

Rolf Jacobsen

translated by Roger Greenwald

from *North in the World: Selected Poems of Rolf Jacobsen: A Bilingual Edition*. <https://tinyurl.com/yangbhdd>
A free Reading Guide is available: <http://www.rogergreenwald.org/North-in-the-World-reading-guide.pdf>

Guardian Angel

I am the bird that knocks at your window in the morning
and your companion, whom you cannot know,
the blossoms that light up for the blind.

I am the glacier's crest above the forests, the dazzling one
and the brass voices from cathedral towers.
The thought that suddenly comes over you at midday
and fills you with a singular happiness.

I am one you have loved long ago.
I walk alongside you by day and look intently at you
and put my mouth on your heart
but you don't know it.

I am your third arm and your second
shadow, the white one,
whom you don't have the heart for
and who cannot ever forget you.

Sand

There is a precise total for all the grains of sand on earth,
as well as for the starry worlds above our heads
(supposedly the same for each), if only we knew it,
but it's more important to know that the grains of sand
grow constantly in number and the deserts are getting bigger.

A touch
of violet has mixed itself into the pink of sunset.

Sand is white as milk and soft
as a bowing of violins.
Sand kisses your foot
and trickles over your palms like clean water.
At Bir el Daharrem hills and valleys are made of bronze.
At Thebes and Asmara dead cities lie under the sand.

Sand is crushed mountains and the ashes of everything that has
existed.

The sand dunes cross hot countries like stripes of fire.
Sand covers the planets. Moonbeams are reflections in sand.
Sand is the last thing on earth.
Time sleeping.

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