

Erin Mouré / FOUR POEMS

FAMOUS

Where the road no longer sweeps left & right
in great concrete arcs

at the famous resort
under the yellow light of, the Cascade Mountain,

etc.

All the Japanese poets were wrong about mountains.
We are only getting *older*, after all,
sitting

where two streets intersect at right angles under Mt. Rundle
Listening
to the singer from Vancouver we remember

from twelve years ago.
The Japanese poets never spoke this plainly,
they just lied.

Once you start, it's easy to keep going.
The lies, that is.

They're building an underpass for four lanes of highway
under the Newlove poem.

The cold wind he spoke of, was the government.

*On that black highway,
where are you going?*

FOUR PROPOSITIONS FOR CLIMATE

It's the wood & paint of the chairs
speak loudest,
when we are not wearing them.
Where the grass stops at the edge of desert.
Trying as if for the first time, on the lawn, the
fault-lines of the heart
where two continents fit & push overboard
touching

the sky with our mouths & no damn chatter ever.
Bless us this day thy fairly grain
forgive us our name & address thy chair
among us
clutter & rain, what if.

Green the plant colour, made of light.
Green the artesian water after the week of storm.
White chairs on the new-cut lawn.
Your blue sweater bunched up in the garden
& you in it, squatting over lettuce.
In our glasses, small drunk
insects, pickled & glad.
Our way of verbs, excessive
Badlands left in us from the old seas, where the ice
broke down, & receded

Wood & paint of the chairs speak loudest,
undercut by the dig dig
of your hand between peas & broccoli
That fault-line, where two continents
stop
because their villages are fragile, not
built to earthquake standards
The fault-line of the heart, where two continents
Fit.
This road, or any road. Into the desert. & after that.
Where we are sitting. What if

SNOW DOOR

Trying to remember, as if
The music, as if, as if

The music fell into my boots & I couldn't
wear them, couldn't feel.

The scent of orange behind the room's door... that note...
Physical space, physical
space

Space between the window & its frame where the wind enters,
chilling the chairs. Dead flies between the panes, winter flies that
come to life when they warm up, but go stupid from the freezing,
& can't remember flight exactly, not exact enough, they topple on
their backs & spin & buzz. Having forgotten everything except that
they used to fly, why can't they do it now. Too stupid to know why
they can't do it now.

Us, too,
who don't know we've been frozen, or if we have, &
if we know, don't ask questions.

I know I know.

My colleagues' mouths are opening above their male ties, spilling
molecules of air across the room, & I am this sad when I see it spilling,

no one else watches & I can't tell them, they are *serious*, & their jobs
are filling up with their bodies, their jobs are the shape of their
bodies, I see their lives

fluttering, behind.

The woman I once knew
who reached her right hand into the glow & gripped the spoon,
flaming,
the physical reproduction of anguish
denial of physics
defiance revenge

Snow door snow door snow door snow

Affectively, as if
The blizzard was over, we cut holes in the snowbanks,
our razor hearts burnished, our shovels raised up like sheet metal
As sentences, to make us feel

GOODBYE TO BEEF

The irrational deafness of our heads, that's
all.

Where our elegant coiffure comes from,
our own fingers, hey: squirrel-
hunting in the Rocky Mountains under the smell of spruce
forest I said I never would forget
& haven't.

Damn it.

Where our research will get us,
home free, sliding fast
past the hard throw from second baseman.
Looking for just one more homer.

We are listening to too much music, & our tastes
are lousy.

The squirrel my brother shot down with the .22 so the dog could play.
The dog just sniffed the dead fur
& looked up the tree again, eye
cocked for the squirrel.
It is always in our damn heads.

Or my head.

Or anyone's.

When we got together, what we talked of,
the moose my uncle shot & cut up into frozen pieces,
& sent it down, in 1964, on the Greyhound.

What I forgot to say, was:

When we saw that box of moose hefted out of the bus bay in
the din of yelling navvies,
we knew it was goodbye to beef
till springtime.

& I haven't talked to my aunt since.

I go deaf thinking of it. Or anything.