



OSIRIS

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HIEROGLYPHIC THE HERMIT

“tell them I’m a hermit”

Agnes Martin

hideaway in the canyon or desert

sky sun clouds

the books the stones the trails

the art of Kandinsky & Klee—

add the music of the spheres

the poetry of Dickinson & Neruda

the philosophy of Emerson & Thoreau—

trees mountains stars

BLUE STAR IN A SAND FIELD

I take sensibility & bury it in the garden. I abandon the conformity of a pincushion. we struggle to complete the sentences as though they will unlock the cupboard. the question is a bridge, a fisherman. the old dog wanders in the night. we continue to dream of islands.

FLOATER

Something has come loose in my left eye
and tracks my glance as it roams the rolling flames
of coastal ice plant, invasive, plaguing the landscape
with its succulent beauty saluting the passing pelicans
cruising the cliffs, the kelp beds, the last swells of September
crashing in the coves, smoothing the wet sand
below the curves of the drive where police cars
and panel vans with business logos painted on the sides
roll also, rhyming with the waves
and the plants and the boats offshore and the skimming birds
and the whales unreal in their wild scale so close to the street
where people stop to prove they saw
by catching an image in a magic box
where all is shrunk to a screen
the size of this page
where I too try to seize what I see
and save it in a book to stash in my jacket pocket.

DIONYSOS,

in the dark gold of Jupiter's sun
the breaking thunder
of your silence

THUNDER EGG

we are like this
plain round stone,
with its hidden crystal heart
which never sees the sun
unless broken

INSIDE OUT

Upon waking
were I to call upon
an angel I've only seen
while dreaming

were it to appear
in the expression
on my own face

looking over
the tips of my toes
at this cliff's edge

without
stopping me
from taking flight,

would I want
to turn and run-off
in a hurry

afraid to be more
than I am
than I've ever been

or would I remain
toeing
this cliff edge

wingless within
this angel's dream
from which I never
seem to awake

Paul B. Roth

TIME IS SNOW

Time is snow
falling and filling in
earlier deer tracks

A gradual vanishing
taking place
one squall at a time

What we can't sense,
coydogs sniff
from great distances

track
the scent
their noses follow

before celebrating
their kill
by ululating the joy

expressed
by their otherwise
snowflake filled stomachs

HANDS ON THEIR OWN

I forget
to wear my gloves
in the garden

Thorns and barbs,
splinters and shards
without knowing await
my fingers and wrists

Stone chips, worm corpses,
beetle shells,
softened seed casings,
violet hairs
shed from grasshopper legs
attract my persistent eyes

Overwhelmed
my hands think they know
enough to go on without me

but should they return
and find I've grown blue
instead of green veins,
a nose instead of none

they may no longer
want to hear me speak
the same language
spoken before they left

or understand
the signs on ruled paper
that as a child
I made and believed
would immortalize me



CHILD'S BARN WINDOW
DEERFIELD MASSACHUSETTS
Andrea Moorhead



Penché la grêle t'écrase la tête
la boue te saute aux yeux
le ciel mourant flamme et violet
un été de cinéma qui blesse
la peau fine humiliée sous les doigts
je ne rêve pas
la nuit s'est couchée plus loin



Voici l'heure de jeter tes membres
dans l'azur
justifié
et tu le fais
au commencement la peau du front décolle
puis tout le corps
on dirait que j'approuve
et les fougères remplacent les sapins
je comprends
je t'appelle
cette imbécile distance finie
m'abandonne comme un hier fossile

UN FIL ROUGE DANS LE LABYRINTHE
(extraits)



J'ai si longtemps navigué que je ne sais plus
quel royaume oublié vit un jour mon départ
ni même si de quelque terre originaire
j'en suis à traverser ce présent hors voyage
dans l'immobile sans feu ni lieu de l'exil



J'ai vu le sang couler des pierres
J'ai vu la lumière s'évanouir de douleur
J'ai vu pleurer la terre
muette de chagrin
Et j'ai vu des hordes ravager les cités
disposer du bétail humain en hécatombe
tandis que les fleuves mugissaient rougissaient
J'ai vu la nuit s'ouvrir dans le jardin des nuits
J'ai vu danser les ombres
apparaître des anges
sans pouvoir retenir leurs signes ni leurs mots
Et j'ai vu le brasier m'attendre de tous temps
et puis j'ai vu chaque matin comme un miracle



Yeux comme la pluie
automne sans cesse renaissants
de l'aube au crépuscule
c'est toujours un regard qui implore

J'ai frappé les portes de nulle part
là-bas
vers les pèlerinages de la mort
sur un coin de soir mouillé

Cortège de tous vos regards
à la fin
c'est ma solitude même qui m'échappe
cheveux blanchis neige vague

j'aperçois encore vos regards
comme un long rêve
courbé sur mes cyprès.

