The Fool & The Bee

#### ALSO BY MARTIN CORLESS-SMITH

#### **POETRY**

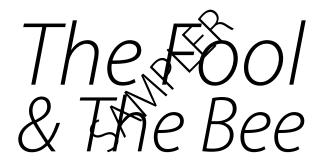
Bitter Green (Fence Books 2015) English Fragments A Brief History of the Soul (Fence Books 2010) Swallows (Fence Books 2006) Nota (Fence Books 2003) Complete Travels (West House Books 2000) Of Piscator (University of Georgia Press 1998)

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# Martin Corless-Smith



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## I. The Fool & The Bee

A visionary processional in three acts

All myths born of a simple-shell, All heroes born of a bee.

### [Prologue]

That which was an Albatross came sweetly down —
Alabaster artichokes on either side the rendering of sky and sea sufficient to supply the thought of Nature in a fulgent mood — and Man at odds; so audience and players might unite suggesting human union transcends the solitude of birds suspended (almost) endlessly above the void — though how an hour or two of scenery can hope to mimic an eternity...

...perhaps it is the ecstasy of Art held temporarily between dark curtains that proposes consciousness played out on a human scale instrument of self and left catastrophe.

#### Act I. Then

[Stage descriptive of an idyll]

[A scene opens]

Hark how it begins – a dollop of affection played into atmosphere – a herring pointed at the Sun All glittery – as if a talisman.

The herring now a symbol of out-fished oceans or

The herring now a name ill-known.

What shall I hold up to the Sun that might reflect ironic glory – it is vain to think of cures to superhuman tragedy – vain to think as well of carpet bombs and fasts.

I who have brought into my den the smirking fox Disabused of charm and status in an urban realm Now too like the poorer humans to elicit aught but fear A loathing – entering the house obedient to need.

Where in the hierarchicals shall we place poetry? A residue of culture when a story held us rapt — or when a culture wrapped a farthing of anxiety with prudent hope and anticipated ordin'ry resolve.

The sickness unto Death, The evils of Revolution In consolation to his wife – Decline and Fall Lord how shall we gather at the river Without texting all our friends

Once in the enemy of time I rinsed my hate with sadness made of Love and for a moment found I could manage to exist without the burden of anticipation answered by desire –

I could uphold the instances of being as if by aspect they resolved all matter into incidents that coincide – hold a herring to the Sun Its eye a perfect mirror to the glory of the frozen present in a future memory.

\*

...A pine grew through the centre of the house and reached into the room – we could not move so climbed up through its barbs
Out to a memory of stars...

...broken limbs that rests
Like a pier into the lake
a half moon with
Europe in the shadow of ny other continents..

It was my body I saw clambing through My house, my morner and my mind The pine had been a thought hence out of time It was as real as happiness

(The night that grew with intermittent joy – a story with all hiding lost at hand – rain and an ocean's wind An eye inside the skull

which boats across the skein Black depths – oil continent Beauty of death her open look And knowledgeless season

what energy drives one to move On a limitless sea – towards what Directionless motherless dream – Skiathos or Helena – the trill

Of a single voice above the lapping To tune immediate silence Pizzicato archipelagos Unseen – and what I crawled out to

Where I had ocean and secure Where I had blood and celestial support Out to a chainless step And peer into the black liquor

Hopeless – travel where We meet loneliness and Anxious spills over to make Me feel for her her outward

Incomprehensibility – an amazon of car Draws past a pine tree pyre Born out of the glossy forest floor Into its own oncoming gale

Field of seed drawn sideways draped The wool of shepherd winters A world to move across – transinfinite The birth of something lost

Love like a great arched chasm We find ourselves inside – remind me Mother before you were – remind me In our ocean above the roof

Where the splintered pine grows into night Cold to the starry snows – pine In an ecstasy of growth A punt over a moat For I don't know what I need to know A pine on fire The spirit of the house A sacrifice for I don't know

A shadow candle burning down
Into the night for I don't know
My lover on another world
My mother and her mother too
A shudder through the empty room
I don't know I don't know).

Suppose this very now
An uproar is at hand
A visionary cleft
Through which to glimpse

Another ecstasy
The courts bemused
Seven restless youths
Have slit a bullock's throat

And was it sacrifice yet unordained? Whilst you entomb yourselves With ancient rites
No longer portents from the skies.

Called into being as if invited to some festival Some custom of restraint, some instinct of exect The pears near bruised with succulence The liquor pouring thickly down the leas

Oh there is no tomorrow after satrifice
It is another world held open for the revelers
The great-winged beetle is above us now
Held there by breath and dream alone.

What of the idiot king – shocked at his dismissal? What of the well-schooled Dame? Feed the horses – empty the barrows No one shall be subject to their dues.

What pleasure bibes the clown? Columbine's dream Being a fly mid-stream No fate, no fears, no views. We have thought up a story so intricate There cannot be a plot. We have peopled the cities with characters Who all believe their act.

Not the Martial arts, nor the bee alone Not the horse and chariot, nor the monstrous snake Here is the indifferent squid – here the rising mold Here the sensuous toadstool hidden in its gloom.

#### for Alan Halsey

I misread arms for anus – errors for eros Misheard the red moon flakes Which means precisely nothing Pre-cise-ly.

Angel abuts the church ceiling At such and such an angle, faith! Where calmness and calamity Mix heresy with hearsay.

The wary flower Kissed so sweetly By wind and bee Kiss again so wearily

[Enter Mars-Ares]

SAMPLER The hacking cough, throat Eye down the face like egg Blood not staunched These boys into the face of that

I can't help hide but Where shall we swallow Hate or fear – the boy Whose beaten face resembles

Love – poured into nowhere perfunctory responses are professional I can't help but hide My own fear and privilege

That's my son, some man is everybody's son, why can we let it go – not ours how can it not be though.

[Enter Bee-Aphrodite, the twins embrace]

Breast of an Amazon The boyhood figure Lean, confused against The empty chair.

What when your parents Leave the empty house What when the tepid bath You sit into

She will have grown a lock Sister to your own Curved like a gourd To slip into yi groan

Only her face will show Her shock at having grown This erection ripe Unearthed from lust – a thirst burst

Out at last – a deity born of the root The roof caves in The mouth caves in The shout to no-one new....

Bare feet across the kitchen floor Sweet lichor down the thigh On marble tiles Now puddles underfoot.