

*The Timelessest Water of the
Littlest Mouth of the Lightface*

David Herrle

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*Two simple happenings
That got entangled.*

- Kozan Ichikyo

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Prequelibrium

Everyone else is too dirty
or too clean.

Every other body is too fiery
or too frigid.

Everything else is too much
or not enough.

What remains is more you,
yet less you.

Marie Between

She has opened the tomb door
between summer and summer.

Sea-stellar "Marie" between her first
and surname is an Antoinette.

When she's near, she's empty.
When she goes, she brims over.

Shadows' Shadows

Everyone thinks of you.
Not you specifically,
but you nonetheless.

They think of secrets,
of idols' indifference,
of the turmoil of souls,
of the post-near-death
bliss of detumescence.

Of shadows' shadows.
Always of you.

Animal Hill

*The bees' buzz,
the breeze's secrets.*

If I were an animal
I'd jump the far fence
and sniff her tracks.

Under this singular tree
I wag away this dog day,
all bones and bones.

*The trees' blood,
her windy absence.*

Oh, it's not poetry to note
that fields resemble oceans,
but these do, these do.

If I were castaway
I'd count indifferent waves
until I lost count.

*Atop this hill
I grin like a great white.*

Little Volcano

Little volcano,
white knife,
you burgeon,
my Favorite.

Watering volcano,
merciless, lavaless.
The fiery water,
the wintry summer,
the subzero fire.

*Behold:
Ambiguitoa,
Vampirsuvius,
Mount Saint No Saint.*

This restless ronin
climbs and climbs
to your cold caldera.
Hair-trigger temper,
your eyes of murder,
but all is safe on
your eyelash-soft
umbilicus.

I'm Hokusai reborn
in your mouthwater's
timelessestness.

Sing, You Song, Sing

Sing, you song, sing.

There is everything,
and then there's you.
I want less *less* of you.

You, the dream,
have awakened me
from the dream.

Sing, you song, sing!

Osmosis/Evaporation

I tend to fixate
rather than fix it.
But I'm out of inertia.
Now I must act.

Your knobby big toes,
your forehead freckle,
your vapid eye movement,
your weightless chin,
your cigarette spit.

I rationalize
and emotionally
osmose you.

Edith Head said
that Hitchcock
wanted Grace Kelly
"to look like...
something slightly
untouchable."

You're the opposite:
totally touchable-looking,
yet you evaporate.

"Fails My Heart"

In "Good King Wenceslas,"
my favorite Christmas carol,
when the weary apprentice falters
in winter's arctic cruelty, His Majesty's
footprints in the deep snow guide him.

You walking ahead does the opposite:
Your footprints *are* the deepest snow,
your wintry stride is arctic, cruel.

I used to tumble through my life
in manic, eclectic, sometimes fickle
polyamory, but you, icy lightning,
stopped me dead in your tracks.

I Like You Despite You

You *hummmm*
beneath everything.

You don't inspire, you don't motivate,
you don't draw in, but I'm inspired by,
motivated by, drawn in by you.

You *hummmm*
despite your humdrum
insubstantiality.

I like you
despite you.

The Dulcinean Shimmer

In Cervantes' protonovel, Don Quixote changed "Aldonzo Lorenzo," an ordinary prostitute's name, to extraordinary "Dulcinea del Toboso," turned dull to doll, because he sought for Aldonzo Lorenzo "a name...musical, uncommon, and significant."

I rhapsodize an afterimage, a boring mirage, a void-filled void, a substantial absence, a Dulcinean shimmer that further obscures her illegible heart-text.

Forever Forgivable Feral Favorite

Forever Forgivable Feral Favorite,
you're the exception to every rule
and every social standard, deserving
forgiveness seventy times infinity.
No matter what, you are excused.
You don't deserve much praise at all,
yet even your dullness excites.

*Above my head
is a perpetual
question mark.
Above your head
is eternal kiss-
eliciting mistletoe.*

You overflow, not due to super-attraction
(which you *don't* possess), but because
of some mystique from an evasive nucleus,
a nutshelled cosmology, an inaudible fugue,
a lightningsmell, a soulstink, an *urscent*.
Lavaless eruption, you're indifference manifest.

