

POEMS

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Venus and Jupiter

In evening's cobalt hue
The sun averts his glance
Behind the western hill; two
Planets begin their airy dance—
Venus, queen of heaven,
And Jupiter, her king,
Ten thousand times her size
And brighter, though appearing
Smaller, dimmer, so far
His circumnavigation
Sails around the sun.

Thirteen months apart
They will begin anew,
At times so close the old star-
Gazers in their wise
Pronouncements told the birth
Of beauty, love, or war
From god and woman
Trusting on the earth.

And here is the old moon
Cradling the new in its arms,
Patiently watching for that true
Miracle, rebirth of the sun.

Woman Sweeping at Boudhanath

Kathmandu

Tibetan woman bending from the waist,
dark eyes fixed upon her task,
to sweep the cobbled walkway
circling the great white stupa,
sweeping with a hand brush made of sticks,
her bronze face corrugated
with uncounted seasons of wind and sun,
dressed in her brown Tibetan robe and apron,
her hair bound in a green scarf.

As monks chant and troop
in their saffron and purple robes,
past the prayer wheels turning,
under the line of fluttering flags,
below the Buddha's enormous eyes,
she sweeps the dust of the feet of pilgrims
with the slow patience of a god.