

Mark DuCharme

Migratory Laughter

In the dream we pull back
Mangoes & orchids
From the tongue in a state
Of rebirth. It is all
Ongoing, & I flower
In tune with your hair
Which you have more abundantly
Than I. If you shiver
Forget about dental work
For I am the source of all
Mirth. If I flower
In breath of your flowing
Chalk it up to the weather
That I'll never pull back.
Or if I do, be wary
Of occidental footfalls
More living than left
In this accidental pasture.
So "what does this mean," asks
Captain Beefheart in a song
You should know but don't
Answer. You just
Stand there quivering
In a valley 'til noon
When you break out in calm.

A Center

Await what you fear
In the weather not being
Somewhere you'd mentioned
But here in the shimmers
Of the day flowering
Amid dishrag apotheoses
& Hushed suggestions
Whether here or narrowed
To the corner of a mention
With apocryphal pop songs &
Blazing disaster motifs
Ascribed to being, with great
Animal-curved cuneiform shells
Which just slip out of tune
Like so much poise. If you take it
To where you would wander, if
You'd rather be here
In the agility of an hour
Where we go without meaning
To fuse corkscrew suggestions
To the locus of a center
We take part in but don't
Derive from. "That's nice, but
What does it mean" means
There is still some mystery
Left on my tongue.

Sonnets in Meditation

I.

Heart heavy, still forgetting
Lost hours variously forged
Where the air is bright & full of
Stunned passages, complaints
About the sun. The sun is

Near in all our hearts
Our hearts all fear what can't be spoken
Yet we still go on
Acquainted with the strange
Passage of the days unspoken

Betokened in the artful ruin
Where the air is still as voices
Meditating on the swerve
Of frangible sweetness in the rain

II.

While the wind is lost in song
& The air folds sweetness in night's measure
Sing, if you are useful
In your jutting arrival
Composed of dusk & other lost detritus

Held useless until now when old
Songs clank & tangle with the strange
Smell of dusk if you are versed in
Flora or the hinterland angers
In which we don't partake

When we take part in anything
Very much alive—
Yet still we fear
Except, perhaps, when you are near

III.

To have still not bitten off the rainfall
With the dire moon's attention
Looking at what was supposed to have fled
Until the cold moon aches
Under the weight of storytelling

Like windows lost in song
You cannot feel
Until you do
In the weight of forced suggestion
With all skies vanished

& The unrehearsed
Gleaning all our prayers—
Our finite psalms
Our bare marquees

To Those Who May Not Be

In the dream you weren't here
& I've forgotten already
How to say the name of the
Poet not me
Who didn't read &
Would soon go away

In the space of what we didn't say
& Barely understood
With silence blaring &
The broken mentions
Of the wind when you aren't
Here under wrong neon &
Held down with bones
& Everything racing
All round all around
The ears

No one mentions
The dream
In the part of
What burns us no
One being dreamed
Or burned can name
The dream in the burning or
What sings in the ghost
In the light
In the light no one sees

Past departing
Burnt futures dreamt
In the ghost
Of a name in the
Light that
Parts when you don't
Sing & every-
thing teems
Teems in the born

New day