

Chapter Two Addendum

Annotated Poem Extended Alternate Text

Full Text

Full text of the poem is included below and is also available in the [Resources](#) section.

"In Memory of Polish Poet Zbigniew Herbert's Visit, Los Angeles, 1971" by Katie Farris

You cannot save this city; you must burn it.
—Z. Herbert

When he came back to our free union,
which is to say *America*, which is to
say *home*,
he was already gone.

He dusted the crown
moldings looking for fingerprints,
or more vivid evidences, perhaps an
insurgent, perhaps an
arsenal.

Since he returned to our free
union he kept his mouth inside
his pants' pocket,
and his key sometimes
chipped his teeth, and this grin
embarrassed us.

He lost reality; he sat oftentimes abruptly
down, and splintered chair
after chair.

Shouting from his pants'
pocket to Be careful!
Get down!

We looked at him
when he shouted like that.

We would have taken him back,

but he was already gone—
gumming benchbacks in public
parks, knocking on windows

with his forehead, a balding
bumblebee.

Annotations of the Poem

Below are each of the highlighted lines from the original poem, with Rachel Morgan's annotations for each, as well as related definitions.

"You cannot save this city; you must burn it" is highlighted, and the annotation reads: This is an epigraph, and poets can use these to provide context, history, definitions, etc. often placed before a poem.

[Epigraph, definition from Poets.org](#): "An epigraph is a quotation set at the beginning of a literary work or one of its divisions to suggest its theme."

"Which is to say American, which is to say" is highlighted and the annotation reads: This is enjambement, which means the line continues to the next without punctuation.

[Enjambment, definition from Poets.org](#): "Enjambment is the continuation of a sentence or clause across a poetic line break."

"His pants' pocket" is highlighted and the annotation reads: The opposite of enjambement is an end-stopped line, where the line ends with punctuation.

[End-stopped line, definition from Poetry Foundation](#): "A metrical line ending at a grammatical boundary or break—such as a dash or closing parenthesis—or with punctuation such as a colon, a semicolon, or a period. A line is considered end-stopped, too, if it contains a complete phrase."

"Shouting from his pants' / pocket to Be careful / Get down!" is highlighted and the annotation reads: Stanzas are lines grouped together and the grouping can be determined by form or poet's choice.

[Stanza, definition from Poets.org](#): "A stanza is a grouping of lines that forms the main unit in a poem."

"We looked at him / when he shouted like that" are two lines highlighted and the annotation reads: Two lines together form a couplet, and when these lines rhyme, it's called an heroic couplet.

[Couplet, definition from Poets.org](#): "A couplet is two successive lines of poetry, often rhymed." Note that when the lines rhyme, it is called an heroic couplet.

"with his forehead, a balding / bumblebee" is highlighted and the annotation reads: The aging poet's bald head is compared to a bumble bee in this metaphor.

[Metaphor. definition from Poets.org](#): “A metaphor is a comparison between essentially unlike things or the application of a name or description to something to which it is not literally applicable.”

Attributions

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