

Quartets



ANTHONY ETHERIN



FOUR CROWS

CROW (Palindrome)

Deft,
I saw a crow,
over us,
a sure vow or caw
as it fed.

CHOIR OF CROWS (Sonnet)

They stop
and perch
atop
the church,
a choir
below
the spire:
The crows.
Each caw
enlists
ten more.
The mist
is grey
as clay.

CROW FIELDS (Anagrammed Lines)

Winter enfolds varied echoes
in a white or fevered coldness.
A crow flies over tended shine.
The fields are covered in snow....

MURDER OF CROWS (Triolet)

A murder, from a garden, rose
and left us in the dying light.
The sky is red now — no one knows
a murder from a garden rose.
It's rare to see so many crows,
and now they've gone to gather night.
A murder, from a garden, rose —
and left us in the dying light.

FOUR GULLS

DOCK GULLS (Sonnet)

By light,
we mull
their lull
of flight
and white
of skull,
but gulls,
tonight,
will flock
to shore
and swarm
the dock,
before
the storm....

TIDE GULLS (Palindrome)

Go, feel freed....
All abyss, algae saw
a sloop, one vocal lugsail.
As you based it on wash,
surf, or a wade, I died.
A war of rush saw no tides....
A buoy's alias: *Gull*.
A cove, no pool, saw a sea.
Glassy balladeer, flee fog....

SEA GULLS (Beau Présent)

Gulls see eels,
as a glass sea lags.
Gulls assess eggs,
gauge algae.
Gulls ease....
Seas lull.
Gulls age,
alas.

SHORE GULLS (Anagrammed Lines)

When playful seagulls circle, up above the golden shores,
the ocean pulls low beaches over gulfs, here pulling days
across the shells. A plunging curve of blue, heaped yellow,
roars. We feed, but pinch, a cove. One gull laughs helplessly....

FOUR DOLLS

DOLL'S EYE (Triolet)

The doll has cast its eye on you;
it tries a thousand smiles.... (That die —
the one you held but never threw —
the doll has cast.) Its eye on you,
it wants to crawl beside you, too.
It wishes you could hear its cry.
The doll has cast its eye on you;
it tries a thousand smiles that die.

THE SPIRITS OF DOLLS (Aelindrome in 1-2-3-4-5...)

Dolls' tangents,
as I said,
end as hope —
 and aside saints,
 as angels told....

OLD DOLLS (Palindrome)

We fade, if sit aside,
yet eyes are senile —
dull as drab rats too;
fatal lodes
(ore, not in knot).

 To call,
 I fill a cotton knit,
 one rose doll,
 at a foot....

 Star bards allude,
 lines erase —
 yet, eyed,
 I satisfied a few.

PUPPETEER (Anagrammed Lines)

Gig: a random theatre.
I tame, nag, or drag the
haggard marionette....
I am greater than God.

FOUR TOOLS

INK (Sonnet)

Words come
of age.
We thumb
the page
and think
about
the ink.
Without
a shape,
our voice
escapes.
By choice,
we fill
the quill.

THEME (Anagrammed Lines)

Some poems think they are free.
Keen, they metamorphose fires,
yet here make prisons of theme.
(See: they seek form in metaphor....)

ARGOT (Palindrome)

Spill a poem:
A tooth's angelic argot....
Erupt, pure to gracile.
Gnash too-tame opal lips....

RIME (Palindrome by Pairs)

Met I a sonnet's rime,
in a lent pastoral,
or a poem atemporal —
or a toast,
penal in merits,
neon as time....

FOUR FORMS

WHAT'S A TRIOLET?

(Triolet)

The form is short;
some lines repeat,
though terms distort.
The form is short,
its meaning caught
in metered feet.
(The form is short
some lines? Repeat.)

WHAT'S A HAIKU?

(Anagram-Haiku)

Basically, the paced
heptadecasyllabic
blade; a patchy slice.

CONCERNING THE PALINDROME

(Palindrome-Haiku)

Sure, flip. Ah, play mage!
Modes, reversed, omega my
alpha — pilfer us.

ACROSTIC SONNET

(Sonnet)

Around
Constraint,
Resound
Or paint
Some thought
To stroll
In taut
Control....
See lines
Obey
New signs
Now they
Explore
The law....

FOUR WATERS

MARINA (Anagrammed Lines)

Hear that solemn rain
on the marina! Her salt
aroma! The snarl in the
lather! This near moan
alarms another, in the
harsher lamentation....

THE WAVES (Sonnet)

With crests
of white
unrest,
at night,
the waves
awake
from graves
and break
their bones
on glyphs
of stone:
the cliffs
astride
the tide.

THE CAYS (Palindrome)

Raft ropes, nets,
you befilth cay isles.
Seven old, lone vessels I yacht —
lifebuoys tense, port far....

MAN-O-WAR (Palindrome-Sonnet)

Keels, in a tide,
keep rid and log.
I buoy, topside
pooled under fog....
(I ran. I saw
pools yell a gap;
a man-o-war,
raw, on a map.
A galley-sloop
was in a rig
of red.) Nude, looped,
I spot you.... Big,
old nadir! Peaked,
I tan, I sleek....

FOUR MOONS

MOONLIGHT (Palindrome)

A null life,
now one lost, solo slab,
benign in a waxing of fog...
Nix a waning, in ebb, also.
 Lost, sole,
 now one,
 fill Luna.

NEAR DARKNESS (Palindrome by Pairs)

On most
lonesome coal or char,
atoms dwindle.
Go, lend wisdom a tar.
 Choral comes one lost moon....

SELENE (Anagrammed Lines)

A loneliness finds images....
Selene is a land of missing
seas — and long, fine similes.

BLUE MOON (Sonnet)

The Moon,
despite
its white
lagoon,
has strewn
tonight
blue light,
maroon
by dawn
and lost
to sun —
withdrawn,
like frost
unspun.



This booklet features seven sonnets, with rhyme schemes either Petrarchan or Shakespearean. Six are in monometer and one is in dimeter. The dimeter sonnet is a palindrome, and one of the monometer sonnets is an acrostic.

Included also are: three triolets, one in dimeter and two in tetrameter; seven poems whose lines are perfect anagrams of each other (one of these is a haiku); a beau présent, which employs only the six letters appearing in its title; and eight poems palindromic by letter (including a haiku and the aforementioned sonnet).

Two of the poems in this collection are palindromic by pairs of letters, and one sees its letters parsed according to a numerical sequence. This last poem is an ‘aelindrome’ and parses its letters according to the numerical palindrome 1234512345432154321.

The cover art is a manipulation and recolouring of Arthur Rackham’s illustration for “The Twa Corbies”, from the book *Some British Ballads* (1918). (Original image opposite.)

“Crow”, “Choir of Crows” and “Crow Fields” were first published in the leaflet *The Crows* (The Blasted Tree, 2018).

“Dock Gulls”, “Tide Gulls” and “Shore Gulls” were previously published in *antilang. no. 2* (online, 2018) and *antilang. no. 2-3* (print, 2019).



Penteract Press, May 2019
PenteractPress.com

Find more poetry by Anthony Etherin on Twitter,
[@Anthony_Etherin](#), and via [anthonyetherin.wordpress.com](#)

Produced in an edition of 88 signed and numbered copies:

