

The Shopping Trip

The dressing rooms are taped off now like
Scenery in a badly acted, drunken play,
So I sit quietly trying to remember the physique first and then
The splay of her wrists: Was she an angel, I'm wondering, a statue,
A first embarrassed sketch.

Of course, the real question is why am I even thinking this and
Who was she, when what I came for are linen pants.
Touching the fabric is not enough—I'm impressed by how well I can
Refold it and as I walk backward silently out of the store,
I'm in love with the absurdity of the moment.

On the sidewalk again I laugh that I came with intent,
With equal effort erasing any trace of myself. And,
Of course, none of it matters, because, no one saw me.
I thought I wanted
Clothes. But I was grabbing that fleeting grace
Behind sheet-like visages, the elegant crease in
Smooth gray marble,
The air after an athletic ballerina silently jumps.

I scratch my neck at the curb waiting. Stopped.
Wondering again: *Did that entity even exist? Who is she?*
I can't look at my phone because you can't research ignorance.
I'm crossing the street with the crowd now like a bobbling robot.

I didn't want a woman, I wanted a feeling, a sight, a memory of a body.
Creation, I would have treated you with some oomph, surrounding you on

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Both sides by two giant parentheses I would have dragged
Specially for the occasion.

The Cacophonous Game of Life

My, what a naughty game we play
Unbeknownst beneath stars geared that way
The caress of centuries crawling glide past
As we line up, pin little soldiers
One, two, three, make it last.

Heavens, how our ineffable coalescence dwarfs solo kings
Meanwhile, the envy of Sisyphus, palpable, over shoulder rings—
Ours, an Earth too rapt for the ever-gathering of young.
Parents, *en masse*,
Ignore, ignore, that silent, bothersome sun!

Oh, what a naughty jig we dance
Whose steps so simple even rocks could prance,
Though resisted refused kicked back, into womb
Ironic sweet sighs crowing our initial trek—
As newborns birthed, far-travelled, but ah, expelled too soon.

Mmmm, what a merry tune we purr,
At last! In respite repose, as if to focus that ceaseless blur
(These final jaunts back to the starting point of lives)
We, now charting the greatest journey bucket list—
Or to other mysteries beyond the simple traveler, who only hides.

A Final Farewell to My Mother

Oh, dreaming upon a time before that wasn't mine—
How often I have envied your maiden voyages (and, surely, deliberate pace),
As, you, progenitor, looked that one last glance back
Through fields of corn and cows and dirt, never in anger,
Not in haste,
But rather stumbled forward, like any good learner, and continually
Righting body mind soul taste quest,
(Tuning, refining an inner dialectic like
A fine instrument).
Oh, how often did I pine to bend indissoluble
Destiny and stage,
To be able to gawp confessedly as your first sails daily built
And grew,
'Til a mighty self-taught ballast at last transformed into leverage
For pleasant, life-sustaining winds that you saw coming,
That you knew.

For yours was a glorious vessel, meant for steady
Sunny seas, yet tolerating Satan's random
Squalls,
A weathered, hardy, unsinkable craft emerged of
Nearly unknowable, unspeakable beauty—
You, in all your delectable, heavenly, unstoppable gall.
Ah, have I often wondered how well did you heed
Any reinvigorated sirens returned, uninstalled,

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Post-war post-famine post-collapse apocalyptic fall—
A time of steady morphing engine, and lucky dearth of need
(For those who cared to choose it)—
A world that wasn't mine, new, hadn't gone to seed.

Buried are they between us now, behind the somnolent threshold of
Ultra-concentrated memory and fade, like soft fleshy scale,
(A goodly giant snake's lifelong padded shedding discarded)
Buried now are your virgin shining seas into infinite mounds of silence,
As the sister silences of countless remembrances
Dutifully pantomime eternal
Your assiduous active constant creative never-ending
Pursuit of sirens—
After the famine after the crash after the war
You, primed,
Heading off not in reaction or vengeance
But because simply it was
Your path your place your call your time.
Did you find it, progenitor—
A world that wasn't mine?

And in silence did you sing, and dance, each day,
That supreme default of resonances did you
Rely on, not mute or deaf—
But assured a place, as you found, in many kingdoms
Households mountaintops and splendid gowns, and
Never to stoop to the squalid jarring chit chat buzz saw
That only oscillates the everyday mind—

But with the silence of the gods did you climb,

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Did you pursue the train to heaven's breast—where
Dwell you know, progenitor, at last at peace behind a
Journey to the wisdom of eternal silent rest?