

Mothra

Jon Stone

Here's

the mercury vapour
 lamp where spells have
 been colliding all night. And here
 are the moths its battle-glow's drawn:
 rabbit-ear-shreds, bark-scars, leaf-sons,
 shed-submunitionlets, brick-flakes, living
 ashlets, apple-skin-shavings, yam-peel, scute-
 lets and wet tobacco, map corners, snagged
 hem-rags, bitten cuticles of stormclouds, slipped
 hooks, split pods, pink samaras. Now dawn comes
 spilling through car windows, and the man who moths
 unpacks himself from the back seat. In his ear's rumour
 mill, the ossicles chatter like cups and saucers, and dew
 splinters under his feet as he comes to the trap, bending
 to survey his haul. They'll go into the fridge, a cool electric
 slumberland – beginner cryogenics! The egg-rack makes room
 for cylinder-prisons, and every inmate the fetch of its shelf-mate
 (but imperfect, as if a smut or a fingerprint had edged its way into
 the cloning machine). The murmuring blood – low as a heat-pulse
 through filament, the whirl of a pebble chewed in the surf. When all
 are suspended in their miniature seines of sleep, the man who moths
 will remove them one by one, and place them, via the tip of his finger,
 onto pinnately veined props, dishes of lichen, between the lichen-frills
 and lichen-froth of a tree's sleeve, upon a pebble-scrum or a new shoot,
 then aim with care his delicate box of glass and light and lightning, and
 in the pictures later published, not a one of these sleeping beauties will
 look anything less than brightly alert, nectaring on the scenery and
 pro-modelling their kicking-out coats of paint-speckled khaki,
 juice-stained raffle-buff, gnawed-edge gumshoe-dun,
 dog-fox-rust, frost-bottle, mustard
 and more. / Here
 is our
 song, a song
 for summoning. It
 takes days and years to sing it./
 We sing it through slickings of rain,
 through the sun beating us half way
 to death, and we sing it with our throats
 torn, with our drums dulled, with our dance
 nightly by the agents of a hundred and one regimes. We sing
 it in spite of pamphlet drops, countersong, bad reviews, plagiarism
 and constant nightmares. And no, the sea doesn't sing with us, nor
 do the giant hills or the earth itself. We sing happily, and ragingly, out
 of love and misery, and desire and hope and hopelessness all at once, and
 we sing it in our sleep and we sing it in the bath, and we sing it naked and we
 sing it to our children and our parents. Sometimes we stop singing. But very
 soon, we start up the song again, the very same song, and we sing it as if we
 never stopped singing, and sometimes we want to stop but find the song
 goes on without us, goes on in our hearts and mouths, and we come
 to welcome it again, and take it up again, and one day – not
 today but inevitably, some day – one day the song
 will wake you, will summon you.

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 Here's a dream:
 00 the moth whose 00
 0000 compound eyes 000
 000 are satellite dishes or 000
 satellites, whose antennae are firs
 twitching in a sweet breeze while
 the windows of a town fill with
 a marmaladey glow. The moth
 \ blinked out by the moon.
 The moth which
 crawls
 into
 your
 mouth,
 dark
 as a
 stinging
 as well
 nettle. The moth crushed
 in the window frame. The
 moth in her danger shades,
 who touches down on an
 island whose inhabitants
 worship the moth. The
 moth with her wings
 in flames. The
 moth who
 ravishes a
 universe
 for love.

Here's a shadow

falling as shadows do, cool
 and even. Now it's on the sea's broken,
 broken, broken lip, the sea's split lip, now
 the exposed bone of the beach. Faster than you
 can read this wordy glut, faster than your eyes can pick
 through these snagged ink-clots, the shadow eats up then
 expels the shacks on stilts, the cluttered cars, spatters of
 park and garden, pools, roofs, road junctions, slipways, docks,
 metro stations, stadiums, coliseums, hospitals, river-mouths,
 museums, universities, plazas, cemeteries, sex shops, cinemas,
 landfills, ossuaries, schools, squats, crime scenes, flash mobs, film
 shoots, shrines and squares. If it could be cut, the shadow would make
 cowl for seven hundred children. If it could be gathered, it would slosh
 from a million-gallon water tank. It's a piece of the night itself, come un-
 fastened, gone tearing. And what's it doing here, then here, then here, and
 where will it settle? Ask me again when I'm old and have lived through the
 aftermath, better yet a run of aftermaths, one chaining into the next - because
 right now, everyone is guessing. Even those bound to a jungle of instruments
 can't really say what the numbers mean, and besides, mostly we're hearing from
 middle men, enthusiasts. Seated waxily under studio lights or looming bust-like
 over their columns, they muffle their fervour in a kind of drone, a drone that
 sounds like bored intelligence, and they put their case: how the shadow was all
 but inevitable, how it can be overcome by policy, how the shadow points toward
 a future of infinite shadows, how it is, after all, only a shadow. But whatever, or
 whoever, is throwing the shadow likely has no opinion at all. He, or she, or it, is
 only feeling the sunblast on his, or her, or its back, perhaps on the way to
 a showdown or spectacle, perhaps benevolent, perhaps woken
 from the mother of all sleeps and shaking off a
 seismic hangover as the world
 skips like a
 tune./
 Here's
 a howl for
 your wound, to
 take you off your feet, to
 dress you in dust. Oh, wild is the
 whipped-up saxophone, pushed
 to its highest pitch. Ah, but you might
 try to catch the comet that's been blown
 off course by the bluster of space age weaponry.
 Every candle in the house goes out at once, and summer
 is just another idiot, gone with the rush. Here's a wail to rip
 up tree and root, to sweep your mind of change, boy. Electricity
 lines undulating like sound waves, houses turning as mill wheels do.
 Now open your hand. Two miniature girls are hid there, clasping each
 other like tangled keys. And when you put your ear to them, you can hear
 their bracelets chattering, their breath gathering. How do you even begin
 to keep them, with the sky bearing down on you, and now a blizzard
 of golden scales wurlitzing through the city, turning monsters
 dim, as something dies and is born again, maybe
 in your heart, maybe not. The city, she's
 just too beautiful.