

David Lohrey

Kiss Me on the Mouth of the River

He licks his chops
like a field hand

he sinks his teeth
that's good he says
licking his chops wood
and readies the family fire

the country life is the envy of the rich
they buy up the land

one acre at a time to go Christmas shopping
Hurray! The vagina whisperer cries

It's a new dawn a new day of the dead
a favorite holiday for shopping looking for Mexican
souvenirs.

Borderline insane he was as everyone called Uncle Joe
the nickname given by FDR
to his friend with the cockroach mustache
in Turkey everyone dies the earthquake a mere 9.2 on the Richter scale.
One

at Chez Panisse where each and every lettuce leaf is licked clean by a virgin.

He abused his five-year-old and it is much
worse than the priests Catholicism at least has nice music
playing late at night. We called the police the streets at night

or there is bound
to be an uptick in crime fiction is my favorite genre,

what I love is black and white the greatest conflict in American history.
Churchill ordered

to shoot the miners you say you just love the Prime
Minister and most Americans do

but my Trotskyite friends hate his guts

poured out from his abdomen after being shot in the dark
victory was the name of the film

And she smokes two cigarettes or takes them between
and blows it out his ass which is how the makeup artist

from Brooklyn described
it.

Go fish

the name of the game while my father was in the CIA
in its time
of glory hallelujah our truth is marching on
the 3rd day of May 1 please go

with father on his trip to the pharmacy, please, mother,
I am hoping he will kiss me
as he kisses you right on the mouth

of the river where the Mississippi meets
in the Gulf of Mexico.
You can't expect the catfish to surface when it is raining

in Natchez the 7/11 closes early on just about
The rebel comes
she was a descendent.

Solitary Confinement

--- for Osamu Dazai

Feathers or seeds float or pirouette, blown
by the wind: dead or alive. Surface events
scarcely count as much as luncheon with
the Queen. After all, we are not ants; how
fast or slow we crawl is of no consequence.
Just tell me what she said.

The retinue is the hive; the bees relate the story.
It's my goal to join in the tête-à-tête. It's all
revealed in the buzz; but it depends on whether
HRH is in. The Queen's presence quiets the din.
The hive hums. It's the same for humans.
We're all heading for the box; we know the way.

We just want someone to tell our story: yakkity
yak. Walter Benjamin once said the best way to fill
a bookshelf is with a pen. Get to work. One's
library card is an excuse. It's better to commit it all
to memory, as in Fahrenheit 451. Telephones are
the same as whiskey.

Human contact is fulfilling; it is better to withdraw.
Don't lose your thread. We only get one heart; it'd
be foolish to break it.

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Planting Season

I've always wanted to speak about my time in Khartoum
but I've never been.

I have been to New Delhi but can't remember a thing. It was elsewhere
that I found the meaning of life, but I was no more than nine miles from home
on a hitchhiking journey.

I came back for dinner.

My mother succeeded in roping me into her plans to create a heritage garden.
She is especially interested in ancient horticulture. She planted three varieties
of heirloom corn in our back yard with at least the same number of prize-winning
tomatoes: reds, purples, and yellows.

Double that for peppers,
both dwarf and giant, some sweet as an apple and others hotter than firecrackers,
not to mention the rows of okra, melon, and squash.

Mother is wild about gourds. She has become more aware than her friends
ever cared to acknowledge that we could be living on sacred soils.
Ancestral burial sights: she told Father she no longer cared to maintain a lawn,
and had chicken-wire tee-pees and raised beds erected from discarded railroad ties.

I said, "Let's do a bump off that bird's chest. The one with the pert tits.
And if

she insists on having a toot, she can take hers straight from my cock.

How's that?

Chick can snort from down there, as far as I'm concerned. She can go down
on one knee for the rest of her life. I'll buy her a pillow."

The Shinkansen, a lovely celebration of human ingenuity and grace,
is a thing to behold. I am sitting in the reserved car that gradually filled
with the usual smells of the Japanese street and the industrial revolution.