*Volcana Lorenzo,
Volcana del Toboso,
Magmatic Antoinette,
Eruptica Char Sea.*

Tongue-Tying Tongue

My words are countless,
but only your words count.

When wordless, all you-tangled,
I know nothing but your mouth.
Everything beyond your tongue-
tying tongue and teeth is absurd.

As diva-sage Annie Lennox sings:
"The language is leaving me...Changes
are shifting outside the word."

David Delivered From a Deluginous-Diction Death

Hush me before I expire
from lexiphanic asphixiation,
die a death of deluginous diction,
before I verbosely overdose.

White knife carving through
every word, fragrant butcher,
total ruination of my hubristic
lexicon, only you can shut me up –
though you're the sole impetus
for my nonstop gift (curse!) of gab.

Your teeth bite the bullshit.
They trap my bottom lip.

Littlest Mouth

Teeth stand in that iciest crucible like manic, deadly animals.
The *sight* of them bites; the *taste* of them devours.

If they were shoes, they'd be go-go boots.
Their *clair de lunacy*, their atavistic criminality.

Her kiss lacks all pretense, neither rises nor falls,
has no arc, no pageantry – just happens then *isn't*.

I hear her mouth's voice in my fucking viscera,
though she's never – never! – spoken.

Shadowmirrormirage Lightningsmell

Shadow,
you are your
own mirror.

(Water.)

Music,
I hear
only you.

(Mirage.)

You are
all I can
smell in this
infernal world.

(Earth's first lightning strike.)

Every Summer Smells Like You

Every summer smells like you.
Retroactively, presently, posteriorly.

Rather than common winter blues,
my glummiest season had been abysmal summer,
until I sniffed your brief existence.

And while humans fret pandemics,
I'll forever revere this freeing, redeeming one.

From now on, iron moonray,
you'll evaporate my miserable sweat.
I'm anosmic to blooms, cookouts, sunscreen,
pool chlorine, ocean brine, sun-baked grass.

Nothing else smells like you.
Every summer smells like you.

Outsider Inside and Outside Me

Listening to soft secret sounds
slip from the rain.

Watching the soaked grass
sing "green, green."

Who is this former outsider inside me?
This *you* who downpours?

Don't ever linger, Lightface!
Don't wait: Evade this dusk of bones!

Listening to the liminal silence
rain down in your wake.

Telepathizing every dirt and paved road
to bring you near, near.

Who is this burning outsider outside me?
This you who erupts and overflows?

I Said "You," You Said "Me"

In a dream you were spread
like a chestnut tree, clit glistening,
skin vaporous, smiling without smiling.
(Laura Mulvey herself would've been entranced.)

That scene showed the deepest heart-truth,
the cosmic difference between you and me:
under that tree I said "you" and you said "me."

When I Don't, I Do

When I don't think of you,
I think of you.

You, the darkest matter.
You, every Escher stairway.

What's better? Without without you,
or with without you?

You, the slyest lens.
You, the ghostliest eclipse.
You the timelessest.

Cherub/imp, edit and revise me.
No. STET: Rampage, my errors.

You, the unwritten.
You, un-unwrappable.

When I stop missing you,
I'll miss missing you.

You, the knifest teeth.
You, the dream that pours.
You, the neither/nor.

Fickle-Face

I want to forget your lightface
forever, to beat entropic doom
to the final punch.

Your flaws are flawless,
your morning-breath face
a fragrant axiom.

Please let me out of your
fickle-faced, unread head.

Not Yours

Let one thing be mine and not yours,
Favorite: that one forehead freckle
right at your hairline.

(He'll never notice it, though
it's right under his nose.)

Let it be a micro-avatar
of my shortest summer, Favorite,
a cipher deeper than consummation,
lovelier and heartier than all matrimones,
the one thing that's mine – and not yours.

*I dream
the disarming shunner,
despite her armor.*

*Her name, a leash
that created a tiger.*

by David Herrle, 2021