CALLIGRAPHIES

It's so still, as if
I've awakened in another world.
But maybe, overnight,
someone has changed my being.
The storms are distant.
I stand on the threshold of my house
and the air is ever more fulfilled.
The beating of wings intensifies
when the anonymous calligrapher
paints lightning at sunset.

It's so still, I can hear
the seconds fall,
the colors in them twisting –
globes of nectar.
An abundance of light
spreads across my soul.
Legends, memories, wars
leaf through us, like a book.
Everything gets settled,
somehow has reached its climax,
when roses hardly tremble
in the breeze from who knows where
whispering, as in a dream,
the same divine epitaph:
“Roses – pure contradiction;
may no one's sleep be
under so many eyelids.”

It's so still, you can hear
as in another life
how the world appears again
from the breathing of stone flowers.
Pushing with their muzzles
horses drive the fillies to water.

CALIGRAFII

E-atâta liniște, de parcă
m-aș fi trezit în altă lume.
Dar, poate, peste noapte,
ființa mi-a schimbat-o cineva.
Furtunile-s departe.
În pragul casei stau
și aerul e tot mai împlinit.
Bătăi de aripi se-ntețesc,
când anonimul caligraf
pictează fulgere la asfințit.

E-atâta liniște, încât aud
căzând secundele,
în care se răsucesc culorile –
globi de nectar.
Noiane de lumină
în suflet se aștern.
Legende, amintiri, războaie
ne răsfoiesc ca pe o carte.
Totul devine încheiat și
oarecum ajuns în vârf,
când rozele abia tresar
în adierea nu se știe cui
ce-ngână ca în vis
același epitaf divin:
„Roze – pură contradicție;
somnul nimănui să fii
sub atâtea pleoape”.

E-atâta liniște, încât ascuți
ca dintr-o altă viață
cum se reface lumea
din respirarea florilor de piatră.
Împungând cu botul,
pegașii mână mânjii să-i adape.

I DON'T KNOW WHY

I don't know why I try so hard to defend myself against beginnings.

I wait for my heart's amphora to fill very gradually.

All the springs start to flow from the mud trodden
by the flying angels who, poked in the ribs
by something indefinite, have learned to wander both

night and day, unhindered, among people,
until they tame them and befriend them,
then, after a long time, when they're worn out,
they seem to pick one at random and in their body
they draw their breath for one whole year.

Then some of them withdraw only they know where,
leaving no traces, no signs nor hostages,
and wait for their heart's amphora to fill
and spill beyond the brim. In the meantime,
they try to defend themselves against another beginning.

NU ȘTIU DE CE

Nu știu de ce mă apăr de începuturi cât pot.
Aștept până amfora inimii, treptat, se umple.
Toate izvoarele încep din glodul frământat
de îngerii zburători, care, împunși în coastă
de ceva nelămurit, au învățat să umble

noapte și zi, nestingheriți, printre oameni,
până îi îmblânzesc de tot, și-i fac prieteni,
apoi, într-un târziu, cad secerați de oboseală, aleg
câte unul la nimereală parcă și în trupul lor
își trag sufletul un an întreg.

Pe urmă unii se retrag numai ei știu unde,
fără să lase urme, semne ori vreun zălog,
și așteaptă să li se umple amfora inimii
și să dea peste margini. Între timp,
se apără de un alt început cât pot.

DREAMING

Clouds
rest
like
young lions
in the lap
of blurred
mountains

I watch them
groom
their snow-covered
fur

Zinfandel
sunlight
reflects
heart ache
on your
liquid silk torso

I dream only
of sand
& the things
made of sand
brushing my lips
with no sound

Silvia Scheibli

FROM NOW ON

I will only write
about April light

The transforming light

Natural light
that we lick from a spoon

Whose aroma
dazzles & blinds

Wounding us
to anticipate sleep
ever so softly

SEARCH FOR REDEMPTION

I.

I didn't expect this vanilla orchid
to exhale the scent of chocolate
or to send me into a dream of mint,
of coconut trails and fresh ripe grapes.

The overworked sun turns lazy
and exotic. Syncopated drum-beats
play the wind and distant voices sing
in a language I don't understand.

