

Ode to the Dung Beetle

By Katie Kim

Over high towering termitariums, sunrays
Ablaze a land.
Of scattered acacias and shimmering horizons
There the itsy-bitsy Sisyphus heaves his fortune uphill
With the might of a powerhouse—
Though smaller than a mouse—
He plods patiently on this Earth that is grand.

Beware the kori bustard, my scarab!
The beaks that bite, the three-coed feet.
Beware the serotine bat, and shun
The matutinal *mungus mungo*!

He braces his mighty front legs to the ground;
Using the celestial navigation to plot
his protracted homeward-bound journey to his Penelope,
Back legs pushing inch by inch.
As his fortune rolls, him backwards.
Long time the enroute to home he sought—
So races he by the towers and by land
And with no leisure to spend awhile.

The abruptly, as in uffish sense he stands,
The other one, with eyes of crave
That envies the ball the former has made,
Comes scattering through the tulgey wood,
And fights to steal as it comes!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The two front legs stab-and-jab!
Tossed off his precious and flipped twice over,
The exhaustion of the day trying, his best.
Finally he couldn't take it any longer
And thus the stealer—that bad beetle bandit—
Takes our scarab's treasure away—just like that!

"O exhaustful delay! We can't yet call it a day!"

Watch as that hard work rolls away
With the push of those coleopteran kleptomaniacs
And resolve to go back and start on the journey
Once again.

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