



Apo Da Bloo Djoob

T'kum bakk saef ir no
fae da sie broght
da wirld hem t'dim.

Da sie's da wy
da wirld kum's ta wis.
Is da boat wun in ?

Nier ivrie hoos
a maerchint siemin atill'it,
faedir, unγκil, sun,

gadderin quhier pierie bits
a'da brod wirld an aa'its
fremmit tungs fir fokk t'gokk at.

Men, gien a kuppla jieir,
dat riepир, misterjis,
distint haet sies sjynin

apo dir saat-leddirt skiejins,
d'ir ay laevin sumquhar.

Robert Alan Jamieson (b. 1958)

On the Great Blue Deep

To come back safe, or not,
from the sea brought
the world home to them.

The sea's the way
the world comes to us.
Has the boat come in ?

Nearly every house
had a merchant seaman in it,
a father, an uncle, a son

Gathering strange little bits
of the broad world and all its
foreign tongues for folk to gawk at.

Men, gone for a couple of years,
that reappear, mysterious,
distant hot seas shining

on their salt-leathered skin,
they're permanently leaving somewhere.

*translated from the Shetlandic
by the author*

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