Trembling of the City

SAMPLER
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Evolution

I was once a paleolithic painter, a sensual hunter
plundering the earth, living from hand to mouth,
I painted at the cave's corner, concerned only with the day's concerns.
Faithful to nature, I rendered beauty straight and pure
Sketching motion in lightning strokes,
I saw nuanced shades finer than fine.
I did not know of shadows
Believed neither in gods nor in the world to come.
I lived in an age of actions.
Then I fragmented and fissured the world into
reality and beyond
the visible and the hidden
the mortal and the soul.
Defective Evolution

I sense evolution is defective
no guitar sprouted forth from me where it should,
my parents immigrated to the wrong country,
and Paris is too far away.

I sense evolution is defective
the fingers are too lazy to tell the gospel,
Romance drowned herself in the stream,
and the brackish waters demanded their due after her demise.

I sense evolution is defective in those volumes of poetry:
words are dragged by their hair into the green reeds
and splayed across the stream,
their blind sputtering verses afloat,
adrift beside corpses of rock’n’roll,
intellectuals, poets and all the others
who whored themselves
to adapt to the atmosphere.

I sense evolution is defective
on the seam that separates laptop and typewriter,
My libido never awakens to the glows of a screen
but paper arouses me.

I sense evolution is defective
once I declaimed poetry on stage with an orchestra
once I soared with the music.
Afterward I couldn’t utter a single loveless word
Afterward I knew I’d touched the loveliest thing I’d ever know
and ever since I sense evolution is defective.
Trembling of the City
SAMPLER
My Tormentlove

Forgive me if I fall on your shoulder
Inside the wind is too strong
I ought to scream now and become sick, it is a sickness of war
The wind erupts red from my hair which hid all winter
Between the books
And a madman who was not afraid to love a woman
Made me feel special
Came to wish me good night
And to make me a cup of tea.

Behind the wall, a woman screamed on the staircase.
Bathed in sweat, I lay beside him
A slave to the love of strangers,
My mouth torn upwards, my arms sent into the air
The tea spilled, puddled on the tablecloth.
I’ll never forget him, that time when all the paintings were in purple
But one day the door swung open and I saw he had aged.
He laid himself out in my room, I asked him to stay,
And I dressed in his clothes.
You

1

I remember how Jerusalem
made wolf’s teeth grow in my mouth
and I would lurk for you in the streets.
If you had come across me —
that coldness around the pupil,
that strangeness —
I would have gashed you with my teeth
and howled to God:
Thank you, thank you.
Maybe you will never know
how you were Death to me
and the more I chose you the more there lived within me
the illusion. And the body, that was made
for the love of your flesh, sprouted flesh
and my belly gushed forth pure love.
I hide in my room
and the blood that had made dreams quake
turns now to terror
casts off the essentials of love.
This terror has scissors that cut breath,
that crush air into a blinding dust
and the river of splendor flows through life
washing away remorse as it courses down
and whenever I hear children singing
the wounds of your memories are forgotten, clarified away like fools.
Even through the heart of illusion flows the river of life
and the poem is the holding-point inside it.
You who were my Death
climb now from the cellar and hover in the gloom
my soul was in your hands
like a gypsy girl on her wedding day
my dress is a flawless white
your body, hurtful, is fixed in my flesh.
All the way from you to me
I heard footsteps behind me
I turned to find no one there
the footsteps were my own.
I wanted to be wonderful for you
but only the attraction and the lies were real.
All the way from you to me, my voice kept me alive,
it enveloped me in the poem’s skin
buried in my heart a subtle clear Spring.
Your mouth’s vapor in mine
a grey river blowing
on all that was in me before you
and all the waters know it is me.
Jerusalem in South Tel Aviv

Tonight the last wall between us crumbled and your secret fell into me. Tonight I knew that always, always. In the darkness everything you don’t say is whispered: Yeho-Natan, God has given me your love that I will know a word which chases fear away and in this word is Jerusalem.
Distance

The distance from you was as real as glass shards scraped over flesh
If blood spurts from me, you will play the fool and make me laugh
You don’t fear me, it would be terrible to leave you
The city’s darkness whispers the distance from your body
I face the letters naked
Like when I lay on the bed crying
and you wiped down my wet body with a damp cloth
and I thought I might die in a moment if you did not leave.
And your voice roped around my neck
and I went to the shower and the rope is dragged behind me.
I wanted to paint the wall yellow and you waited for me on the bed
I wished that you would disappear, that I could be someone else
and you painted the walls purple
the bedroom blue
and the girl’s room pink
and on her wall we discovered the name you gave her
engraved in timeworn letters,
and you knew you had powers of sorcery
and I knew it too.
Trembling of the City

The interior city trembled
and I sensed a need to feel truly sorry and beg forgiveness
to know that the city would never be the same
because the trust and quiet in the dark alleys of its heart had been disturbed.
In the middle of the living-room we let outside observers get involved,
and come in and sit on the red sofa.
And they have that realistic look of math teachers
with their cold glances and high salaries
and we are locked into poetry books
we are a citadel whose walls have fallen
because I let anger burst through and curse what was.
And those observers with the cold glances
said they came with love
and admitted that we had entrusted them with a great power
capable of razing sacred cities.
And you no longer gazed into my eyes. You became distant,
You turned off the light and went to sleep,
Leaving me beside you in the dark.
I whispered your name, but you gave no reply
I wanted to feel sorry and beg forgiveness
and touched your warm body, and you did not touch me back.