

RICHARD ANDERS

*The Footprints of One  
Who Has Not Stepped Forth*







RICHARD BANNERS



*Their Imprints of One*

*Who Has Not Stepped Forth*

*Translated by Andrew Joron*



BLACK SQUARE EDITIONS

RICHARD ANDERS

*The Footprints of One*

*Who Has Not Stepped Forth*

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BRANCHING MOTIONLESS through your caresses, I answer  
you as slow lightning.

■

TO HAVE HOVERED AWAY behind your dark word, but not  
to hear it ringing in immemorial ears, for it was promised  
long ago above all mountains.

■

TO DIGEST, by means of the heart, the head that was swal-  
lowed by shoulders raised in a shrug; then to vomit it up as  
a spray of word-flowers to be given to a lady.

■

TO PUT YOURSELF in the position of someone who has expunged you from his soul, and thus to experience your own absence.

■

SHE FISHES ME, well-done as I notoriously am, from the soup. At the last palate-pleasing moment, I get caught in her throat by my one outstanding bone.

■

IN THE BEDROOM, a walking-stick with a nose jumps out of one's hand because it has smelled crossed thighs. It will be laid across the knee, though lacking a backside.

■

EVERY COMPLACENT HAPPINESS advances toward its end, but on tiptoes and with outspread arms, in order not to fall from the tightrope.

■

WHO MAKES ME HIS SHADOW must remove himself, abashed, from every place under the sun: it is he I cannot lure as a spider in the spinning of my fancy. Turned away like a monument, even his stone countenance remains hidden from me.

■

A LANDSCAPE FLOWS through one eye and out the other eye again, runs down the cheeks, curves around the nose, and would have congealed into a beard, if the teeth, hidden below the lips, had not suddenly ceased to chatter.

■

HE KICKED, struggled free of the membrane, reeled precipitously from flower to flower, without being aware that in the pitch-darkness of his brain, he was dreaming the dream of a larva.

ONE CAN STEP OUTSIDE from oneself only by breaking into another.

UPON TIME's self-increasing branchings: clusters of spaces with kernels that, in the juice of emptiness, could have lived like gods and yet are bitter stars in the certainty of dying someday as seeds in eternity's womb.

TO SLICE UP the soft globes of life with a sausage knife is as much a crime as to consecrate them to the skeleton of hope beneath the collarbone.

TO FOLLOW the serpentine switchbacks of wonder higher and higher, until the vertigo of wondering brings a fall from the pinnacle.

▪

HAVING FISHED for a lifetime through obscurity, to believe that the golden-scaled angel sprang forth precisely as one was taking a nap.

▪

FOR PEACE OF MIND, to make an arch of heaven as it once was, at a time when one did not exist.

▪

TO LENGTHEN ONESELF until one is able to thread the famous needle's eye, only to await, in the carpet's thread-heaven, being squashed by a shoe.

▪

SOMEONE LIKES TO GO, not into the street, but under it: for him, unique among billions, sand and earth are air. And because of this uniqueness, he tolerates other people stamping around on his head.



■

IF ONE BUT RESEMBLED one's mirror-image, one would, in horror, go on making faces in the bathroom to the point of overtaking oneself on the road to madness.

■

ONE OF THOSE who ignores books so long that they come to be written by himself.

■

ONE WHO IS HARD on himself cuts himself up into palpable pieces, in order to fit inside a container in which there is nothing.

■

RATHER THAN LENDING WINGS to his imagination like an angel, he sets upon it with bloody earnestness like a wolf, so that it gives birth to naked facts.

■

THAT GILDED NOTHINGNESS in which truth is hidden,  
he calls his silence. Let him remain silent, without adorn-  
ment.

■

AS IF BORN in a dream in which it is unknown who dreams  
and whether it will end in an awakening: so everyone ap-  
pears to himself who has not yet died.

■

HE PICKS UP the slain hours and throws their limp car-  
casses over his shoulder.

■

TO BIND MASKS around one's mirror-image, so that the  
hard animal part of consciousness can cultivate, without il-  
lusion, its blooming excess in the flesh-swarm of imagina-  
tion.

■

WITHOUT MYSELF, I would shrink to true greatness.

■

IN ORDER NOT TO GET BURNED, I prudently blow out every illumination.

■

LET A SLACK MOUTH be harnessed to your wobbling head, reinforcing your reputation as a steadfast sage.

■

YOU DESERTERS into endlessness! At long last, we miss you.

■



IF THE PEARLS (so unlike truffles) thrown before the swine had enjoyed casting aspersions, they would have remained proverbially wingless.

■

ONLY A SAFETY MATCH lights his fire.

■

SQUIRM IN VEXATION for a lifetime inside this blue drop that, out of elevated pride, fell from a deity, or stretch your back into the lotus position—circling the mortal light, you were worthy of the sublime, vertiginous trick of nothingness.

■

WALL UPON WALL, with the known termination: solely to force the breakthrough to the unknown, with a crack that creates an imaginary tremor.

■

WHEN THE MIND begins to scintillate and fly upward, illuminated, if possible, by a rainbow, rigorous philosophers decree its weight, so that it tumbles downward, tossed from cliff to cliff, and henceforth supplies its energy, for example, to electric chairs.

