

Patrick Chapman

The National Style 'O' Resonator

You pass it to him hopefully. "Play me something
Meaningful. Thrill me on your metal strings
With a blues from my homeland, or the spiritual
You learned how to pluck, just to undress me."
Fingers adept on a fretboard, you intuit,
May serve you well in other ways. But this –
This is before you are married. This is the time
You desire him the more for his skill with a neck.

There will come a day, after a long intermission,
When he takes the machine out from under the bed,
Shines it like new, carries it down to the kitchen,
Hoping to catch your smile reflected in the body
As his fingers flutter on your lips, trying to strum
The music back into your voice.

Black Smoke

There is no Australia in the Bible. This point
Gave them resolution when they came.

In the sky that Easter Sunday morning,
A new sun flashed, snuffing out

The Guard in a second, along with everyone
It had been charged with protecting.

What remained was not a city of the dead.
There were no corpses in the streets. Where

They still existed as anything, the people
Were shadows traced on marble walls.

The ceiling of the chapel was unwounded;
The Pythian Apollo, undefiled. Statuary

Inherited this territory,
Contaminated now for centuries.

Selas

Days when every night is a full moon
And you a true lycanthrope. No doubt
There'll be a dawn; it will not save you.

Dawn will draw you out. It's not the bone-
Distort mutation that reshapes you
In a hail of lunar stabs; it is your shadow

In daylight you hope no one will see. That blot
Of darkness follows you around like a tell –
The wolf unrevealed but his tail on display.

Volcano Day

Your heartbeat in my ear;
My tear upon your breast –

And in the earth, a thunder
Where there never had been

Thunder. In the street
Where never had we heard

Any more percussion
Than a drum in some god's

Dying day parade –
Arrhythmia, a starting thing

So let it come –
My tear upon your breast

And let it come –
Your heartbeat in my ear.

Already we are studies
For our own discovered statues.