

Robert Hillis / LOVE SUITE (for Rebecca)

1

I borrowed your eyes  
last night and  
I walked through the  
house wearing them  
fresh air entered  
my lungs and my hands began  
to open to learn tenderness.  
Colours were strange  
not at all what I was prepared for.

You rose from the couch.  
I saw my eyes looking back at me  
cold and unsure.

We climbed the stairs together  
and went to bed separately.  
In the morning, it was  
my own eyes I looked out  
from and was afraid.  
I saw that the colours and sights  
that I had once loved  
belonged only to my eyes.  
I stared out a window and knew  
close as we are,  
only with our own eyes  
can we see our deaths  
waiting  
small landmarks on the horizon.

2

I take care to linger  
on the places you  
have told me to.  
You close your eyes  
and I like that.  
I know your face and yet  
I do not know it each time  
it is completely new to me

You watch me undress  
say nothing listen perhaps  
for a wind outside.  
I stand naked.  
You smile and take my hand  
I smile too my fingers  
already finding power.

Everything surprises me.  
The way you use your mouth,  
the way moonlight finds our bodies  
no matter where we lie on the bed,  
the way the trees outside  
seem to watch us,  
our eyes following  
the other's even when  
they are closed,  
the way your fingers

seem to be where I want  
them, the children  
do not call out until our love making  
is finished and we lie together  
thinking of them each alone in  
their small rooms,  
the way you get out of bed  
and stand above me as if  
you wanted to see how  
I looked when alone.

3

I enter the kitchen  
you have placed a rose  
in a cup near the sink.  
It doesn't surprise me that  
its scent fills everything  
I touch for the rest of the day.

When I think of you I  
do not think of flowers,  
the smell of morning  
after a night of light rain,  
nor a sweet cloud of perfume  
that passes my office,

or the full blue dress  
that hangs on the door for  
the morning, the warm body  
I hug when I wake in the middle  
of the night or the bath water  
that holds you softly as I  
would like to, nor the pronounced  
form of your crotch in blue jeans  
although all those things  
remind me of you.

I think you are  
unlike the person I think  
of, you take my hand  
when I am tired and can no  
longer think straight,  
you move your hair from your face  
and stand there important  
as anyone can be.

4

Sometimes after making love I look  
at the moon how small  
we are beneath its scrutiny.  
For you I try to be the horizon  
or the sound the world makes in spring.

In the mirror I see you  
change the baby while he  
holds two fists in the air.  
I take him from you and kiss  
him and you smile as if you  
have found the perfect place to  
stand. I kiss you full  
on the mouth until  
the baby's weight pulls  
me away. Later at the sink  
I listen to you play with him  
know my happiness  
can not be described.

6

Sometimes I like to wake you  
in the middle of the night  
and surprise you with my passion.  
Our love making is different then  
no longer protected by light.  
I soothe you awake slowly  
my fingers finding you soft and open.  
You move your thighs  
in a fluid sway as you continue  
to sleep. I wash you with my tongue

until you move your hands over me  
to tell me you are awake.

When I wake  
you are a field of blossoms beside  
me I take your hand  
let it shape my words for me  
your tongue pushing back  
the darkness in my mouth.  
I hum softly to you you smile  
and I know how I must open to you  
not be that other man  
who sings to himself  
while the children cry downstairs,  
who finds his pleasure first  
while looking into your eyes,  
who has not learned yet  
his pleasure is formed by yours  
his smile an echo of yours his words  
planted in his mouth by your kiss.