

TEXT / LABEL

FOLKWAYS RECORD FL 9717

SELECTED
POEMS
OF
KENNETH
PATCHEN

READ BY
KENNETH
PATCHEN

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Patchen, Kenneth
Selected Poems of Kenneth Patchen



DESIGNERS COLLABORATIVE

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SELECTED POEMS OF KENNETH PATCHEN

RETURN TO ARCHIVE

**CENTER FOR FOLK LIFE PROGRAMS
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION**

FOLKWAYS RECORD FL 9717

And What with the Blunders

The Origin of Baseball

The Wolf of Winter

The Fox

Nice Day for a Lynching

23rd Street Runs into Heaven

Pastoral

The State of the Nation

'Be Music, Night'

The Lions of Fire Shall Have Their Hunting

Red Wine and Yellow Hair

The Orange Bears

So Be It

The Everlasting Contenders

In Order To

The Man with the Golden Adam's Apple

Soon It Will

The Reason for Skylarks

Descriptive Notes are inside pocket

SELECTED POEMS OF KENNETH PATCHEN

Read by Kenneth Patchen

Selected Poems of
KENNETH PATCHEN
read by the author

INTRODUCTION TO AN ENGLISH EDITION
OF KENNETH PATCHEN'S POEMS

It is difficult to preface Patchen's selected work with any comment which can add to the reader's appreciation, because work of this kind, like all the poetry which takes its origin from Hart Crane and from the speech of contemporary America, has an impact which is wholly immediate—one cannot evaluate it and read it at the same time. Patchen, who is, to my mind, unquestionably the greatest of Crane's successors, and potentially a greater and more coherent figure than Crane himself, has brought the perfection of this immediacy to a point at which, when it succeeds, is very like a blow in its total effect, and it is equally impossible to analyse. His gift for the purely lyrical and evocative phrase is never submerged, even in the poems which succeed least in their intellectual content. But it is not only this gift which makes Patchen's significance. He owes his stature entirely to the fact that he is a human being, that he has a sense of pity, that he has never forfeited the fact of being a man; and because of his humanity and pity he can produce the utterly withering blast of scorn and contempt for the pimps, thimble-riggers, atomic liberators, and the rest of the Gadarene filth who are making the world a desert—a human being, at his full height, surrounded by the enormous chaos and putrefaction of barbarism, standing for pity and human achievement against the entire barbarian apparatus. He is one of those solitary figures like Henry Miller who is utterly unafraid, and whose writing is one vast gesture of solidarity with the victims who know they are victims and the victims who think they are winners. The existence of medical science and of this kind of poetry are the only two factors which give contemporary Western life any claim to be called a civilisation.

The vastness of the conflict, and the depth of Patchen's feeling about it, make him incoherent. Some of the poems are little more than the ejaculations of somebody who is watching a crucifixion. As a satirist he has a fund of scorn and just anger which is out of fashion. It is the fury of someone who loves his fellow men. There is no misanthropy and no cheap sniggering about it. The Army of the Night has found a voice here, which says 'Down with them, let the maniacal cruelty which they spend their substance to devise destroy them, because it shall not destroy us.' The imagery is a sadistic imagery, because in the world we live in they have covered everything, even the flowers, with blood. There has been a tendency to aloof inhumanity in much of our own war poetry, because we relied too much on understanding history. Patchen both understands and feels—he sees the ruin and murder which is coming, and feels the death of every victim.

If the spirit of Patchen comes to reach the new conscript generation, if his poetry and his attitude to poetry gives the next generation a voice, there will be a sound in the street that will not be rain.

ALEX COMFORT

London, 1946

- Side 1 FL 9717A
- Band 1: And What With The Blunders
- Band 2: The Origin of Baseball
- Band 3: The Wolf of Winter
- Band 4: The Fox
- Band 5: Nice Day for a Lynching
- Band 6: 23rd Street Runs Into Heaven
- Band 7: The Lions of Fire Shall Have Their Hunting
- Band 8: Red Wine and Yellow Hair
- Side 2 FL 9717B
- Band 1: The Orange Bears
- Band 2: So Be It
- Band 3: The Everlasting Contenders
- Band 4: In Order To
- Band 5: The Man With the Golden Adam's Apple
- Band 6: The Reason for Skylarks
- Band 7: Pastoral
- Band 8: The State of the Nation
- Band 9: 'Be Music, Night'
- Band 10: Show Time (Soon It Will Be)
- Band 11: Where Shall We Walk