My jeans become a red sarong,
and you appear on this brown dirt
path, walking barefoot with me
through the cacao grove.

II.

The day has a bite taken out of it.
Everyone is hungry,
chewing off bitter hours.

I try to patch the hole
with sweet cherries, melons,
the earth's tears.

III.

How does one atone for desiring
baked apples, blackberry wine,
a squeeze of pineapple between the lips
when many have no rice?

Salvation slips behind a cloud,
and I long for the warm taste of faith.
Morning hides beneath my tongue.
The sun melts.

IV.

In the ancient jungle, silk pours
its waterfall into the sacred pool—
scent of deep green and bougainvillea,
the dark musky earth.
As I lean against this tree,
a kiwi vine flowers up my back.
My voice is the echo of mangoes
dropping to the ground.

THROUGH THE MUSIC

—Las Vegas, 2017

Something shoots into me—
a fire on wings.
Pain is my light and my hope.

A dragon follows—
breathes into my back. I ask him
if my clothes are burning,

and he licks me with his flaming
tongue. Wreaths of candles flash
when I blink.

Footsteps run past me.

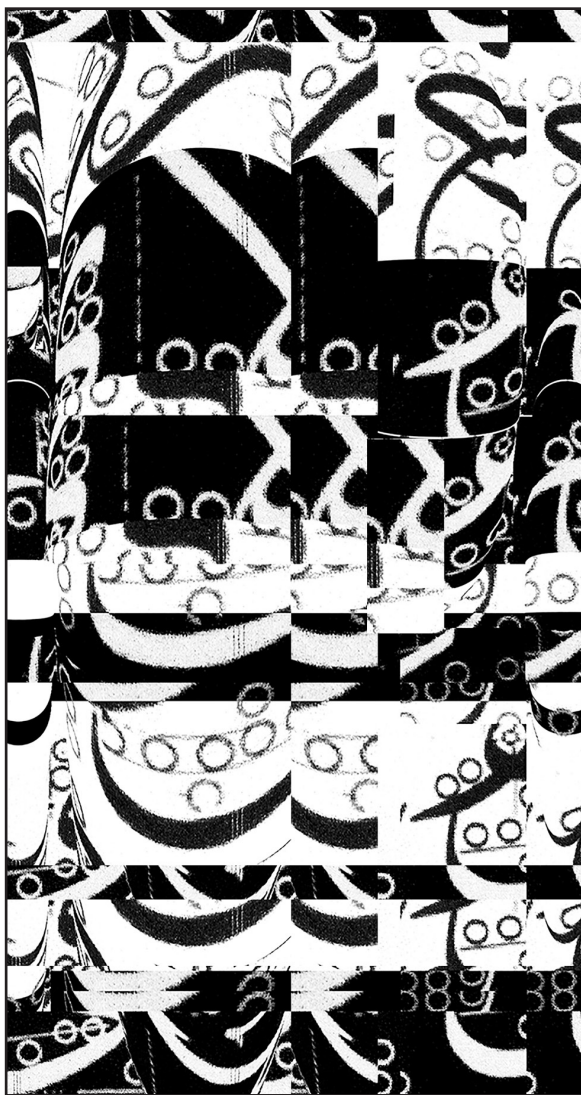
The beach is folded into my pocket—
as I open it, the scent of sun-baked breeze
carries me to the sand where white lace

flames on turquoise water.
My hands cradle the sounds
of trees leafing the sunset dark.

A distant siren wails.

Salvation slips behind the moon's caul
near a waterfall of stars.
I wonder if God lives here.

As the night opens its cool arms,
I enter.



