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## Three Poems

by Robert Blake Truscott

### Postcard From North Street, Fowey 12/25/1925



--pic. of Joan, 1925 --Joan's letter to Charles

I miss you, Charles;  
Mother cannot handle  
life alone.

And I'm no use.  
I paint pictures of Fowey,  
sell one now and then,  
and on these days when it snows,  
I think of the cold distance  
between us.

It is for us to bear witness,  
I suppose.

Do you miss *me*?  
This portrait, I'm afraid,

is all I can send  
you right now with this legend  
in my hand:

You will have a family in America  
a son for each season,  
a wife faithful as Earth.  
But yours will be  
the warm world: always,  
the cold star of morning  
turning into the love  
the evening brings.

Your sons will paint  
your portrait  
by the light of those stars,  
through the universe of night  
between us now:  
mad, heroic,  
full of words.

Just in time,  
your daughter will give you  
what you fear to lose.

Oh, never mind me,  
I'm a silly, jealous Sis  
who wants her Charlie home again  
this Christmas  
to hold close,  
to hug and hug alive,

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instead of this snow,  
which disappears  
in Fowey, below my window,  
traceless  
into the harbor sea.

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## Arriving in America

### *Steerage, Steiglitz, page. 47*

Old children,  
Marthe, the island's  
lined with hemlocks  
and marble.

People pick up their bags  
all around me, not knowing  
the nature of Paradise.

Ferries come in and out  
at all hours  
to go to the Island  
with the thousand stairs.

In London, Karl said  
“In America, you must have something  
to sell; old men will drown.”

I have clothes.  
I can dress people  
into anything:

Beggars into gentlemen,  
the ignorant become scholars;  
Thieves may apparel as priests.

We used to joke  
in the orphanage, Marthe,

*"Needle and thread,  
needle and thread,  
put them together  
and bury the dead."*

Karl said beware the Stairs;  
ferries go back with the weak;  
no one here knows  
the Law,

the steady unleaving  
of fatal trees,

Oh, they wait, Marthe,  
don't we know ourselves

the ferries,  
the stairs,

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the Law.

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## The Window

H. Lenau looks out at Hell's Kitchen , NYC  
1888,NY from a photo of  
the Great Blizzard by Steiglitz

Those black umbrellas  
are a dream.

I'll stay safe inside today  
and watch:

The maple on the avenue  
is covered in velvet marble,  
bloom of white.

Lord forefend,  
I may fall out this window  
if I keep looking through  
too long.

Is it spring?  
Will nothing come of nothing?  
No, I've changed  
my mind to snow.

I will go down in time  
to the Great Blizzard  
to take that trolley  
out to City Island,

covering all the other places  
with these

indelible, pale vocables  
my history on my way:  
This morning,  
those black umbrellas  
look too real.

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**Robert Blake Truscott** has appeared in more than 40 journals, including *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Nimrod*, *The Mississippi Review*, *Sou'wester*, *The Greenfield Review*, *The California Quarterly*, and *The Literary Review*, as well as several anthologies, such as *In The West of Ireland* and *The Hampden-Sydney Review Anthology*. Truscott is published in a number of educational texts published by the Research Education Association, and he was the poetry editor for more than a decade with *Stone Country* before that journal ceased publication. He is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins Writing Seminars and currently teaches writing as a distance learning instructor and as an instructional designer for Colorado Technical University, and Regis University. Mr. Truscott was the Assistant Director and Writing Specialist for The Douglass/Cook College writing Center at Rutgers University for seven years, and was a Senior Communications Consultant for SWG Consulting in New York City for 15 years. He is currently married and lives in Colorado in the shadow of Pikes Peak.

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