

Brandon Krieg

Comedy of Mirrors

Cinema on the hill: a few frames of rain
without human story

Born and the search already ended

Blackberries a scatter of volcanic glass the one
introduced for profitability

on three taxonomic axes, the other
a year in the news cycle despite so few bodies

She incredulous *the falls are left on at night*

*

And saw from there cloud-shadows on the reefs
where no clouds were, dark shapes perhaps

decommissioned
tanks sunk

to shelter lingcod, cabezon, a discoverable use
waits to absorb each form,
a man dances

behind a signboard as cars pass; after interval n
the program repeats the landscape features:

And saw from there this huge oxidized sun thread the eye
of the overpasses, aware again
of what is called beauty

as if of a beeping in the house
whose source cannot be found

*

Like Lost Childhood still wandering the management area—

clear-cuts, fireweed, fin-clipped steelhead
rebuffed by spillways

come to rest in an ovoid pool under the structure
erected at the meridian of the fourth and fifth ice advances

in the center of the pine barrens
in the center of the oak openings
in the proscenium

whose columns are a succession of ice cores dissolving
overawing the dikes the audience
wears the masks

neither cosmic nor tragic but comfortable with the holes cut
for screen's light to access the eyes

*

And stood under the sulfur flares
and saw from that height to where the subdivision repeats—

the father and the mother
pouring syrups into pools

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the children gazing into the pools

*

Many white capital *I*'s of smoke rise
beyond the valley-fills and overburdens:

a range older than the Himalayas
is becoming clean coal is becoming text: I

luv u

a voice in the wilderness
set to repeat

*

And later in that city with mountains on either side
she read *Borrowed Love Poems* to him
and Rilke's letters
and he kissed the mole beneath her breast

a pebble among pebbles picked

from the streambed of childhood, where the hook-jawed gods
of childhood perished into sex

And saw from there the source

of the red light on the walls of her tiny studio:
the radio tower on the hill

and listened to the uncanny broadcast picked up by her
record player as it played

Bach descending into the Iranian centrifuge on the last
notes of his name

*

And walked alone through the market arcade
touched by her difference

And saw from there the mountains in their places,
Distance fled from them

having leaked its trail of fuel across the sound
where it laid down to die

into posters, postcards, the search
already ended

*

And the music stopped, and the dancers who swayed against
each other
long after it stopped
stopped too.

Rilke had been paraphrased for the vows,
and *Borrowed Love Poems* read under the florist's wire trellis,
and the families had lined up for their memories.

He stared into the camera thinking
I will see this picture of myself many years hence

staring into the camera thinking
I will see this picture of myself many years hence.

On this screen it has happened,
the life that seemed my own like a mirror or a garden;

it is a mirror held up to a mirror, a garden held up to a garden,
it belongs to neither the beholder nor the rain.