1972

Idling with Observation & Song

Edward Dorn

Follow this and additional works at: http://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.1418
THE LAST JUDGMENT

Medieval sculptors knew,
Better than marxists, what to do
With the exploiting upper classes:
You carve them naked into stone,
With fiends that strip them to the bone
While shoving skewers up their asses.
Torture them richly and with skill.
And let them pay the bill.

Raymond Oliver

IDLING WITH OBSERVATION & SONG

Just now I saw the sign
on the necklace of a crazy Zodiac
Lil announced
And what
did it tell you the poet asked
leafing through the Slingers
extragalactic notebook
Las Vegas is a vast decoy
How do you interpret it? The poet idled
A mirage it is not
It’s real, like a hunter’s duck
Then we’re in Luck, the Horse observed
Only the duck is faithful to that deception
and when he is shot down
his temperature plunges
to meet that of his fabricated brother
wherever that is
in the water of a glacial pool
in the gamebag of a metropolitan fool
or in the wagon of a suburban ghoul
yet he may rise again, when the oven’s hot

Edward Dorn
to the mouth of his sporting consumer
and find his way
digested by the drafty stomach
and ignored a little later by the daffy brain
as he winds his way by porcelain bowl
to iron pipe and concrete main
while the eye that shot him
jogs through a page of Field & Stream
And
if you multiply that bit enough
you end up down in a trough of shit
so yes
when the handle floats by you'll pull it!

Desperate the Poet whispered
Vicious and Desperate . . .

Men and Horses Lil smiled
share a similitude supported by foolishness
you both wear blinders
though only your race wears them openly
I've seen them on the road
where they come and go in the same direction
and when you are made of wood I've heard
you have men in your belly
and in your arched and idealized neck
and when from these parts they spill
to take what they could not take by storm
do you share the feast more than a fake duck?
Claude
when they take you apart
to fuel their fires and brace their hulls
and start, each one, to his disastrous home?

Uh, I'm not that sure I get your question Lil
the horse exhaled but
are you speaking of a need for Horsepower?
Yes I suppose I am, in Horses
and then she turned to the poet
Now that we stepped
out of our coach
and beneath this tree recline
with our jug, can you sing
an ordinary song
after the wailing of that Firecar passes
Hows that?
Hows what?
What meanst thou?

Well like
your mother would like
to hear

Ah yes, That Test
reflected the poet through the slits
of his psychic blind . . .
are you a relative Lil
of the famous Cocaine Lil?
   The Chicago Lady
whose story opens with the quatrain.

Did you ever hear about Cocaine Lil?
She lived in Cocaine town on Cocaine hill,
She had a cocaine dog and a cocaine cat,
They fought all night with the cocaine rat.

Those lines are on the mirror
if she was a woman
then she is my sister!

A marvelous reflection Lil
then how about a song
my mother sung to me when
I was small and in her arms
it is her song but mine as I remember it

I wanted you to make one up
but let us hear the one she sang
when you were just a pup

CO-KANG! the poet began
was a Girl from the mountain
raised on air and light
Erythras dressed in leaves
resembling tea Erythra
in her hair and she was vulgar
and strong as salt
and intuition came to her
like the red deer to a lick
to blow the bare words
of insinuation into human nature
the only nature to her

Cocaine was a mountain thing
dressed in red bright calico
like her knowledge in her nose
she was a lioness intense
to the switching of the Inner Trail
which leads by hidden passage
to the absolute Outside
yes dressed in red bright calico
the sunne comes up on the girl from Cuzco

Bright Erythra the girl in calico
when the sunne comes up on Cuzco
she snaps her fingers in thin air
and they produce the numbers
never produced before C_{19} H_{21} then
five times more for the fugitive NO_{4}
five times more to lock it ON
the awful shyness of the NO_{4}

Then a man is what he thinks she said
it matters zero what he eats, yes
with what he blows his nose
is what he knows, ah yes, there
where the blood docks I will be

And then my child she sings a Lofting song
for the great birds who fly across her lenses
while down the road she goes
Such is the nature of this dope
that upon these eastward glancing slopes
the leaf is grown and it's no mystery
how on this terrace of the globe
the limousine was born, right here
where the Moon's leaf was forbidden
by the Royal Inca who
first knew outer space covered with blood and wax
and rode along the cordillera in smooth cars
put upon the backs of the slaves

Or however they were called by those Braves
Nor could, my child, that which exists
possibly be more Here and less There
no matter how our local knaves
have turned the function of dope around
The thing that can be thot and that
for the sake of which the thot exists
is the same
is yet sound
and in it the Power of Reality rides
behind the oneway vision of the darkened glass
Surrounded so by envy There appeared
At sunrise on the first of April
Suddenly as Monco Capac at the Lake Titicaca
a man in cream-colors
a funnel fixed in his brain
Saying It is all one to me where I begin
For I shall come back again there

Out from the tilting city arrayed
in the cinerama of his adrenalin
and displayed by his bioluminescence
rode his Highness Mescaleen
an old old man but fresh as you my dear
the night you sprung from my body
covered with blood and wax and
laughing out an ode to space endlessly

And they met. Remembering the reddish disk
of which we have merely heard the melting occurred
and that may be jamd but not disclosed
"There lives a fonne that fuckt an earthly mother."
She whispered as they passed
And I can feel it He replied
and by this simple change their passing
conveyed, apparently in the flash
of the meridian sunne upon her laquered nail's
convexion, a scoop of crystal like a giant AND
MORE than enough it was always said
to satisfy the habits of Bobby Blue Bland
PLUS the latterday frenzies of Duane Allman

Bella Donna was a broad. She
who turned the coffeepot upsidedown in Tulsa
who maintains the madness of mumbling
She rose like a shade between them
as they turned about to reconsider
and in turning
they were so into what they could see
they couldn't see what they were into
and she rose from the ground
from the million roots of the shade
interrupting the indifferent flow of the sunne
but not as the scarce planets
who keep it for a while clasped in their penumbras
until the parsed rays flow from the point of the cone
and the whole system can see what's going on
in the third orbit
where a clock hangs on the wall of a mirroring room
with its hands up tight against high noon

My Darlings! Come Back!
Bella Donna addressed them
Can't you see you're the separate rails
of a single track?
I got a crystal called Atropine
I keep it here in
the veins of my vine
and she rose from the ground
Yes, child, she climbed off the ground
and the dream came
And the Bella Donna whispered to their surprise
My principle will prop open your disguise
so we can all have a look thru that brocade, Mescaleen
You'll see it more, but we'll see it Whole
right thru those pakistani threads there
right in there underneath all that hair
Because there's not even a quarterinch a Inca here,
And as for you, my Dear Girl
I can only recommend it to your brain
you know what I mean, Cocaine
I'll kiss your ass with a drop of rain
for any word
that drops from your nose to your mouth
without a gettin itchy, to leave the plain truth behind
So if you don't Mind
you can take your big visions off my road
and whatch out for that toad!

And thus she had the drop on their eyes
and they were rigid along their vectors
and they saw thru each other the Correctors
with eyes that were mined in Kimberley
and cut and polished in Amsterdam . . .