

BlazeVOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

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Love Watches for Death

Love watches for Death. She watches the road.
She waits for her Death to come home.

When he does, he is mute. He must keep his own counsel
Regarding his time in the desert

In order that he does not burden her conscience
With knowledge of deeds he has done in her name.

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Love watches for Death. She waits for her stud
To come home to their bed, for she misses his touch;

She's deprived of the heat of a body that's rightfully hers;
And wasn't she promised the comfort and strength of a man?

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Love watches for Death. When her Death returns home
He says nothing to Love of the children he's maimed;

Of the men he has burned so a town could be saved.
If he tells her the truth of it though he can barely

Believe it himself, she'll disown him as some kind of
Changeling. When Death

Gives not even a word;
When he fails to expose the old stain on his heart

So that she can consider her own unbesmirched,
Love denounces his silence

And Death –
Without a defence against Love's disappointment –

Takes to the desert again,
In search of a quantum of peace.

Crush

The hottest-ever summer. I am seven.
Out on the step, my aunt is reading a paper.
I ask her why that ‘i’ is upside-down.
It is an exclamation mark, she says.

My mother’s friend arrives with her daughter.
For a photograph, the adults make us kiss.

I am captured in short pants;
My hair is pageboy-chic; my tank-top
Over wide-necked purple shirt,
Sports orange stripes on brown.
I’m like a walking Bridget Riley.

I remember the girl’s hair.
It is flowing black.
Her face is all squinting embarrassment.

That kiss and one upended ‘i’
Begin the shortening of days.

Into the moment when a life discovers time
– The borders between birth and dying fixed –
Experience accelerates, succumbs:

Gradually crushed
As if a sound explosion turned,
Compacted in a singularity of memory,
Subsumed as single notes,
Each of which had once discretely rung
Grander than an opera.

Cinnamon Fish

On a morning when even the rain
Is complaining about the weather,
You bring your leather and
I bring my steel. We revive

The spirit of pterosaurs
Wheeling in a prehistoric sky
Where punches a wormhole between
Our drowsy bed and the Cretaceous.

Now we can dream under earlier stars
Whose light has already survived them,
Venturing out to the edges of us, then
Reflecting to blend with its oncoming self.

It is every bit as real
As consciousness in molecules of water;
As manta rays with cinnamon for blood;
As a rose that can turn the direction of time with its scent –

But we revel in our half –
Awake entanglement until you have to
Get up, take a train, go home, make
Breakfast for your little ones.

4°

Clouds of mirrors in orbit
Turn the face of the sun
Away from the Amazon desert.

The Lost City of Barcelona.
The Lost City of Mumbai.
The Lost City of New York.

The submerged hulls of the Sydney Opera House
Like an experimental cruiser seen from below
An inverted waterline.

The Lost City of Berlin.
The Lost City of Cape Town.
The Lost City of San Francisco.

A billion human bodies
Abandoned in the dunes
Of Italy and France.

The Lost City of Galway.
The Lost City of Beijing.
The Lost City of Memphis.

The Greenland Arcologies reach for the sky.
The Antarctic Riviera opens for the season.
The Roman Sahara reconquers an empire of dust.

The Lost City of Zurich.
The Lost City of Islamabad.
The Lost City of Atlanta.

4'33"

After the
planes
The only music to be heard
In those elevator carriages
Is Cage's.