1978

The Clowns

Richard Blessing
The Clowns · Richard Blessing

Suddenly they arrive, baggy pants and shoes grotesque as marriages, faces white as the moon, laughing and weeping.

The sad man is in love with the funny lady. It is a trick like a pratfall: no pain, no laughs. The sad man is sweeping the spotlight like sawdust. He sweeps it up small and keeps it all for himself.

The funny lady swallows goldfish like popcorn. They turn into children who run out from her skirts.

The man tries to kiss her, but their mouths curve wrong. He stands on his head and proposes to her feet. She tries to hold him, but his shoes come off. Even the funny lady is sad.

Nobody cares. Look! There in the center ring, where there ought to be clowns, a stupendous man, muscles abulge like a codpiece of silk, is taming a woman with a rope and a chair. Their lives, their death-defying lives, glare through the music like perfect teeth.