

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 whirr of a pebble chewed in the surf. When all
are suspended in their miniature scenes 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, the windows of a town fill with seismic hangover as the world
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 raided / \ / \ /
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.

} } } } { {
Here's a dream:
00 the moth whose 00
0000 compound eyes 000
000 are satellite dishes or 000
000 are marmaladey glow. The moth
crawls into \ / \ /
mouth, dark \ / \ /
as a \ / \ /
stinging \ / \ /
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 them
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
cowls 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
satellites, whose antennae are firs a showdown or spectacle, perhaps benevolent, perhaps woken
twitching in a sweet breeze while 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
as well 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 chittering, 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.