

## Goat Song

*Pray, do not mock me. I am  
a very foolish fond old man  
and fear I am not in my perfect mind  
- King Lear*

1

Born in the year of the Chinese Dragon  
on the cusp between Jupiter and Saturn  
mutable fire and cardinal earth  
wisdom and justice persistence and grit

but really just an old goat  
*cabron viejo il vecchio*  
a stock *commedia* character  
the girls make fun of to his face

giggle about behind his back  
but sort of pity when he smiles,  
that smile, poor thing,  
kind of sweet and adorable

though all that is out of the question  
A life of nothing but memories  
and imagination, knowing love  
as well as the back of his hand.

2

Always naive and of late out of date,  
losing stature more ways than one:  
pants too long, belts too short  
three inches less height

in what was just a few years,  
not to mention public opinion.  
Becoming despite fitness routines  
neither elf nor leprechaun

as he sometimes fancied he might  
but merely a gnomish little old man  
under a toadstool smoking a pipe  
leering at trim ankles walking by.

3

May-December always absurd,

a classic case of lost cause  
maybe worth the pain of losing  
what never could have been had

to let him see in the rearview mirror  
things closer than they were, more precious  
for knowing how ephemeral,  
to see himself playing himself,

to live love again in all  
its bittersweet impertinence,  
feel again the sweet melting  
of lovers in love, lust and trust,

the sheer joy of knowing her near,  
the *all's well* just the thought of her brings,  
the empathy, the mutual pleasure  
in being vital to one another.

4

*Lunatic, lover and poet all compact*  
says the king of the fairies in a midsummer's dream.  
So then might Dildo the Dotard, tragi-comic  
in his own closet drama, parody:

*Teacher mentor confessor shaman nuncle*  
*by dint of transference all complexed.*  
Enter Oedipus Rex and Father Time  
stage left stage right before the curtain.

Blind the one, eyes gouged out in a fit  
of self-loathing, bloody sockets rinsed with tears.  
The other, long-robed -tongued and -bearded,  
blood-sacrifice in the whisper of his scythe.

5

Ancient by the time his son came home,  
Laertes, digging a hole with an oar-shaped spade  
to plant a seedling peach he knows he  
will not live to see bear fruit.