

Kurt Cline

CITY OF SLIDING GLASS DOORS

I was the one who saw the walls tumble
before the earthquake occurred
playful as a poltergeist
interrupting a midnight kiss

I saw you tomorrow—flames in your hair

vanishing point drifting beyond

parkinglot & public housing

the view opens out onto other windows
subconscious going up like a house on fire
have you noticed the wailing
of more ambulances recently?

It's a city blooming with crime—
how do you want to get took?
Middle of ghost month might as well take yr choice:
rent a room in a house owned by ones former spouse

or work as a tutor for a precocious adolescent André Breton

There's a knock on the door—the police! The mermaid

w/the star on her Crown's absolutely pinkie about the gills

she who can turn a seagull into a musketball
sets her halo down next to her umbrella
it gets mighty rainy in heaven
out where the blue rose blooms

the smell of the sea

handwriting too indecipherable

to remain undecoded for long

METAL GHOSTS

Sky seems laboring up
a long flight of stairs
a car horn honks my name
it's true I had a dreadful dramful

One must protect oneself from evil ghosts
by learning to laugh into the depths
of an impenetrable black mirror
don't ever try to possess it

Reader can you suggest
where the story begins? Worlds swirl
the secret heartbreak
of the Glass Bead Game

indestructible cars pass by
each made up of tiny filaments
organized into dreams
above the burning Wheel

river of telling time where to go
how is this plasmoid mannequin
continues to pinch itself?
Ferris Wheel loaded w/

colorful flags, miniature
explosive charges
brass bands Buddhas
rotating in opposite directions

neighing horses to mournful verses
it's that ebony glint gives away
the meaning of the silence
BRAINWASHED

aíles of idols eggshells
in the control room
subliminal saboteur--those
rose petals are razor sharp!

All those monkeys at all those typewriters!
As for me—my head is singing—serene as if
a bow being pulled in both directions at once.
I guess somebody had to get hurt

COBBLESTONE SOUP (for Diana)

I was liquid fire, enraged
by objectless desire. I figured
I might as well start in anywhere
& continue on until the end of the night
words looping in blue ink smudge pots
elongated on the sidewalk. Full moon
on the wane again, the mystery
of the alabaster statues wld have to wait.
All there is to write home about
falling off the edge of the planet
a new hairdo by a pillar
in the subway station the traffic outside
grown more intermittent a pigeon
lands on the skylight. A gay junky
tosses one last slender consideration
my way. In my dream, I'm asleep.
A woman's voice screams "Help! Help!"
I try to rouse myself but fall back into the dream
I was having before being awakened dream
previous to all dreams & window-collages
words before they are spoken
chirruping of frogs among closed lotus petals
dawn and dusk & the burgeoning between
which is not to consider it otherwise
a marginal account thoughts bleeding
in a blue blur the higgledy-piggledy
waterspout & characters
hammered out of daisies
can only be a metaphor
which is poetry, aching
like a windlass in a hurricane
tumbling unexpectedly into the clearing
so that I almost forgot what I was saying.
This was back in the days, you understand
houses cld be repainted & families restored.
O the light-heartedness of fortune! Even to say
I was a criminal lends me too much credence!
This being alone again going within blue

loops interlocutory curly-cues. No echo
in my skull can wing it. It's still dark
over the pond & the rooster's crowing.
Now if only the morning will wake itself up.
It's a different world we live in today.
South of the mtn, north of the river
a child's face in the window
looks out at the rain.

THE DIVERS' BALL

Assignment: he's looking, a man
who wants to buy. When you ask
the quantity he says it depends on
the quality. This diver was not
your ordinary diver. He'd taken sapphires
out of the Red Sea. You had to have nothing.
Be a person passing in the street. Just before dawn
the diver went down to the tide. A face
no longer out at sea. A new window opens.
The best actors, the best parts!
Brown Nile.
Your indigo scales.
People don't dream of death anymore
but shoot it out over cemetery plots nevertheless.
All forms of human thought have been inhabited.
His sister owned an aquarium shop in Santa Monica
Maybe not a bad idea, just step away for awhile.
Thinking of another life, the traveller leaves,
a shy man: time in his mind;
bright as the sea, he knows to have her.
Some were dancing with beerbottles
in their hands; others were playing bongos
around a bonfire made of driftwood.
He was standing, staring
at the elephantine steel sculpture
between beach & sea. Along
the ocean-side, a trafficjam of off-road vehicles,
mariachis strolling past, making one
lose one's line of thought entirely.
The California lifestyle isn't for everyone.
If you looked into his eyes you could see
he was totally cool. No cocktails this evening.
Emerald bisque symphony over the night.
When time is left alone, people understand,
just how it is. The world loves itself
in a special way. She's on his mind,
a flamboyant time. He loved her. He had to be
strong to let her go that night. A kid looked at him

passing on the shore. Someday that kid
would be him. Places in the world.
People like that—they could go anywhere.
Red the reef. Hilltop roads behind
a Mustang GT 390. He wanted to get
back to Sydney, Australia. Those rock pools
were the life. He was thinking of Willie Green's
sax in the air as smooth as the breeze among the palms.
Everyone talks—but what? Sign language! A private jet.
A car pool around the nation. The world
isn't a lover; it's a friend. When of necessity
we were forced to part I asked him to sit for tea.
Off the reef the kids swam well. A lawyer
had mentioned an inheritance to him. When
are you coming back, everyone was asking.
He didn't need it anymore, yet felt
a little reminiscent. The world is long.
You can see how it looks at itself.
Can you hear the waves? In a week
or so seagulls in the wind. Ducks in the pond light.
Away out in life, he's starting to feel better.
It wasn't easy to leave. Thinking of her.
The sunlight in the sky. Conflict between
Love & Time. Chocolate dipped in melted cheese.
A chauffer in a car. The world goes away,
comes back again next morning. Under the sea
where the sun-fire filters green, stone floral mosaics
proliferate. Ours is a one-way journey
off the edge of the map. The road
is a sense of travel. Such a smile
has yet to leave his face.