

JOHN WILKINSON

EAST LAKE

1

Lost to sense for its statement, song will die on the air
she slabs out in due proportion, metrical a goddess. See here:

Je suis le petit chevalier,

a tabor little hands have smoothed like a bedsheet
of long-since scotched desire,

paradiddles flat and tinny,

clattered by stick creatures, throngs of the once-connected
never more lift to squawk, ice's riveting dismantles noiseless.

Song had made rounds accursed, usual rain fell,
ran through complications countable in fractures,
done for, every one. Did you not guess, did you not hear

flayed skin is relayed down from its dry
bough and treated, lopped trees bail from upholding, bow to
latest deluge, blanched branches stark:

shred response forms, roll up the sky,

stash away unused tack.

Where back roads are clunking like a bowling alley,

clunk with

loaded belts thrown in the backs of off-roaders,

suppliants who scorched by beating sun, wear
a lightly-applied biometric skin, suppresses auto-immunity, it
bears its unique identifier,

– these consent to have been

rendered biddable, clamped in own curated list,
disabled to inflect,
never attune or twist to rhyme, mine is what profile fits.
Galvanic data streams to a support node,
futurity foreclosed shunts off to steady-state,
the starved day rat-tat-tats in a drumbeat, dispenses
sweat and dust its fund, following deductions, will allocate.

Before this process, lake water dimpled,
amorous grebes
danced their *paw de deux* and floated free.
Riff swole to a twelve-bar.
Lips were put up to the world
– which resonant,
in one accord twitched out of its wrap.

Revert to the precious book as written,
legend doing duty too
as though a god's stand-in once inserted
in a dull numb spring,
sensed obscure want had siphoned off
burdensome
great pressure from above.

Now might a passing god contract
to a nub, light squeeze from tips of stalks,
a font of dreamwork
hunch in her stripped stylus.
A protozoan book springs
irrepressible pond-life whose horizon
breaks riotous through the human fence

stretched to all uncreatures
shining, crumbling, oxydising,
hurricane to slow-moon-wane,
agitates prolific
shirkers from a hungry aftermath –
the immemorial rocks,
their moment flipped, scamper,

skim across light-fretted water,
mocking the imposing
star-map that scales the heights,
multiplying the eyes of god
shrinking back and self-dazzling
– who at utmost shatters,
strewing her one face in myriads:

Tongues to lap commingle,
strident with constructive insects
fade down East Lake –
then resume in unison then complicate.
The singular as written skirrs away
warping grids,
bubble-wrap or spawn, a scud convoy:

the lake speaks in tongues of water at once drawn in by sand.

Slab. To slab is to grip clay and knead it with those fingers of intention. Then to hollow with a twist. Take to the fire.
Light moves across its fired glaze.

So too an echo shakes

skin stretched on tenterhooks, parchment insect glyphs dot,
as though a windscreen were a scroll
music follows in the gourd secured.
Its surface tells of depth but the depth awaits a surface strike,
a resonance.

Run through a descant tweaked as in thought the forest was
brocade in sprigs and sprays, edge
zones such as beach huts, dreams or service roads,
those too were highlighted:
then what wakes and muffles like a pupa,
sleeping bags in doorways
paper-thin,
flare once lit upon:
light breaks on them, would break
down in spectral bands resolved on displays
analysed on high floors,
where clean and well-lit ranks
charting the coppices, drop coprolites into slots out of mind.

They sift through the night as sand
figuring where dawn evokes, stone oarsmen pulling clear,
resistance
being what they re-embody,
frittering then re-set, setting obdurate –

the worms of guilt turn aside, big-tent policy blathers,
a hand claws from a hand, sheer want electroplates,
grasping for this object
having no give when it comes to it:
this object is a mere stone,
the stupa an idea washes over or at best can squat above.

How did the tongues of desire solidify? How like the searing
licks of lava trap the breath in pumice?
Protect this property. Guards make hourly rounds.

Unique identifier
bounded by small parks, under canvas, in caravans, shivers
in its setting, chip of gravel
sanctified and named among anonymous stars.

From spectrum to a point.

From body to a profile.

Departed is that cohort swept from concrete plains
to mild, fertile valleys, after scratching a subsistence in what
bled dry, came flourishing the sigil of the horse.

Nothing found in his corpuscles. An itch
in his throat. An implant being what's left of him.

Slab the drum with earth or ash of this late performer
coded in a scud of notes,
who stopped awhile, amidst the flayed, those cast aside.

Dissipate in song
across the wavelets' convoy, *obligato* scurrying,
pattering then whisper with a wire brush,
shudder under mallets. Strip on strip of pastel nothing
drape little boathouses,
trailers parked behind –

fog descends, annihilates the shore in aching
opiate commission,
the undertow staggers, witness key messages, trigger nodes
obtrude their sonic signature. Slab.

A ruffled patch of water, ladder top left, shingles and creases,
pinches sky between folds. Strings
that kept the home a haven, snap aggressively.

 Snap out of it. You hear that fearsome clatter –
that's the drum kit, the cell, the corresponding,
the decoding society,

 they're tightening, tuning their intact skins;
pipes expand and resonate, cracking
night's stiff varnish,

 in every seam a file, in every monad a crowd.

 A slab, a cut, a hotplate burns,
incisions scar in ecstatic healing, damage comes to be integral,

such jubilee will trouble measured gods, and fire in the revels
of deformity will breach the wood circle, melt
the icy stage people jitter on,

 the whole tribe
shape-shifting in their ghost dance,

 guying gods of their choice, hungry for carnality,
cast off their senseless masks then tread the measure down,
 solvent in convulsive music.

Weigh the evidence, weigh each feather of emotion
as a seismograph twitches or spectroscope names,
see what the print shows,
 a Rubik's cube of blind alleys, bridges in half-span,
highways stopped short in fading tracks where goats browse,
 mountain passes stymied
by too lucid an idea of them
 brought up sharp at a schist block or glacier:
raise your eyes.
 Glances finick at the orb she cradles in her thinking.
High above, clouds interlace; on ice floes, sportive
providential gods shoot little darts,
 deep in the forest, far from their patches,
buskers pause as deer frolic out of grassy beds,
 harpists step from behind large-girthed oaks.

Love the aberrations. Trees exhale, glyphs jostle across stone,
hankerings of cellulose, freaks of cholesterol,
 now the living things
 play
 give-and-take between trees and clouds
 cogent in to-and-fro,
the aberrant now cogent in their form. Matt stone winks,
scribbled rapidly by sunlight spinning through the oak-
leaves' riddle, time tunes to quartz
 Shale shakes:
will punching the clock stamp hands down forever?
iron march compel slender ankles?
Though river sand is dredged to wheedle light as brittle vials,
a stream heart-stopped, near-throttled,
 pipe furred,

blocked within its stagnant or puffed-up periods,
all that constricts...

memory stirs in the watercourse,
cysts fidget beneath volcanic ash.

In grey ash embers glow unquenched on a fire-shovel.
Plaster casts join a symposium in the outer court –

hearts exposed to air.

In gaslight a dawdling night worker
sparks his cigarette,
lunette on a dark pavement, row of torches
flocked by soft insects that bat against his tightly-drawn face.
Stay there, drumming locked fingers. Think on't.

Dew solidifies to jade.

You lost permission to access – didn't they notify?
You'll have to be escorted out.