POEMSCAPES



KENNETH
PATCHEN

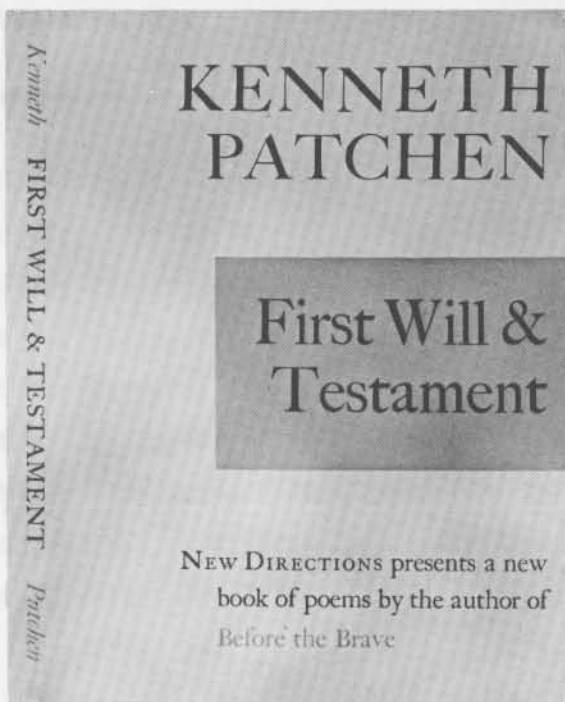
Published in 1958

•••
BEFORE
THE BRAVE
BY
KENNETH
PATCHEN

RANDOM HOUSE
NEW YORK

•••

1st Book - published in 1936



First Edition 1939

CLOTH OF THE TEMPEST

KENNETH PATCHEN is one of the most notable figures in American literature—a figure standing unique and solitary among the poets of America. This latest volume of his work marks a milestone in poetic achievement, for his is a voice that articulates the beauty, the wonder and the horror of today in a powerful language that is of our time. He is capable of exquisite tenderness and of impassioned violence, of piercing irony and mystical contemplation.

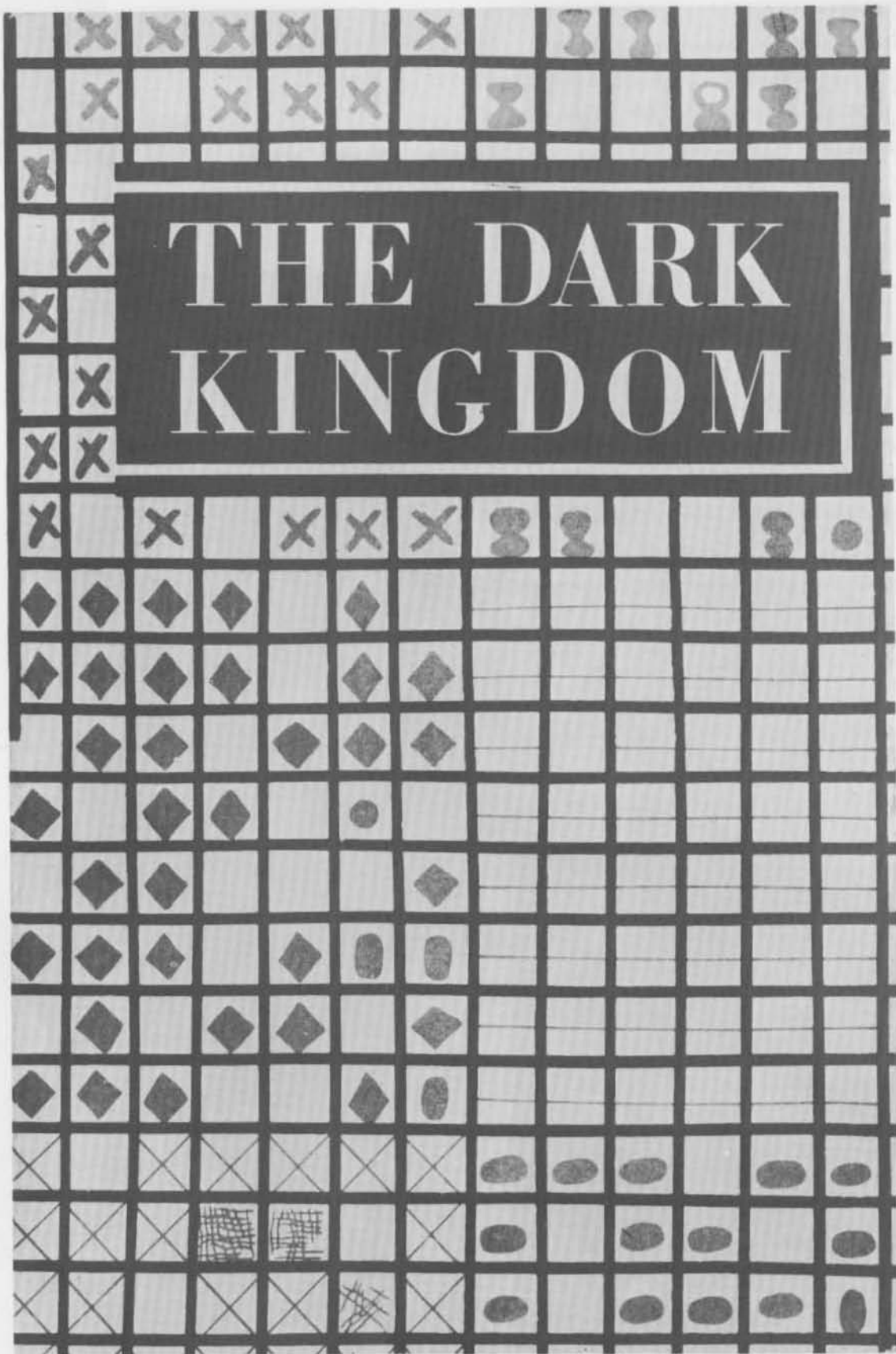
(Continued on front flap)

