

PETER CULLEY / Five North Vancouver Trees

for Lary Bremner

Here and there between the pages a skeleton leaf conjured up those lost woods

Patrick Leigh Fermor



1.

The phylogeny of sleep
vs. the ontogeny of waking up
bunnybeard blankets
dewdrop the sleeping slutswool
drooled voices skitter
from the back of a tent (circus)
useless user fingers pinch
filched bodega grapes
awake in sheets so soft
you devour them in a dream
goosefeathers knuckle
a wet November no-hitter's
bloody stucco,
horseradish breezes
curl brown paint from gray lumber
in soft curls—
an August half-moon
teething at sixes & sevens,
in sheets so soft they squeezed
phantom pain out of real pain,
excuses thumbed a map's wet fold,
a ghost train fringe marked with
misty rivers, chenille fingers, flutter gulches,
cross-digging legends out of anthracite
shaded parks bunted for cornerboys
that flap & tumble & shamble.

2.

All is Loch Elsewhere,
Arcadian pancake & parkade,
chewed venue, through potash
& slough
eelgrass aftertaste
past castle & ledge
where the blue bus humps
up & left, past the twinkling figurines
of a presumptive distance
even darker closer in & up, thickened so with
baronial fences & colonial hedges that
only from overhead can
the security corona be glimpsed
when cat-like you trip its cricket senses.



3.

All is Cantaloupe Causeway
a shrubbery of near attainments
half-rendered blossoms
a spider's tincture grown over
a monkey puzzle half-hardened with honey—
lichen overhangs the wavy cavy air
dream-flies sip hat-salt & eye-salt & sea-salt,
& in the inky truffle shade of a giant oak
plotters tip cordials, toast
Lost Illusions, lost dogs, lost wages—
a bubble is a mighty fine thing!
For about three months & change
the tulip was worth more
than the picture of the tulip!
& that tapioca backwash
wreathed in strawberry quik
was like childhood in reverse,
open to the nourishment but still
popping the air's envelope,
brakeless on a banana cruiser.



4.

The state couldn't catch a fucking cold
too cheap to keep the flow of piping hot
up just ask the bus stations
& movie theaters—
no fresh towels for popcorn paws
& foam alone won't disinfect
the coughed-on loonies & toonies
they insist into our minty mitts—
thus later asleep, eucalyptus drop
half-lodged, I missed it
when Matrix dropped his
crystal set into the toilet tank
& so soap-bombed the fountain
that the concrete salmon
crested foam all over downtown
scales glinting off the white pebbles
in the giant bowl of the casino's
outdoor loser ashtray.



5.

In sleep so thick
the panels of the trucks
pivot through the birds & bricks
that flap above the viaducts
on downs as soft as poplar fluff
graders scrape off mossy stuff
revealing projects never needed,
zombie gardens never weeded
& a ragged couch's burning fleece
prompts no visit from police—
a hermaphroditic order
in the standing water
a kind of turbid flux
flaps above the viaducts.

