

Seattle City Council

**Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture Committee Meeting**

2 p.m. Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Judith Roche**

Today's poet is **Lyn Coffin**

Lyn Coffin is a widely-published poet, fiction writer, playwright, non-fiction writer and translator. 13 of her books have been published, and 2 more are forthcoming this year. She teaches Literary Fiction in UW's Department of Continuing Education. She is also a profession actor with EffectiveArts. Her website is [lyncoffin.com](http://lyncoffin.com)- "The Sound of One Hand Clapping." She is very pleased to have been chosen as a panel member to judge local students' Weapons to Words submissions

**Goodbye, Godot**

(for Mohen)

By Lyn Coffin

This is a man who embraces snow: he has the juice of pomegranates on his thumbs. He and the snow are always disappearing.

This is not a love poem: this has nothing to do with words or bodies or things that get put inside them. This has to do with sparrows trembling on vines- vines that will still be there in the dust- after the fight after the battle after the war.

Don't get me wrong (she says, knowing words can't keep even personal wolves from unmarked doors.) Don't get me wrong.

I'm not his mother, not his lover (is there time here for an asterisk, meaning 'alas'?) \* I'm not even his friend

though that's a pebble thrown in the right pond (pause here to hear a Bassho Splash!) --I have no culture, he has too much

I had no war- you get the picture. Where he is male, eastern, dark, young- you get the idea. He is a part of what I

forgot to remember. I am the shadow of a memory still to come: we are each to the other the ghost of an imaginary friend

the breath within the wind which is otherwise a lecture. I will not bore you with the usual list of suspects: lineups of heavy-set thugs accused of writing greeting cards moon june love above- Ah- But just one throw of chaff and what might have been a poem is ruined, stained with blood (Tehran) or coffee (Seattle)... In Seattle a waiter arrives labeled (HI! MY NAME IS GODOT) bearing a small glass tray, a mirror-- a mirror as round as a pregnant moon and on that mirror he carries a pomegranate even rounder: the mirror falls (the waiter has been shot)(insert title here)--waiter fruit and glass break open- blood and seed and sweetness mix with shards and he separates the trinity with delicate fingers: fruit from fragments. The fruit and the body are ruined but he puts the mirror back together in the shape of a stained glass poem. These are just words from which we both disappeared. You can find him lying in long sweet grass at the heart of a Persian desert. I am that improbable American grass if I am anything at all.\* But no (meaning yes) I still love you so I'm still here-- a vine in the dust, after the fight after the battle, after the war. And any trembling sparrow is welcome to light on me. (no asterisk\*)

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