

DREAM IMAGES
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I strive for sober, 8 am cut out moons,¹
but memory serves up other things.

Like the now destroyed labyrinth sky
drunk on its own ozone.²

They'd all be alive
if there was something I could have done.

Time vanishes. Like a witch.

Time—

grinds men up like meat.³

He looked plucked from a junk shop.⁴

Looked both innocent and powerful,
like tulip bulbs growing,
(curled up, wordless)
just under the dirt,
under last year's snow⁵ —

oversimplified and so quickly forgotten.

He was love itself.

Well, part love,⁶

part shadow and sun.⁷

“I’ll keep you”, she said
“between my shoulder blades,⁸
in my eyes,
flush to my breath”.

They wandered over a ruined nowhere,
through horizontal wildflowers,
pitiable and weak,
through embers, crab apples, and blotches of sweat
and tears.⁹

Who knew secrets
like intertwining branches
could sit in your stomach—

eat at you—

they were mind-wrecking.¹⁰

They could heal a person.

After three seasons, he was saturated with impatience.
Sleep abandoned him.
Any sensation that involved memory was set apart
and became utterly inaccessible.

Every day—

with tender lungs,
they breathed
in caterpillars and moths.

Month-old insects fatally dissolved
into a stream of liquid cement.

Iridescent,
 luminescent
 sludge.

They were drowning.

She loved him—
 like monarchs love milkweed and moths love silk ribbon,
 like seeds love wind or rain,
 and fevers love the lilac bush.

She whispers over the magic of what he is,
 feels the raven
 peeling
 the Luna's wings from her mouth.

Eyes closed; she is silent.
 Her bleeding gums¹² show through.

Pressing her lips together, she thinks:
 “of course, of course I can't...
 of course, I can't keep you.”

Her perspective was dizzying.
 She was not his mother or father,
 not his child, friend, lover.

She was not mythological, but a spirit
 with a touch
 of human likeness.

Their bond was obscure,
 swollen with mirroring images, yet contrasted entirely—
 inner solitude vs. inner conflict:
 marvelous, ceaseless.

She opened her arms,
 tried to comfort him,
 failed.
 “I suppose I should have gone back.”

He watched the story replay on figurative movie screens,
wondered if they would disappear,

become dream images.

How does one cope with irreparable loss?

They joined themselves together, saw the sky illuminate and were flooded by
grief and joy.

The human heart is alone,
so free of any earthly tie—¹⁴
full of sorrow, full of tenderness and light,
too curious to be fettered, too innate to be imitated.

They walk into the distance, succumbing to the fact that they will freeze and
thaw again,¹⁵
just like the flower,¹⁶
like the bark of a birch tree.

Both are the same;
in the cavities of their necks¹⁷ lie a stone.

Hot—like a river of fire,
they fade to ash
and bone.

Endnotes:

- ¹ Pollitt, K. (2012). *The Mind Body Problem*; “8 am cut-out moons” from the poem *A Chinese Bowl*. Bridgend: Seren, p. 25 .
- ² Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “sky drunk on its own ozone” from the poem *Small Comfort*, 75.
- ³ Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “grinds men up like meat” from the poem *Epithalamion*, 54.
- ⁴ Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “plucked from a junk shop” from the poem *A Chinese Bowl*, 25.
- ⁵ Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “under last year’s snow” from the poem *Aere Perennius*, 7.
- ⁶ Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “part love” from the poem *A Chinese Bowl*, 26.
- ⁷ Ibid. “shadow and sun”
- ⁸ Stewart, Leah (2006). *The Myth of You and Me*; “between my shoulder blades”: Chivers Press, p. 143.
- ⁹ Johnson, Denis (2001). *The Name of the World*; “blotches of sweat”: New York, NY: Perennial, p. 87.
- ¹⁰ Johnson, *Name of the World*; “they were mind-wrecking”, 63.
- ¹¹ Pollitt, *Mind Body Problem*; “the Luna’s wings” from the poem *Lunari*, 78.
- ¹² Kent, H. (2017). *Burial Rites: a novel*; “bleeding gums”. Rock Island, IL: Rock Island Public Library, p. 224.
- ¹³ Warner, G.C., and Cunningham, D. (1962.) *The Woodshed Mystery*; “I suppose I should have gone back”. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co., p. 28.
- ¹⁴ Breton André, Chénieux-Gendron Jacqueline, and Olivier Wagner (2019). *Nadja*; “so free of any earthly tie—”: Paris: Gallimard, p. 90.
- ¹⁵ Kent, *Burial Rites*; “freeze and thaw again”, 302.
- ¹⁶ Kent, *Burial Rites*; “just like the flower”, 31.
- ¹⁷ Kent, *Burial Rites*; “in the cavities of [their] neck[s]”, 286.

Sources:

Breton André, Chénieux-Gendron Jacqueline, and Olivier Wagner. *Nadja*. Paris: Gallimard, 2019.

Johnson, Denis. *The Name of the World*. New York, NY: Perennial, 2001.

Pollitt, Katha. *The Mind-Body Problem*. Bridgend: Seren, 2012.

Stewart, Leah. *The Myth of You and Me*. Chivers Press, 2006.

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