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After the Performance

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AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

After a mad and impassioned dance the evil magician is dead
and we stroll home over the untroubled bridge
festooned with lovers and curing carcasses.
It is June, the month renowned for love.
Shallow boats will tie up under the bridge to catch the carcasses
when they are cut down and fall into the river.

Barbaric, you say. On the other hand I had forgotten the shock
of the first night I saw them: I thought they were hanged men,
I thought they were jeweled
because of the fireflies clinging to them like coats.
Now you understand my use of the word "festooned."
I was drunk and it did not seem strange to me
that they would hang men off the bridge in their finery.

So you see a side of beef with luminous flies is a relief
to the drunken.
You say you are concerned that I drink too much without you
and I say I raise my glass to the lovers on the bridge.
I raise my glass to the shallow boats and their open arms.
I raise my glass to the beautiful and distracting performances they put on
for us in June.

HYMN TO BE SUNG ON GOOD FRIDAY

At noon I am drawn to a café by the crackle
of an old record.
Actors argue about their play:
it is a play about actors.

The sun has been out so long it is unwelcome
and the people on the streets hurry to avoid it.

Flattened flowers whisper under their shoes.