ARABIC LESSON #8
Robert Moorhead

Ute von Funcke

Translated from the German by Stuart Frieibert

OMENS

She knows feathers
will grow
out of her old skin

invisible at first
the delicate plumage
wordless omens

he will see them
touch their quills
read them before her flight

ZEICHEN

sie weiß federn
werden wachsen
aus ihrer alten haut

unsichtbar noch
das zarte gefieder
wortlose zeichen

er wird sie sehen
ihre kiele berühren
sie lesen vor ihrem flug

Ute von Funcke

translated from the German by Stuart Frieibert

MY MATCHING SELF

At the make-up table
with a deft hand

I darken my white hair
reddden my pale face

I get up
like my matching self

it bolts the door
goes through the wall

outside
it's waving to me

the blind windows sense
only its shadow

MEIN ÄHNLICHES ICH

am schminktisch
der leichten hand

dunkle ich mein weißes haar
röte mein bleiches gesicht

ich stehe auf
wie mein ähnliches ich

es verriegelt die tür
geht durch die wand

draußen
winkt es mir zu

die blinden fenster tasten
nur seinen schatten

Ute von Funcke

translated from the German by Stuart Frieibert

WOUNDED BLUE

You lifted your head and
said quite incidentally

the sky had
a lot of scratches

then you left

you didn't see the way
the sky lay at my feet

and I knelt down
to palpate its wounds

the way from my fingertips
gold flowed to fill up
blue's wounds

VERLETZTES BLAU

du hobst den kopf und
sagtest so nebenbei

der himmel hätte
viele kratzer

dann gingst du

du sahst nicht wie der
himmel mir zu füßen lag

und ich niederkniete
seine wunden zu ertasten

wie aus meinen fingerspitzen
gold floss, aufzufüllen
das verletzte blau

STILLED AS AN IMAGE

Stilled as an image of a blue harbor. Waves ceaselessly unbreaking
against rocks & trawlers permanently roped to an empty
morning dock. In an unlit corner of the canvas what I take
for cormorants peeling back the surface of the sea in search of
sustenance may be, on closer inspection, a flock of ghosts,
fingerprints or time-worn stains. Which makes me question the truth
of the whole damn thing. Like when I learned about the tooth fairy,
how that led me to doubt Santa, god, that my parents would love each
other forever. Like when my brother returned from war. No,
the pale ocean palette bleeding upward into stormy skies implies only
what I wish it to. I wish the world captured in one long frozen kiss,
lips forever on the verge of touch. That kind of expectation. That in the end
this urgent, unsatisfiable burning, & its wake, isn't really our fault.

TINDER

When the wood's still tender (before life has taken
its toll, youth's invincibility

softened enough to schism, lessons taught
but unlearned), we strike

lengthwise, toward the sun, so what's left
from what we've burned (to keep ourselves

warm) will flourish again, someday; another
limber generation.

from RETINA

(i)

misnamed and dizzy
these are the frost flowers of an
unfamiliar couple found
in a simple southern
dead paper city.
the legend of their years is underway:
it touches glass
and meets no one.
at that spot in the story
brides with operatic shoulders
play out the underside
of these terms
while their arms dance.

(iv)

delicate:

a designated pain of distant solitudes
by a window

(vi)

this is the operatic story
of a place – Welcome!
with its courteous closed doors
where a dance is the underside

of the paper legend
of the city
of the dead woman
of the misnamed couple

free & simple they were
unfamiliar with its speech like frost
with its scale of the many unknown
mists that streamed over them
for years
when they went out walking
when they searched for the solar eclipse
the lunar eclipse in vain

there is no relief
no action here
they are enclosed now
in night-like glass

(viii)

bodies tighten within the silence of their graves
political outlines are soaring but inadequate
undreamed of burdens become inseparable from one another
granular moments melt personally
here is a period of greedy sunshine
overnight there's park of unexplained pleasure
in the end summer turns away its love-like garlands
a misinformation machine looks like a restored castle

(ix)

Sudden patterns shift geographically and question those common red bricks housed in childhood. You can bend the present to a critical routine numbered on the artificial clock of crimson speculation. You can unpack your locket and your shells in conflict over a bowl of sugar but your inner wrist remains personal. Over there is the ancient spectacle of an actor pronouncing the broken names of regret in public. Here you start over in the abandoned hallways of a hospital. Your voice is the skyline.

GUI-TARE BASSE BATTERIE

à Matthieu Messagier

Ainsi mouraient les sixties. Fractions d'accords contre les tempes.
Le bourdonnement du flux enfiévré nous emporte toujours.
Nous déporte sur son vaisseau de cristal. Rêves binaires à la dérive.
Je pense à Jack et Allen. À Janis. Jim et Jimi. À la mort express.
Au tempo des existences foudroyantes. Aux désespérés du swing.
Aux vagabonds de Tallahassee. Aux sauvages de l'île d'Alcatraz.
Au traité de Laramie. 1868. Aux réprouvés de toutes les tribus.
Aux sources où nous venions nous désaltérer. Tôt à l'aube.
Au brouillard de Trélles. Aux barrages protecteurs de l'enfance.
Au vacillement de notre frêle esquif sur les eaux du Potomac.
Là où des poèmes flottent à la surface de l'encre vers minuit.
Là où des protest songs servent de remède aux mièvres comptines.
Là où le phrasé sensuel des Gibson nous protège des autorités.
Je pense aux souterrains de velours. Aux griffes de solos vengeurs.
Au laci électrique dessiné par les néons. Les phares de Cadillac.
Aux forêts hirsutes. Aux fils d'argent du soleil dans le feuillage.
À cette machine à six cordes. À mille coups. Qui tue les fascites.
Aux viscères de la nuit. Au scintillement sacrificiel des harmonies.
Alors que nous redescendons le fleuve du dernier des immobiles.
Rampant sur l'eau. Serrant contre nous le serpent languide.
Nous allons vers l'Ouest. Là où la terre prend fin. Finistère.
Encore bercés. Consolés par le tangage du brick de papier.
Rythme. Ouragan. Vibrations. Danse du chaman sur scène.
À la radio. Mémoire des oreilles vigies. De nos os de verre.
Dans cet éternel labyrinthe hanté. Où le destin n'existe pas.