■

CONCEPTIONS THAT REACH HIGH, that augment themselves with limbs as light as birds', consider themselves to be already realized as soon as they are awakened in someone.

■

TO SIEVE, with forked tongue, silted-up syllables, until the gold that flowed past, unrecognized, doubles up in laughter, and the overly padded passages tear apart.

■

TO LISTEN, for a lifetime, right through to the music-surrounded silence, without drowning in that ring of ringing tones, or becoming rigid as a diamond.

■

TO SET ABOUT thinking with one's brain in aprons, for fear of soiling oneself.

■

TO RAISE ONE'S HAT only to those wonders that, like a lottery ticket, one pulls out of a hat.

■

WHOEVER PALMS OFF IMAGES to the clouds should reflect that his head is not a blue bubble that he can pump up to the zenith.

■

AS DIFFICULT AS DIVIDING ZERO, if zero is taken to constitute not the hind-end but the beginning of the world.

■

WHO BUILDS YOU BRIDGES has first of all barred your way as a river.

■

AS HEADS, stones would hate eggs, deeming them, because of their always identical shape and interior slipperiness, to be spoiled stones.

■

THE MOUNTAINS MOVED BY FAITH, in revenge for their displacement, fold up around the throat of the believer.

A FLAME THAT, having abandoned the wick, searches throughout the breadth of my imagination, and strives in vain to escape my head.

■

NIETZSCHE'S BACKBONE, Lichtenberg's cloak—no items for cane- and coat-racks—even should they be made of flesh.

■

WASHED ASHORE: boxes packed with living heads. Once the lids are opened, wide-open eyes stare out at one. In a frenzy of loathing, the boxes are all overturned and the heads are made to roll across the beach. Later, snow-white plastic human torsos creep up alongside with heavy, obscene movements, as if they were sliding on slime. They attach themselves by the suction of their whitely suppurating throat holes to the bases of the heads; then, somewhat jerkily, they stand up and depart as if nothing had happened.



■

IN ASSEMBLING ETERNITY, it is necessary at every instant to set back the time one instant.

■

WHEN THE ROUNDNESSES of life occupy a broader area than fits inside a square skull, the unruly beams in the eyes buckle with laughter.

■

ASMOKE-VEILED BURNING QUESTION ought to care nothing for any answer that comes in here wearing the same fashionable outfit.

■

HE WHO MAKES all the bulkheads tight before the flood likes to cuddle a tiny ocean against his breast.

NO ALARM CLOCK with bells of fur guarantees eternal sleep, Meret Oppenheim.

■

TO HAVE MELTED so far into some music that the saving shore beckons like a silence that never was.

■

WHOEVER WANTS to be devoured young and without pain avoids the dull dentition of an ancient maw.

■

TO DOFF ONE'S HAT before silence and darkness, as if to show respect to nothing and no one.

■

TO BE ABLE TO SAY neither "I" nor "you" to that which,  
lacking flesh and bone, leaps toward one out of the all-black  
mirror.

■

APPROACHING HIS OWN RUIN, he steers the gondola  
through a Venice of his own invention.

■

TO SPEAK IN RIDDLES themselves riddled with decay.

■

METAPHORICAL GEMS that become moldy if their parthe-  
nogenesis is impeded.

■

WITH A BLUENESS conned down from the heavens, the  
naked truth tries to conceal its genitals, which testify  
against it.



■

TO MAKE ONESELF as thin as a hair that is split in thought.

■

NOT EVERYONE WHO, with the smallest nudge, crumbles like snow should be remade into a snowman.

■

BITTER TEARS FALLING into the cup of joy believe that they are plunging into hell.

■

NO METAPHORICAL MATCHSTICK reddens when burned alive.

■

WHERE SPIRITUALISTS and profane jokesters share the same cage, the grillwork of bars is imaginary, but not the audience.

■

TO LET SIMMERING RAGE congeal into joyful porcelain, so as to encourage the bull in the china shop.

■

TO STICK IN SOMEONE'S THROAT as a forgotten name.

■

ONE WHO MAKES HIMSELF so small inside his head that he considers his head to be the universe.

■

IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME, space will twist into the  
shape of a hook, allowing the Creator to take his hat.

■

TO WRITE CREATIVELY means to read water thrown into  
the air, before it vanishes into the sand.

He turned and saw a man standing in the  
light of the moon, and he knew that it was  
the man who had been with him in the  
cave.

He turned and saw a man standing in the  
light of the moon, and he knew that it was  
the man who had been with him in the  
cave.

To stick in someone's throat is quite a  
new experience.

One who makes his head as a man with  
his head to the ground is the universe.

RICHARD ANDERS was born in 1928 in the East Prussia region of Germany. After completing his studies in 1959, he taught German in Athens and Zagreb. In the sixties he worked as an archivist in Hamburg; at that time, he also made contact with the Paris surrealists. Since 1970 he has lived in Berlin as a freelance writer. He has published several books of poetry, two collections of short prose, and an autobiographical novel.

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EDITED BY JOHN YAU



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GARRETT CAPLES

*Painting*

JEAN FRÉMON

*Echo Regime*

JOHN OLSON





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