

# A Lemon

Out of lemon flowers  
loosed  
on the moonlight, love's  
lashed and insatiable  
essences,  
sodden with fragrance,  
the lemon tree's yellow  
emerges,  
the lemons  
move down  
from the tree's planetarium

Delicate merchandise!  
The harbors are big with it-  
bazaars  
for the light and the  
barbarous gold.  
We open  
the halves  
of a miracle,  
and a clotting of acids  
brims  
into the starry  
divisions:  
creation's  
original juices,  
irreducible, changeless,  
alive:  
so the freshness lives on  
in a lemon,  
in the sweet-smelling house of the rind,  
the proportions, arcane and acerb.

Cutting the lemon  
the knife  
leaves a little cathedral:  
alcoves unguessed by the eye  
that open acidulous glass  
to the light; topazes  
riding the droplets,  
altars,  
aromatic facades.

So, while the hand  
holds the cut of the lemon,  
half a world  
on a trencher,  
the gold of the universe  
wells  
to your touch:  
a cup yellow  
with miracles,  
a breast and a nipple  
perfuming the earth;  
a flashing made fruitage,  
the diminutive fire of a planet.

*Pablo Neruda*



# The Lemons

Listen to me, the poets laureate  
move only among plants  
with rare names: boxwood, privet and acanthus.  
But I like roads that lead to grassy  
ditches where boys  
scoop up a few starved  
eels out of half-dry puddles:  
paths that run along the banks  
come down among the tufted canes  
and end in orchards, among the lemon trees.

Better if the riot of the birds  
dies out, swallowed by the blue:  
we'll hear more of the whispering  
of friendly branches in not-quiet air,  
and the sensations of this smell  
that can't divorce itself from earth  
and rains a restless sweetness on the heart.  
Here, by some miracle, the war  
of troubled passions calls a truce;  
here we poor, too, receive our share of riches,  
which is the fragrance of the lemons.

See, in these silences where things  
give over and seem on the verge  
of betraying their final secret,  
sometimes we feel we're about  
to uncover an error in Nature,  
the still point of the world, the link that won't hold,  
the thread to untangle that will finally  
lead to the heart of a truth.  
The eye scans its surroundings,  
the mind inquires aligns divides  
in the perfume that diffuses  
at the day's most languid.  
It's in these silences you see  
in every fleeting human shadow  
some disturbed Divinity.

But the illusion fails, and time returns us  
to noisy cities where the blue  
is seen in patches, up between the roofs.  
And the rain exhausts the earth;  
winter's tedium weighs the houses down,  
the light turns miserly – the soul bitter.  
Till one day through a half-shut gate  
in a courtyard, there among the trees,  
the yellow of the lemons is revealed;  
and the chill in the heart  
thaws, and deep in us  
the golden horns of sunlight  
pelt their songs.



*Eugenio Montale*

# Lemon Blossom

Fragrance was her forte,  
and she wore it well.  
Swaying to Fado,  
eyes closed to this  
unfathomable longing  
delivered into song.  
She stayed close to you,  
scented like the flowers  
she was named for,  
until your knees  
weakened and all  
you could say  
was, \*Yes.  
Yes, you are all  
I could ever want.  
Tonight, or  
any other night.  
Fragrant,  
dancing, loving life  
with every exquisite  
inclination of your  
beautiful, profound mind,  
your lovely, ripened body.



*Elisa Maria Argiro*