

Joseph Cooper

Snooping Through NBC studios with pen and pencil

for Kenneth Koch

I love you as a suit of armor rusts
under the stark, necromantic air of
a forsaken uncle's dusty portrait
whose motionless eyes make a racket of
acumen, a flamingo serenade
gasping for multitudes as a full moon
revives our cadaverous hearts and we
fall in love like thaumaturgic charmers.
My darkling, my encompassed plentitude
though we may never be a sonnet, less
love letters cursing paper and pen with
grim conviction for having been written
let us go on shining like eidolic
soulmates in the spectral hallways of night.

Will You Be One Of Radio's Future Greats?

Dear Heartline, I move through the trapped orgasm of prayer knowing there is nothing I wouldn't do for you except write you a love poem and if you were to die like you did last night in my dreams, I would hold your bones for 6,000 years, even more, like the Lovers of Valdaro. Our mandibles close enough to touching, that archaeologists of the future would have reason to speculate we died leaning in for a kiss having fallen hopelessly in love with each other's ivory nakedness as if we were ancient elements attracted to one another by the cold rules of logic. Dear Radioland, hello. It's 5:45 a.m. I'm warm for you this morning, but this crackling and hissing divides us. Some days are just more real than others. My heart is crashing into me. By the time you hear this, Radioland, we'll find happiness in our ways of life even though it's been years, years since we've touched.

A Radio Freshman Speaks His Mind

It seems only yesterday at least for a couple of hours
I was that person like a science-fiction mist
hanging over the sea or snow on a bristly wool
coat becoming fearlessly transparent. Dear Radioland,
I have an irrational fear of being crushed underneath
a fallen traffic light. When it's quiet and I'm holding you
all I'm really thinking about is the next poem, yet you
have stolen my heart, my heart wonders if it might be
haunted, the way a train arrives at a station and no one
exits and then it just speeds away as if it were shaking off
a momentary chill. I keep waiting for you, but I'm the only
one inside my head waiting for the warm embrace
of a headless body in a topless bar the way citrus
always seems to ripen in someone else's poems.

Mike Says

I like it here in the poem with nothing but a flashlight
and all my deepest fears. The sound of waves sweeping
across an indifferent sea. My heart is crashing into me
as I am now and forever finding ultra in this radio drama.
Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever be made of anything
but an almost miracle moving in and out of focus playing
telephone with the space between us like a woodshed on fire.
It's been so long since I confessed to being born
on the cracked side of a leaking snow globe.
Let's take a chance tonight on the few great lines
that drank wine and danced all night. My heart,
my heart is in my pocket, it is Lunch Poems by Frank O'Hara.
How terrific it would be to explode like a jet plane
across my mind before falling in love with you, Radioland.

Where Do Those Huge Radio Salaries Go?

Dear Radioland, these are the selected poems
of the last days of summer. Hail a taxi. Dance in
the rain. I don't know if it's enough to hold you
when all the lights go out as the sky folds and flowers
are shaved off the neck of the earth at the dead end
of a weathered road. And what of those who still believe
in a million closeted memories playing favorites? I can't live
without you whoever you are sitting up in bed, naked,
in complete darkness drawing blind pictures of me
sitting up in bed, naked, in complete darkness drawing
blind pictures of you standing at the edge of the alphabet
never wanting to be anything more than complete
surrealism. Whenever I think of jumping off the radio
tower I wonder, could we be lovers? It's come to that, tonight.