

Five Poems by A.F. Moritz

by Albert Moritz | Dec 16, 2025 | Arts and Literature, Poetry | 4 comments



Simenon

The poem had limped, a witness said,
as it had run toward the Gare St.-Lazare.
That was enough for Maigret
to begin: to trace, track down, finally find
the poem, read it with his massiveness
still deeper, tenser, quieter,
more hidden than the poem's own.

Enough for him to have seen,
before he found it, the ding of its life,
a resentful dream somewhere, a cheap
rented hole, from which it had gone out
each day for years disguised in routine routine,
while it waited, spying until the dawn
would break for murder.

Enough for him to wonder: turn it over
to the inevitable
partial judgment
or let it go?

Shamed

I used to write
"The grasshopper said",
"The groundhog told me",
but people convinced me
with their amused tolerance
or intolerance
that this was naïve.

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However, it is what happened.
And still today
it's what happens:
the caterpillar says to me,
the painted turtle
asks me: "So now
you're ashamed to know us?"

When I Was a Child

Sunrise slants low through the reeds.
The stream so still, there's
dust on the gold green water.

Phronesis the Cricket

Cricket, whatever
result or none you get from
your song you accept,

and shut up, if steps nearby
hint singing might get you killed.

Yours is the very
best idea: to live to
sing another day.

Talking with Stones

every stone is a
head a
grave
stone
erased
heavy quiet
fall on your
knees bend bring
your face close to the
dirt kiss taste
what
things
are beneath
these lips
have
for the time
being
no words

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Author Profile

Albert Moritz



A. F. Moritz has published more than fifteen books of poetry. His work has earned honors including the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Award in Literature of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the Ingram Merrill Fellowship, and selection to the Princeton Series of Contemporary Poets. He has translated seven books of poetry and a novel from Spanish and French, and in collaboration with Theresa Moritz has written biographies of Emma Goldman and Stephen Leacock, and *The Oxford Literary Guide to Canada*. He holds a doctorate in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British poetry. He was the winner of the ReLit Award for poetry in 2005 for *Night Street Repairs*, the Griffin Poetry Prize in 2009 for *The Sentinel*, and the Raymond Souster Award in 2013 for *The New Measures*. He currently serves at the University of

4 Comments

Karl Jirgens on December 16, 2025 at 3:41 pm

Thanks for posting these excellent poems!

Reply

Albert Moritz on December 16, 2025 at 8:02 pm

To the editors:

Thanks for your beautiful presentation of five poems from my forthcoming book, *The Wren*. I've only begun to explore your impressive magazine. Already I admire it very much. Given the nature of the magazine, I want to share with you the British magazine *Ars Notoria*, outstanding: a sort of affairs magazine with a strong socialist, counter-culture slant, and with strong publishing of poetry, literature, and essays on culture. To boast on *The Wren*, I'm going to share it by providing the link to a feature on my poetry that *AN* published last August, including three other poems from *The Wren* and an interview with me centered on my previous book, *Great Silent Ballad*, 2024. Again, thank you. A. F. Moritz. How, here is the link to *AN*:

<https://arsnotoria.com/2025/08/01/poetry-is-primordial-an-interview-with-a-f-moritz/>

Reply

Penn on January 11, 2026 at 8:11 pm

Phronesis the animist! Love these poems and look forward to *THE WREN*.

Reply

Nick Power on February 3, 2026 at 7:30 am

Loved the Simenon poem, Albert, and the knowing in the other poems.
Live to sing another day!

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