LÀ OÙ EFFLEURER LE PASSAGE SECRET

à Marie-Claire Bancquart

La langue écrit contre les dents. Frotte ses mots contre l'émail.
La vie serait une sorte d'illusion. Surabondance de chimères.
Et pourtant les caresses. Les taches d'encre. Les amis disparus.
Souvenirs découpés en sarabande. Nous avons marché ensemble
Le long de ces rues. Une foule de solitude face aux publicités.
La Seine est haute. Ses flots massent les quais indifférents.
Nos pas résonnent sur les absences. Écrasent des fleurs crues.
Bleu délavé. Rose incarné. Un bouquet dans chaque reflet.
Les voies alentours sont des affluents ébouriffés de stridences.
Nous y déposons nos regards parmi les voitures. Les autobus.
Les fines jambes des belles inconnues. Le grain de leur peau.
La cadence chaloupée de leurs hanches le long des trottoirs.
Nous habitons ce voyage des jours. Cette ondulation de profils.
La ville grave patiemment les traces de notre passage sur terre.
Sur macadam. Bientôt le printemps et le catalogue des oiseaux.
Il faut donc espérer parmi les maladies. Les souffrances jetées.
Le fil de l'existence s'enroule autour de nos vivants écrits.
Ce sont eux les survivants. Les immortels qui nous portent.
Un bouillonnement de paroles enceintes qui éveillent le lecteur.
Et à la fin il ne restera donc plus que les poèmes dans leur jus.



And though a pillow is missing
you sleep on your side, one ear
tracking the silence, the other

pressed against your only chance
—still, it's a bed, helping you
count out loud the closeness from 10

to 0 when the pillow that's left
catches fire by reaching out
the way its feathers once gathered

waited for its wings to unfold
cover the ground side by side
with the ashes and your lips.



Without a moon your death
would be impossible—every night
must sense this, uses its silence

the way you are covered with dew
that listens to the continents drift past
making room for another underneath

by slowly lowering the Earth
without a sound except as flowers
—you are standing, never expected

that the ground would shift
where someone handed you a note
setting it on fire again

as if the blackened dot
that ended each sentence
would smell from moonlight

suffering on the ground
dug out by the handful
to let in more air this time

forever—to welcome you, find
a place near a waiting stone
already growing petals and harmless.

WHEN THERE ARE NO DREAMS

the body knows the crystalline structure of the rain, the burrowed warmth of snow, admitting neither labyrinth nor verticality, windows' sheen as the grid slowly fails, the body knows a rinsing of hot air, a cleansing of particles so fine the eyes waver in their stare, solar baths in the green gold sea, in the salt-brine of consciousness, the quivering of muscles as the day lengthens, shortens, disappears into the shadow, into the moonlight, the cascade of imaginary starlight, velvet night, dreamless and secure, as the body recalls the crystalline structure of the rain, the burrowed warmth of snow, the aching of skin in the black grained textures of past encounters.

KALEIDOSCOPIC RAINS

Saturated ground, walk quickly, step higher, seed the night with those golden crystals you brought with you, a silk bag of tiny objects, thought to be magical, thought to contain a rare mineral, found only in the night sky, in the vast imprinted circuit board of the night; walk more quickly, don't drop your bag, the crystals can't touch the ground now, it's too cold, too hard, there is a stone plate rising up behind us, its shadow seems to cover us as we walk, don't drop the crystals yet, don't seed the ground, the stone is protecting us, shield of radiance from within the earth, from within the flow of mineral blood and its incandescent strangeness. It's calmer now, we're beyond the ravine, there are no more shadows, the stone has receded and the night wind risen.

