

Christopher Mulrooney

Juvenalia

say what you like about Rome insomnia kills you there
your guts on fire with rentlessness
root of all ill
booming wheels roaring drivers
to wake the deaf or sea lions at the Pole

still you might be crushed some night
high the roofs a tile heavy
defective pots go right out the window
down to smash on the cobblestones
make your will before you dine thou dizzy with disasters
tragedy is under any broad window while you're making your way at night
so pray the hussies never throw aught on your pate but merds

o the sodden lout dying to brutalize some fool
he rolls upon his bed another Achilles he
languishing for love of the late Patroclus
sleepless 'less he pummel summat
stoned howsomuch he'll not go near th' em-
purpled flashlit searchlighted fellow
surrounded by the vastness of his bodyguard
me on foot by moonlight schlepping
or shielding from the breeze a guttering dip
he doesn't care a fig t'avoid

the price of admission

you kick the sign in your forehead
with your own left foot
it isn't a guarantee by any means
something about your grace when doing so
must win the heart of the machine

shop 'til you drop

I. Brokeback Market

you check your guns at the door
the lonesome cowboys on the soundtrack
watch your every move
with rustling eyes

II. HQ Super

this is the peaceable kingdom
swans and geese are for sale
pigeons and sweetmeats
fans and automobiles and diapers

III. meat market

the lonely matador leaves his ring
for security at the carneceria
you can fight it at four
and have it on the table by seven

Memory

The bright water; even as one's childhood tears,
The attack upon the sun by the pallors of bodies of dames;
the silk, en masse and lily-pure, of oriflammes
under walls some maidenhead protects from fears;

the frolic of angels—No... the current of gold on the march,
moves its arms, dark and weighty, of cool grass. She
founders and calls out, the Sky her canopy,
for a curtain of shadow from the hill and arch.

II

Eh! damp the windowpane offers its clear broths!
Water lays out with gold pale and deep ready beds;
Little girls' dresses green withal and faded
make up willows, whence spring birds with no bridles on.

Eyelid warm and yellow, than a coin more pure
the marsh-marigold—the keeping of thy vows, o Spouse! —
at noon sharp, out of its dull mirror, is jealous
of the grey warm sky's pink and precious Sphere.

III

Madame is standing much too straightly in the meadow
nearby where the threads of labor snow; sunshade
in fingers; stepping on umbels; for her too proudly made;
children at their reading in the flowery verdure

of a red-leather book! Alas, He, like
a thousand white angels departing on the road
sets off for beyond the mountains! She, cold
very, and darkling, runs! after the man's hike!

IV

Regret for those thick arms and young of puremost grass!
Gold of April moons in the holy bed! Joy
of abandoned workyards by the river, prey
in August evenings that make grow such rottenness!

Let her weep at present beneath the ramparts! the breath
of poplar-trees on high is for an only breeze.
Then, it's the water, sourceless, grey, bearing no gleams:
an old man, with a net, works in his boat motionless.

V

Toy of this dreary water-eye, I cannot clasp,

o motionless small boat! oh! arms too short! nor one
nor other flower: nor the yellow that calls me on,
there; nor the blue, friendly in water the color of ash.

Ah! the dust of willows which a wing suspires!
The pinks of all the reeds long since gone to air!
My little boat, always tied; and its chain moored there
At the bottom of that water-eye—in what mire?

Arthur Rimbaud
tr. Christopher Mulrooney

knot

if I bark up the wrong tree
sure a squirrel at his nuts
will chatter of the Trinity
all God all Man no
Ghost of a chance
at loggerheads

apologia (Nazim Hikmet)

no steed silvered for saddle I've
nor legacy to me
land nor wealth
a honeypot I've got
a honeypot
 red-hot!

it's my all my honey is
I keep
my land my wealth
that is to say my honeypot
from every sort of vermin
oh just you wait
with this to me
a pot of honey
there will be bees
 from Timbaktu...

Boxsall

see that he's met at the door
but let's not be over-indulgent
get him some coffee or a drink if he wants one
that's it

how do you do I'm saying
how do you do Mr. Boxsall
do you like my art collection
it's my favorite this one
it hardly cost me anything
now it's worth oh millions
but that's not why I love it

I read your review this morning
and I wondered if we might have a chat
do lunch no I have staff for that believe me
do a meet there are young people who say that
no I just wanted to have a chat

look I respect the freedom of the press
you remember Cary Grant saying an unseen power
or something like that yes
that was a long time ago
look here old man
I don't want any trouble with you
or with your organization
but what are you saying
we let the free market decide
what's right and wrong with our product
you can't buy happiness with love
it takes real money
there's a capital investment here
that reaps a whirlwind of cash
flowing in and out all the time
think of the payrolls on our units
we have space to burn here
and our time is valuable
valuable so would you mind
do you mind if I don't see you out
just go back the way you came
don't ask Dorothy anything at all
just don't darken my door in future

Dorothy I didn't think you'd mind if I went
to North Hollywood for a few hours
just to see how things are going for a while
just don't cancel all my calls
and see to it the gentlemen are entertained

is he gone well that's a relief
when the boss gets back just say
I was pretending to be someone

it's part of my acting therapy
who reads the critics anyway

where'd he get that painting did you say
oh it was here when he moved in
there's something about it but I don't know what

this just in (au cinéma) this just out

where were you
while the morning stars sang
why I was receiving
my jobation thank you
very much
as the anchorman
said to the weather girl

j'ai la plaie
dit-elle
on sait
en vérité
ma foi
regarde-moi
s'il vous plaît
la tourterelle

Blondie's back
in a very curious remake
all her kids are clones

the newsreel features
professional wrestling

who's playing the trumpet
in the second row?

roaring lustfully
like Bashan bulls
the loudspeakers
stampede