

POETRY

Boscobel

I

I rode a mare
 who had three heads
one quick, two dead
 a wish had held
the living head.

Two ways I whipped
 the triple mare
to separate
 a greening maze.
We pitched

Us down in shattered wood
 and with her double
head's shut gaze
 I walled each eye
that I might die.

The living head
 ran on, ran on.
I heard her mane
 assume a leaf
I heard her breath

Inhabit water
 stirruped
for the sacred fool
 I would not lose
my death to be.

II

My hands were birds
which flew before me

My sleeve, the river
they fed above.

At the end of my wrist
one perched singing

Walk you down
by the limber willow

Where your wife waits
a faithful widow

Holding a ring
which you must enter

To bear a child
and he your maker.

There I walked
by the limber willow.

The child was a child
of fire.

III

Watch how wind
anneals with water:
I am a child
drowned to save you.
I am a cockerel
bloody with morning.
I am an end
to your beginning.
I am a victim
betrayed.

Child, we meet
in a warm, green silence:
now all sunlight
patterns our stillness.
What was our shadow
floats above us.
Watch how your fingers
fuse to my tendon.
Listen, your voice
is mine.

Peter Sanger