By KENNETH PATCHEN

author of
Journal of Albion Moonlight and The Dark Kingdom

• HARPER & BROTHERS—ESTABLISHED 1817

First Edition 1943



2nd Printing 1946

MAN IS TO MAN A BEAST: A FAWNING DOG, A ROARING LION,
THE VULGAR FOX, A ROBBER WOLF, THE TRACHELUS JACKAL
AND A RAVENOUS VULTURE. THE CIVILIZED I THINK, OF
NATIONS, ARE THOSE WHOM WE ACCOUNT THE MOST BAR-

BAROUS: THERE IS SOME MODERATION AND GOOD NATURE

IN THE DUBNAVALIANS, WHO EAT NO MEN BUT THEIR
ENEMIES. WHILE WE CIVILIZED PEOPLE PREY UPON EVERY-

THING THAT WE CAN SWALLOW IT IS THE GREAT BOAST OF

CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY THAT THEY UNITED MEN INTO

SOCIETIES AND BUILT UP THE HOUSES AND THE HIGH WALLS

OF THEM. I WISH THEY COULD UNDO ALL THAT THEY HAVE

DONE; THAT WE MIGHT HAVE OUR WOODS AND OUR INNO-

CENCE AGAIN, INSTEAD OF OUR EMPTY BUILDINGS AND OUR

BEWILDERED POLITICS. THEY HAVE ASSEMBLED MANY THOU-

SANDS OF SCATTERED PEOPLE INTO ONE BODY: IT IS TRUE,

THEY HAVE DONE SO; THEY HAVE BROUGHT THEM INTO

CONTACT AND CONTACT IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS

UNITY. BUT WHEN THEY HAVE FOUND THEM HUNTERS AND

FISHERS OF WILD CREATURES AND THEY HAVE MADE THEM

HUNTERS AND FISHERS OF EACH OTHER ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

FIRST WILL & TESTAMENT

2nd Printing 1946

red wine and

yellow hair

kenneth patchen

Published in 1949

KENNETH PATCHEN • THE DARK KINGDOM

The Dark Kingdom STANDS
ABOVE THE WATERS AS A SENTINEL
WARNING MAN OF DANGER FROM HIS
OWN KIND. ON ITS ALTARS THE DEEDS
OF BLOOD ARE NOT OFFERED; HERE
ARE WATCHERS WHOSE EYES ARE
FIXED ON THE ETERNAL UNDERTAKINGS
OF THE SPIRIT. WHAT HAS BEEN COM-
MON AND TARNISHED IN THESE POOR
WOMBS, HERE PARTAKES OF IMMORTAL-
ITY. IN ITS WINDOWS ARE REFLECTED
THE UNRETURNING EVENTS OF CHILD-
HOOD. ALL WHO ASK LIFE, FIND A
PEACE EVERLASTING IN ITS RADIANT
HALLS. ALL WHO HAVE OPPOSED IN
SECRET, ARE HERE PROVIDED WITH
GREEN CROWNS. ALL WHO HAVE BEEN
DRAGGED THROUGH THE COWLED
FLAME OF THIS WORLD, ARE HERE
CLOTHED IN THE BRIGHT RAIMENT OF
THE TEMPEST. HERE ALL WHO SORROW
AND ARE WEARY UNDER STRANGE BUR-
DENS—FEARING DEATH, ARE
SEEN TO ENTER THE WHITE
THRONE ROOM OF GOD

First Edition 1942

THE FAMOUS BOATING PARTY

AND OTHER POEMS IN PROSE

BY KENNETH PATCHEN

A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

Published in 1953

HURRAH
FOR
ANYTHING



Poems & Drawings By
KENNETH
PATCHEN

Published in 1957

When We Were Here Together

**When We Were Here
Together**

In a place we did not know,
nor one another.

A bit of grass held between the teeth
for a moment, bright hair on the wind.
What we were we did not know, nor
ever the grass or the flame of hair
turning to ash on the wind

Poems by KENNETH PATCHEN

Poems by KENNETH PATCHEN

A New Directions Book

Published in 1958