The Humanities

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The Humanities

Cover Page Footnote

This poem is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1989/iss1/16
A new breeze whirls pages of still
Wet altruisms off this desk and across the floor
Into the shadows of a Tiffany-web lamp
And up against sun-kissed sneakers
A rubber sole rises stork-like to itch
A green jean calf
While Brobdignagian shoulders perch
On the open sill.
He drops his cigarette in a glass of warm cider
Pulls the hollow metal ball chain
And swoops out to the night.
A brown jungle of curls the last to wave.
Off to chance a secret run in the fields
Of hay stacks and dead-etched walnut trees
A leap over Pilgrim stone fences
Into an empty field cast with bits of starlight.
The spinachy-hue land flashes blue with June bug
Camouflaging secrets between folded leaves,
Warm stones and tight lipped buds
Swelling with a thousand orchestrated whirs and ribbits.
A yellow moon jiggles its top along the ridge
Sending a signal out to the night.
Shadow figures from stacks of dusty onion skins
Rustle in the hedge row swaying dark arms.
In a hot-coal hustle he bolts from the spot
As thick green ribbons of corn snap past his eyes
Merging into macadam, chain link and dailies
Until he stumbles upon bright city skirts.

With a tremble burst of perspective
From the pink outcry mouth
She shrieks over the saliva mike
Folk melodies to the urban woes.
The danger signs of her long sharp earrings
Shake and flash in the buzzing of her words.
Upon seeing the crowd to be silhouettes in cigarette mist
She freaks and lickety-splits to find real faces.

Five red pony tales shoot down her spine
Her radiator wrist watch a persistence of memory
Clinging to her arm like warm liquorice
Sweeps against her trash-compactor purse.
One foot on fire she spirals down a windy one lamp street
Colliding with an off duty checkered cab
With her purse spilled out and chin on the curb
A pair of orange sneakers stop by her nose.

In a word, a shock, a nod
Magnetized to the other’s array of mad plumage
They cauterize the connection
In an entropic overload of dance and awe.
With a gurgle and a kick she and the cat in the orange nikes
Gallavant thru town with matches to light
Exploring camelback keyholes and revolving doors.
They set camp in gravel dunes of a vacant lot
Only to split at Gendarme light in a flash and a hiss
Up the State tower grabbing fast to fly and hold the stars.
Brash clouds blow by opening a view
To a cornucopia’s mottled lights.
Star crossed to the absurd
The carrot dangling and swaying
They gasp and gyrate capturing swathes of air
Between clenched teeth.

Dawn’s pink belly pushes in the east
Sending tell-tale starts out to sea
The lawn gossip of katydids and rhythms of street corner musicians
Mute into pigeon coos and the drone of a distant street cleaner.
Above her red bangs she stares at a plaid-robbed woman
Her gray face clear in the bare bulb room window
Her lips moving for an unseen husband
While deft hands begin to cut grapefruit.
With his head warmed in her lap
He smells venders’ spices and soft pretzels
And rises up on worn orange pads
To recognize the street and the river view.
As wool dyers and chimney sweeps drift by
They pass the gates into a greening park with wind-loved hair.
On a groved rise they name a squirrel, and a bird
And quite forget a sinking vermillion moon.

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I
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