

Poem by Anton Chekhov

Translation into English © Eugene Alper (from *Anton Chekhov: A Brother's Memoir*)

О, поэт заборный в юбке,
Оботри свои ты губки.
Чем стихи тебе писать,
Лучше в куколки играть.

Oh the poetess of the fence,
Baby toys are still your friends.
Quit your scribbling on the walls,
Just stay home and play with dolls.

Poem by Liodor Palmin

(c. 1880, sent to Anton Chekhov with a document)

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Коллега, милый мой Антоша,
Сейчас немножечко устав,
И волосы себе ероша,
По обещаенью шлю устав.
Сейчас Калашникова пиво
Юмористически игриво
В стакане искрится на дне,
И в общем жить не худо мне.
Как мореход на острый риф, мы,
Поэты, лезем всё на рифмы...

My colleague, dearest Antosha,
Just slightly jaded, though no martyr,
My hair ruffled to contortion—
I'm sending you the promised charter.
Seeing Kalashnikov's good ale
Playfully glint and never stale,
I feel the bottom of this grail
Inspires me to up my tail.
Just like the builder needs his lime
We poets hunger for the rhyme...