In no time,
there was this sickeningly sour odor of vinegar rice and cabbage.

I expect to see a rickshaw come careening down the aisle. The combination
of 21st century technology and sour peasant odors diverts attention
from the great existential questions of our time.

One yearns for the démodé to become fashionable, or at least I used to.

It often even becomes trendy,
like digging up old cars in the back of weathered barns: Citroën DS21s
and Mustangs

hidden in the forest. We found a Maserati wrapped around a tree.

I'm all for that.

It's a matter of rediscovery, like the BBC production of *Brideshead Revisited*
by Justin Bieber.

She says

she is up for anything but she prefers not to be asked.

She doesn't want to be asked for her approval or permission. She doesn't want
to be given choices or to be asked to make decisions.

She wants him to do all the deciding,
to lead as in a dance.

She begged him not to ask for her consent. She is not a virgin.

She remembers once shouting, "Just do it!" to a young man
who felt obliged to speak as politely as his mother did when serving afternoon tea.

I shudder at the terrible game my imagination is playing.

Can you believe this shit?

I know the type. He probably approves of that awful 20th century anthology
featuring Rita Dove.

I know the type.

He's got a subscription to *Reader's Digest*.

The last time we spoke,
he was hoping to replace his bathroom ceiling light fixture with a chandelier.
He's Chair.

With my butch hair-do and white T-shirt, I resemble a flat-chested Jean Seberg,
Jean-Paul Belmondo's girlfriend; unfortunately, Malik has someone more
like Brigitte Bardot in mind,

including her famous pout.

He is in love with her unforgiving breasts and fuckable mouth.

What does it mean?

It means that even the frumpy get horny.

Crows Are One Thing

I.

She had this air. This *way*.
Like a gull: over water, land, you name it.

II.

This is my life. My...uh.
She was *everywhere*.
She painted.
Charming, fresh breath, fragrant.
Plein Air. Not plain but *plein*; natural.

III.

Air borne disease.
It'll soon die down.
Sea air, sure. On the river, same thing.

IV.

We had to air out the room before we could sell.
The realtor insisted on getting in a pro. A *team*, he called it.
Not a trace.
They don't take writers. They don't want writers.
They don't want you to have stuff going on, you know.
They had a novelist once; it didn't work out.
That is why they prefer losers. They're not looking for a star.

V.

He runs every day before sunrise, by the air terminal.
His wife died there. Hit by a bus. Right out front.
The bus was struck from behind and she got beneath, *trapped*.

VI.

There's not much air pollution here. Not *here*.
Most of it's from China. Dust. Air's yellow. Yellowish.
It hangs.
It flows in; it swims. People can't *see*, let alone breathe.

VII.

Nothing wrong with a little air; we need air.
Wanna join?
Listen.
Just listen.
The gulls; there's a mist. The fog is like a mist.

VIII.

Yeah, that was her.
We got to listen to her live. She sounded nervous. She was on the air, *live*.
Around the world; it *is* hard to grasp

IX.

I don't like the air. I don't.
Do you?
Just a crack, yeah.
More? I said a crack. It's the clouds; they look like rocks.

IX.

We'll be asphyxiated. Better open a window.
Don't kid yourself.
They're smart. They *are*. They hide, suddenly vanish.
Mosquitos. They're smart; and then come out while one is asleep.
They're like fish. Not the bottom of the lake but the bottom of the room.

XI.

I can't breathe.
Put on the air.

There's a thing, a whatever: no air from 3 to 5.
To prevent black-outs or brown-outs.
The sun. We're not living; we're drifting. Floating.

XII.

We need trees; more trees, forest darkness, a black forest.

XIII.

There are long-standing grievances to be aired.
They almost came to blows.
It's the salt. Everything is sun-bleached, old and worn.

XIV.

I stepped out to get some air.
You went by train?
"Give me air."
You weren't driving, were you?
It's all grass; as the crows fly, man.

XV.

Air, not heir.
Air.
There is no air.
There is no money.