

Pui Ying Wong – Two Poems

In The City Of Sirens

Friends have gone to join the activists' corps.
Some play cynics or with their cymbals of sounds.
Some leave for a new country all together.
The news is not good. There are many worlds to save.

We know evil walks on streets like ours, eats similar food.
It comes in garbs of sorts, even priests' and princes'.
Executioners practice their craft, barely bother with plots.
And our own, dead on city streets, slumped in cars.
Nothing is done. No one hears.

Poetry is useless like house keys with no address.
Some say let's start a honest conversation,
Forgetting that we've been talking and talking
Since the days of Homer.

So many houses on fire,
So many clouds, ringed with ash.

If The Horse Dies

If the horse dies, take a walk.
If the drain becomes clogged, call the plumber.
If on your wedding day it rains, bring
 an oversized umbrella,
 (flowers optional).
If they give you dirty looks and call you names,
 be as beautiful as your mother tells you to.
If you want to cry, do, but not in the city square.
If on nights you can't sleep, count syllables.
 Remember words are like people,
 don't mistreat them
 and try to see them as they are.
If the poem doesn't show up in due time,
 go looking for it like it's your child.
Above all, don't forget
 the flame that starts the whole enterprise,
 the vaulted sky you never tire of,
 the sun and moon that will be with you
 till the end.

Pui Ying Wong was born in Hong Kong. Her new collection of poetry *The Feast* is forthcoming from Mad Hat Press in 2021. She is the author of two full-length books of poetry: *An Emigrant's Winter* (Glass Lyre Press, 2016) and *Yellow Plum Season* (New York Quarterly Books, 2010)—along with two chapbooks. She has received a Pushcart Prize. Her poems have appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Plume Poetry*, *New Letters*, *Zone 3* and *The New York Times*, among others. After many years in Brooklyn she now lives in Cambridge Massachusetts with her husband, the poet Tim Suermondt.