

It's late, Miss China, and: He and I, and: The
Drownings in the Yonne, and: Small i.

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It's late, Miss China, and: He and I, and: The Drownings in the Yonne, and: Small i

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In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

**It's late, Miss China, and: He and I, and: The
Drownings in the Yonne, and: Small i**

Emmanuel Moses (bio)

Translated by Marilyn Hacker (bio)

It's late, Miss China

the cause of despair was
the effect of another despair
the erased world still pulsed
raindrops ants
a world dreamed henceforth
across the snow

and after weeks of insomnia
the dream, at last

reeds smoke
a soldier in rags

little gnat
in the grimy windowpane
my silence and my stillness
finally frighten you
and you fly away

the car's headlights
coming through the fog
at full speed
interested him so much that

you can imagine what happens next (and last) **[End Page 99]**

He and I

what's disturbing
is the glowing darkness
between the two rooms

in one a child pretends he's rolling
his hoop across a city

in the other a man is sitting
with his head bent toward the floor

so as not to burn his eyes

later the man watched the child
score a point while expecting
the white-gloved waiter
who'd bring him his bowl of raspberries
on a bed of ice
neither of the two was happy
or unhappy **[End Page 100]**

The Drownings in the Yonne

In memory of Frédéric B.

sometimes, you know it, the wheat spears are as blue
as the deep perspectives
of old buildings
at nightfall

and sometimes, tired of stretching vainly toward the sun
they lie down on ridged earth
refusing to move

if you cross the bridge, you will find
a jutting ash tree
washing its wounds in the current

faces call from between the fishing boats
whose flanks beat ceaselessly against the bank
ghost at the edge of an abyss of light

see me my Lord how I am straying
like the lamb condemned to the slaughterhouse I pass through
doorways above which lanterns lead me on with their single eye
I cross steel bridges that tremble
each time a train rolls beneath their bellies

you were born in winter

among old trees surrounded by stones

I climb toward pallid places where there is squabbling night and
day in different
distant languages

the city would like to entice me into a dream [End Page 101]

decked in garlands in honor of your star

but I take my life away deep into the alleyways

a voice rolls down to the trough of the waves

the chimes did not sound

how to lay one's head on a motherly breast?

the drowned room keeps shining

what do we know besides

the old fecundity

Small i

Small i suffers and muddles

a sky-blue thread stripes his heart

as if his eye had leaked into it

he wails he throws himself up

little master Small i

scarlet with anger

at his intestinal torpor

a yellow broom bush by the tracks

no longer calms Small i down

nor purple shrubs the wind abandons

between glistening puddles

and yet Small i once was

complicit with the world

had all the elbow room he needed

at its all-night cafeteria [End Page 102]

Emmanuel Moses

Emmanuel Moses is the author of six collections of poetry and five novels. The poems translated in this issue are from *Figure Rose*, published by Flammarion, and winner of a Prix de poesie de l'Académie Française. *He and I*, a collection of his poems translated by Marilyn Hacker, will be published by the Oberlin College FIELD Translation Series.

Marilyn Hacker

Marilyn Hacker is the author of eleven books of poems and eight collections of translations from French, including Marie Etienne's *King of a Hundred Horsemen*, which

received the 2007 Robert Fagles Translation Prize of the National Poetry Series.

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*Emmanuel Moses**Translated by Marilyn Hacker***It's late, Miss China**

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