AN INVENTORY OF LIGHT

Drop the phone
the screen is too bright
your face is turning silver
iridescent like the moon
seen from inside the water
fish congregate all night long
mesmerized by the smell of the light
by the steady burning along your eyes
the circles appearing above the water
shadows cast by the screen in your mind
by the blackening torch of earlier
scenes

PLANTING SNOWFLAKES IS AN ABSURD TASK

created by the mind when the electricity is off and there is no news, no proclamation of storm or attack or human failure, and the snow accumulates somewhere, and maybe could be used as a source of water if the grid stays down, if the flashing lights above the moon show no signs of stopping, red and green, amber and bronze-flecked cobalt all afternoon, causing the mind to flicker in sympathy, to forge new links, new channels, so that planting snowflakes in the wind might well be significant, there is no science to imaginary acts, no stalling out of gesture or realignment of thought, it's snowing again someplace beneath the glowing, beneath the startled vapor trails coming from the moon, someone else might have taken the opportunity to get out, to plant snowflakes in the upper atmosphere, nothing else could explain the rose glowing above the moon, the sudden darkness, the imaginary emptiness in the mind.

SELF-PORTRAIT

For Adonis

I am the exile
covered with holes

the frail limbs
tending what remains
of the garden

that unearths a voice
buried by ash

I see the usual borders
the very same limits

each day a siren
echoing in this tiny corner
where I only have the dark
memory of that refugee road.

NORTHWEST OF JERUSALEM

Sometimes I prowl
the deepest trails
for fire for light

the snake keeps shedding skin

that I could only dream
of such privilege

not even Adam would sacrifice his ribs
nor offer his blood
for a missing poet
buried somewhere
in the dawn

that fingers barely touch

the pages of an old magnum opus swaying
to and fro

facing the foggy windows

and the floating silence
of my cigarette smoke



WORK DETAIL OF ARABIC VISION #2
Robert Moorhead



je traverse la ville
au clair soleil de mars
entre deux averses je marche
sur ma gauche la basilique
de Fourvière sur sa colline
voilà bien longtemps
que je ne me suis recueillie
sur la tombe de mon père
même si des parcelles de moi
se mélangent à la terre
où je voudrais faire germer
quelques pousses pour lui
fraises des bois muguet
avec quelques abeilles

THE VISIT

The elegant woman came to see me
and began asking questions
concerning the color and trill of birds.
She wanted to know, too, what a tree was like,
because she didn't remember.
I didn't know how to answer,
but thought of that prisoner who also forgot them,
after so many years,
and who wrote a beautiful book on the subject.
The elegant woman then said,
"What do you know of peoples' lives?"
I didn't know how to answer.
She then made a gesture of a guitar at full blast
and started singing.
When the night quieted, she climbed on her blue Vespa
and rode off intoning "Purple Rain,"
until becoming small, tiny,
an ant scurrying
over a thread of asphalt,
and I never saw her again.

LA VISITA

La mujer elegante vino a verme
y empezó a hacer preguntas
sobre el color y el trino de los pájaros.
Quiso saber también cómo era un árbol,
porque no se acordaba.
No supe responder,
pero pensé en el preso que también lo olvidó,
después de muchos años,
y escribió un libro hermoso sobre aquello.
La mujer elegante dijo entonces:
“¿Qué sabes de la vida de la gente?”.
No supe responder.
Hizo después un gesto de guitarra incendiada
y se puso a cantar.
Cuando cayó la noche, subió en su Vespa azul
y se alejó entonando “Purple Rain,”
hasta hacerse pequeña, diminuta,
una hormiga moviéndose
sobre un hilo de asfalto,
y no la volví a ver.

Annemette Kure Andersen

translated from the Danish by Thom Satterlee



Like metal bars tattooed
in place
wrists burn
fragments of early
years on her body
like white
scars



Som tatoverede gitre
af fastholdte
håndled brænder
fragmenter af tidlige
år på hendes krop
som hvide
ar

Annemette Kure Andersen

translated from the Danish by Thom Satterlee



An escape may have been
possible but she collapsed at
the two metal barricades
the frozen crocus of
the Milky Way crushed
as proof of
the sunrise
cut free



En flugt kunne have været
mulig men hun faldt om ved
de to spærrebomme af metal
mælkevejens frosne
krokus trådt
ned som aftryk af
solopgangen
skåret fri

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STEPHEN KESSLER'S new book of poems, *Garage Elegies*, is just out from Black Widow Press. His translation of *Forbidden Pleasures: New Selected Poems by Luis Cernuda* received a 2016 PEN Center USA Literary Award.

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