

Curt Hopkins

**Night and the Body**

*Y caída hacia arriba – O. Paz*

It falls upward  
Splashing onto the sky's face  
And pooling like hard liquor.  
The bronze bells  
Torn like cardboard  
Ring in the long wells  
Infinite and crass  
And the night is eaten  
Torn into a thousand pieces  
Sheeted into machinery  
And chewed up in the gears  
The puff of breath  
Mutilated.  
Mourners watch the body  
Borne off on the waters  
In its little ship  
Shining with arms and armor  
Magnified in vitreous descent  
Then calls pitch off cliffs  
And roads crack and fail.  
The dead man would fix  
A brass plate to his bow.  
'At least I loved.'

## A Desert Place

I planted black grass  
In a glass plaque beneath a tent,  
Rent by heat and wind,  
Wounded by a boy of ten  
Whose thin wand rose and wound  
Around the choking, binding broom,  
While in the polished plate  
The blind, blown sand  
Scoured the image of a face.  
Here the sage ends hours  
And our twilight lions roar at safe remove.  
Draw whichever plans or patterns you desire,  
Sand shifts and winds lift the skin off  
The little places where we make  
Our marks and scare ourselves.  
Moons cast waving hills in silver  
As they pass and flicker into filmed life,  
But these are only moments, *entr'acte*,  
Nocturnes lurking in a figured space.  
Desert day says in this spine  
The waiting magenta feathers of a flower  
Are concealed, curled in its dry needle.  
It's a simple thing, being, but it's hidden.

## San Bruno

*At Psara on the blackened slope.* – G. Seferis

The fog has rolled over the hill  
Into San Andreas,  
Misting the reservoir's mirror.

Indians wander up  
San Mateo Avenue  
From Singh's Island Grocery  
And Roop Kala Jewelers.

I can see the egrets pacing the reeds  
In the slough by the airport  
In my mind's eye.