

MALCOLM
EVISON

THE STILLNESS MOVES

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by Malcolm Evison
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DAY-TIME POEM / HENDON

What have they done
the trees stand outside
firm as concrete

the windows
tremble a little

the day tells me nothing
it is only I

I tell the day to stream
through my consciousness
open my eyes
and sing / and sing releasing
the dull despair

“it is not yet begun”
I cry out
“it is not yet begun”
and the cry

pierces my flesh
burning
like an inner sun

and the air is silence.
What have they done.

THE STUDIO

It moves. The stillness moves.
I sit and watch the stillness move.

The painter concentrates
displacing and replacing things
interpreting the thing
In terms of his attention.

He shapes his destiny. He moves

his hand across the plane.
Displacing and replacing things
he moves through his creation.

THE GAME

Forcing a tear from the corpse
of my imagination
my fear laughs and sings its source

away. What is this being why
is it so free? Am I not I
my own to write and feel?

Erecting reason
as a monument to God;

I move. I think. I fear.

WHISPER

Dread has a silence which makes death
seem trivial. It magnifies the moments
and the hours slide slowly toward

a new freedom. The air is real
is air. The man breathes to fulfil
the what and why of it

but never knows (Dread is a whisper
Against the scream of death) Screams
Into silence - “the earth is friend and foe”

his answer to the feel of it. He knows
but cannot say / the feel of it.

Dread is a whisper screaming
at death. It has a silence which
makes death seem trivial:

A whisper that screams.

LIKE ETERNITY'S PRECIPICE

This growing hour assumes significance

the power within derides
its precursors
in order to excite my will

I swallow the dark mourning moments

erect a monument to mine
alone-authentic-self

destroying idolatrous goals
I hang

like eternity's precipice
in a finite plain.

AWAKENING

And truth is fading fast
making its want my need

and love is a mere fragment
of my life

but life is just a dream
and dreams are only
partial truth

and truth is fading fast
but life is free

and freedom is a dream
which never fades

PERCEPTION

Forget the past -
the past is present

doubt always and be certain.

Now concentrate. A tree.
You have created
a tree. Just see
where it gets you.

Concentrate. Invalidate my thought.
A thought, a tree, now can't you see
where it gets you.

I am a thought, the thought is me
just concentrate - what do you see?

A poem. My metaphor of love.

Now concentrate and see
where it gets you.

Forget the past -
the past is present

doubt always and be certain.

PRAYER

Words have no value
other than to praise –

teach me the way. Teach
me to raise
my voice in song, to sing

the joy and fear
of being. Write me an epitaph
of love, and then

forget. Forget my foolish ways.

Words have no value
other than to praise.

ADAM

This man, this image is the scheme
of things. This pure delight
he finds as he touches
the flesh of a woman. Man-made
this gift of God, the rib that grew

and blossomed to preserve
the blossoming. The man seeks entrance, strives
to heal the wound. Who can unite
these themes; this earth, these images,
his dreams - deeper than knowledge?

This man, this image is
the scheme of things -
within it and beyond.

EVE
(The Meeting)

There and unknown; unknowing. This one
this moment is. There
and she does not know it. She is.

The man moves from his loneliness
toward her. She looks ahead,

her gaze, steady and confident. Her eyes
affirm the day. He cannot share it, sensing
that her lips betray, this confidence.
He reaches out to touch

her face, her lips tremblingly apart;
a silent fear disturbs
and beautifies. There are no words.

(She, he, wait for the mystery
to reveal itself).

The touch. Words drop their silent veil.
“Amen”, she says, discovering the word.
“Thank-you”, he says, discovering their power.
Together theirs is praise: separate and one.

NOCTURNE 4 - "TIME"

Black trees, black skies, black silences.
Even the rain. The rain is dark
and silent - tonight
it has no voice. Touching my face as I
reach out (trying to find myself -
the I. I cannot know the I
only the songs. The songs of time.)

And time goes out and all
of space seems small;
losing its dignity. The rain
touches my face. My hands
clutch at the darkness - feeling
the loss of time. Unbeatable and yet

not there at all. Cannot be there
without me. For time is was
and was the is of me - the I
I cannot know. (Lost in the knowledge

of unknown time. The words. The silences.)

Nothing apart from the echo
of being. In being there is
none. Nothing apart from the echo.

Make it resound. Apart from it:
Nothing. Make it resound.

To know and to be known by time.

ELIMINATE ENUMERATE

Eliminate. Eliminate. Eliminate my arrogant knowledge.
Let me be certain and concentrate
upon my doubt. Finding a zero ground
the joys abound

attention rising to a peak and thoughts
and thoughts of things
and things

disintegrate.

Staking my claims both here and there -
arise awaken now
arise. Eliminate. Eliminate.

Enumerate. Enumerate.
Describe count nought for one
and all for nought

disperse

it is I am
so certain nothing is sure

eliminate affirm

your power is diminishing and grows.

ONLY THE ONE

No man is nearer than each
to death / each knowing
what the other knows
each know the same

as each
though still unknowing
one man dreams
only one man

every one man
not men

nor women / not the philosopher
or bishop - and the people

they know nothing -
only the one

each man disguises the most plain reality
no man is nearer than each.