

1919

For my love, I drop letters in the P.O. box
Head into the coffee shop
The one where we first held hands— our favourite spot

Never eavesdropping, but barmaids know everything
Yet here I sing
Happy or sad, for the poor man's a play thing
Combat neurosis to deshell the shock that springs

You loved this Italian-style espresso shop
Disliked your coffee strong
A bit of salt cured its bitterness
but aggravated your war wounds, as you feared disappointing Knox
and remissed

Men talk, they drink, stub ciggies in the ashtray
Claim not to gossip war secrets
Some truth lays in the hearsay
But none of your absence and whereabouts, I pray

Americanos for the Americans
that cannot stand the coffee "too Italian"
Scots and Brits prefer Chicory, adulterating
But too inferior to hide the scent of their adultery

Cup of George, or Cuppa Joe
I've longed for your safe return, since the Final Blow

I favour no more waiting for telegrams
and the day I hold your hand
So I can bring you coffee again
Pinch of salt for solubility, removing harsh tasting notes underlain

Until then, I pray for no letters "returned to sender"
and perform the same routine, *pro tempore*

Sipping coffee, made too strong by fault
We ran out of salt

Tin Soldier

Demure is she, breaking in pointe shoes
for a classical ballet performance—
a one-legged soldier's muse

She fantasizes of an Italian Renaissance
spends the 365 rotating on her axis
She dances—
Wound up and tuned by metal prongs
along a dulcet sound

Only a silhouette of her pirouette is etched in the walls
ff a varnished, anti-tarnish box contoured in its halls
Thin as paper, hers is warned by a Jack-in-the-Box

Love knows no bounds
Not when it calls a meeting among the earth, sun, moon
And a an anatomically, atomic fifty man carved from a spoon
Nor a high-tide gravitating, or a fire in the sky burning
For the wind in love is a kiss so humbling
And Love is a dance—
a dare doused in an octane rating
Clinched in arms, paper and tin melted

Odin Told Me to Do It

My trepidations are not propelled
by seven, eight or nine dwarves or elves
I would sink my nails in deep a vial of Mead

Break a vow of sobriety for knowledge
Consume to my neck its scholarly sea

I would shamelessly be a thief
of the imperceptible to the touch
For the things we cannot see, are still as real as can be

The desire to know it all
to hoard education taken to my grave
I am a shameless collector
of painstaking, booked history

Confront the Dragon, Get the Gold

The body, a temple
A heart of gold
Swathed in fleece
Guarded
Naked
on a Silver Bough
Sacred, yearned to be left alone

Dealt an ace of spades
In a wager of consequences
Corps à corps
Dual wields offending
A Trojan, distracting
though fickle, delighting
Hussars skilled in gambling

Ti Kallisti, your heart is beastly
Endow me your leitmotif
Reddening, a Quince
Circadian, in beats
Distant in dissonance

An opus of hums, oeuvres unrelieved

Is it only permissible to stay awake
as I sleep?

Etched in hesperidium

a *tabula rasa*, the containment of my words of sagacity

Too many, too archaically

Pressed in the wax slates of myriobiblion

Hear her pleas

A chariot of dragons fuming, each on a leash

A battle of three silver tongues

Returned a life of vigour and wisdom free

where locked towers met treachery

revealed a Suit of Cups, ace of hearts on my sleeve

Guided spirits in streams

Minor Arcana, a game of Euchre

I play Misère

An extended crest, I now wear my heart on my chest

Huff poisonous breaths

I protect with one hundred heads

A temple of gold

An apple of ardour

With armour in its core

Eye of Ra

Vehemence takes its repose

in angled slats of my souls

Beneath my nails

is my own blood, boiled and dried

Seething volcanically

melting to its pique

Only I know the rigour it took

to bridle the lava sinking my capillary attraction
Massacre sailing doldrums
tidal on each wave of ichor
in moments of wakefulness and morning star conquests

Introduce me as Daughter
attached to a placenta
She and her, born from Nuit
with bulbs that travel with the power of a vision
Extending beyond the stars of a nighttime sky
An epithet only known as the Eye
Beautiful, as is thought mythological, feline
A huntress— aggressive when taken for granted
Unkind, pacified
Fury in her femininity
Her pupils churning fire
like dotted heads kept above water
Solar— douched in the Sun
Set ablaze by her hotspur violence
Came a gentle One