Dominique

Sally Kearney

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Dominique · Sally Kearney

This shoreline curves like a bow,
like the white road we drove
under a sunset vague with sulfur.
A bony androgyne is leading us
to the wrong beach; see how he
stoops for a light and glances
back at us. Imagine him in a moire
cape, glancing back at the mirror,
saying, “Lovely, yes. It’s very lovely.”
He is the whore I’ve always wanted. And you,
you dance each summer night
with some middle-aged veteran of former wars,
stripped down, muscular,
leading you through all the old steps.
You follow stiff as birch in his hold,
a more knowing Nausikaa.
Don’t wink at me. The romance
of his time has worn smooth
but like his baldness it must be worn.

And what will we be, two old buzzards
pecking and kissing under the rotunda?
I can’t have enough of your beauty,
celestial, leading your goggle-eyed daughter
to clarinet lessons, or at the ballet bar
in leg warmers, or striding alongside,
fast, talking confidences, very fast.