera would show him they were widows indeed!

easy to tie and untie, it holds firmly but is not totally secure.

\*

#### THE HEDGEHOG

beware! the Square Knot will untie  
itself under movement. do not trust  
the Square Knot to join two ropes  
together. the Square Knot will capsize  
under a heavy load. when tying the Square  
Knot, both parts of the rope must exit  
together. whence the untrustworthiness  
and trickiness of the Square Knot? gather  
around: but no, I will breathe not a word,  
not until the Double Fisherman runs out of  
rope.

these are the words he was at last compelled to write.

\*

#### HYMEN

to tie an Anchor Bend Knot,  
make two turns around  
the shackle, leaving turns  
open. knots may evade us,  
as our own features are  
less familiar to us, to our.  
take a half-turn around  
the standing line and  
feed the free end thru  
the turns and pull tight.

the Anchor Bend Knot was a ruin awash in wilderness when I found it.



## Cave Paintings of Cordwainer Smith

### ALPHA RALPHA BOULEVARD

in 1879, the first Cave with Stone Age paintings was discovered at Altamira in northern Spain. they were declared to be fakes. today, the Cave is no longer open to the general public, who are declared to be fakes. name incoming:

\*

### THE DEAD LADY OF CLOWN TOWN

the Chauvet Cave, Ardèche valley, December 1994. on the floor reposes skulls of an ibex and two wolves, also bones of bears. the first part of the Cave has red images on the wall, the second, black. the dominant animals throughout the Cave are lions, mammoths, & rhinoceroses. red handprints. these pictures are constantly getting in one another's way. not invisible, but material. as a matter of fact, I believe they're much afraid of us. I quite agree with you, and they shall lose visibility when the time comes. I feel sorry for you, said a lioness; I am always sorry for strangers whom Fate misguides into the Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave.

\*

### A PLANET NAMED SHAYOL

the Lascaux Cave has more than 1500 animal pictures, but the Lascaux Cave is incapable of re-arranging even one of these pictures, tho the sky may drop a star, may shift a cloud. thus, the mineral is distinct from the animal.

\*

### THINK BLUE, COUNT TWO

the paintings at Bédeilhac in the Pyrenees vanished completely within six months of the Cave's discovery. please, please come here on the land,

I had begged, knowing caves are  
rickety as roofs. there are further  
sights beneath the earth: rocks  
and stones and trees are clouds of  
yellow dust rolling behind the wagon.

\*

THE COLONEL CAME BACK FROM NOTHING AT ALL

the Cave of Niaux is in a limestone deposit  
at the entrance to a valley created by the Ariège river.  
Niaux Cave! the clay is your moon, roots your sunshine.

## Fencing Techniques of Daphne du Maurier

### THE SCAPEGOAT

in the Contre Carte Parry, your point is on the left of your opponent's blade & pointed toward his/her flank. your defensive movement begins with the point moving directly forward shortly after the start of the opponent's thrust, but your point then moves in a tight counterclockwise semi-circle around opponent's blade. the object is to use just enough semicircular movement to get around opponent's blade during opponent's disengagement, which should mimic the tableau of atop the hayrack catching the hay you fork into the air. this Parry, the Contre Carte, aka Sitting Up With The Patient, is executed with minimal arm movement & a slight elbow bend.

\*

### REBECCA

the straight thrust is the simplest movement, & one of the hardest attacks to land successfully. it is a direct lunge in the opponent's unprotected line, but the attacker must cover a great distance without any feinting action. the opponent has only to make a cursory parry to avoid the thrust: the foil sits in the chair the air left empty.

\*

### THE INFERNAL WORLD OF BRANWELL BRONTE

in a One-Two Feint, the hand itself remains in place, stock-still straying not to nigh,

no lateral movement or dropping of the hand on the first feint. the direction is

a) forward; b) vertical - a feint above the hand & a hit below or vice-versa

\*

## THE BIRDS

the Ballestra increases velocity during attack.  
jump while pushing off from your rear leg  
(as the first foot begins its step, the rear leg  
propels you forward). both feet land simultaneously,  
with rear foot landing flat while ball of front foot  
strikes the floor. lunge before weight settles.

the front foot is a field of foxes,  
the rear foot the towered hounds.

\*

## MISS HILL AND THE SOLDIERS

what is reading aloud? the recovery back  
to en guard... the recovery of speech  
by reading writing aloud maybe... is  
performed by pushing back with the front  
leg while pulling back with the rear knee.  
the forward recovery to en guard is done  
by a lean forward & up to guard stance,  
with the rear foot moving into position last.

an object flying, as a foil flies,  
leaves no mark when unresisted,  
were it to fly a thousand years.  
walking leaves a furrow eventually.

Jeff Harrison has publications from Writers Forum, MAG Press, Persistencia Press and Furniture Press. He has two e-books at xPress(ed), and one at Blazevox. His poetry has appeared in *An Introduction to the Prose Poem* (Firewheel Editions), *The Hay(na)ku Anthology Vol. II* (Meritage Press), *Poets' Corner*, *EOAGH*, *The Argotist Online*, *Coconut*, *Eratio*, *Sentence: a Journal of Prose Poetics*, *Otoliths*, *Xerography*, *Moria*, *NOON: Journal of the Short Poem*, *Dusie*, *MiPOesias*, *Big Bridge*, *Reconfigurations* and elsewhere.