

Brian Blanchfield

Funny Loss of Face

The ivy larks on the bordello vine
are visiting one another's resting closets
like boys and men in Taiwanese baths:
anyone could be behind that leaf or must he
prefer sleep to sharing sleep the dismissed
one, flustering, not just anyone, retorts
and have him know, special again only once
his turnkey takes, before the wind top to bottom
as in a movie of itself plays the shuddering
singularity of love, selecting no one
particularly anyway, but all in las peliculas
sit deeper in their popcorn parkas down.
Everyone's in for the night except
you who had flown all day didn't want to fall asleep
here I was telling your neck relax your eyes
were going to wake up raw without solution
for lenses, so it was better you find
the little baths they had at home. Why it was
funny I suggested we concoct it from scratch's hard
to say and whether one of us or which was
good about everything. When you call and
the leaves are brighter red, it's later, nearer
the sun, and relief is that vibrant.
That you can see already where more doors
were and birds the feathery circuitry
the wall will bare is an occupancy of mine.

Rods and Cones

To be built a squirrel, to scale, to be
proportional, at the side of the shorttrail
track with the wild onions, her reflex
celerity prime, each eye circuited directly to
her cortex so, unlike human vision, hers is
not coarsened by summation: that
quick is the squirrel. When she
stands, is made to stand, one foot favored,
petite and lifted, on the three others
plantigrade and looks to god, who
stands behind his handiwork, waist high,
is made to look, she sees how significant
scale is to Papa, the back of his boy's head
the size of his own cupping hand. The track
needs to pass through something, and a town
is a lot to ask, a place that can produce
a people, enough of a people that one
in a platform dozen can be a passerby.
I-35 overpass suggestion: Kansas City.
Slow turns around coarsening, around
summation, why can't I react sooner
to what I see? (The boy pivots around
his crown his paper visor). Took me a minute
to replace my comb in the pocket of my
jacket. Benches to suggest time, benches
the squirrels comb the grass beneath, looking.
Benches are a fixture in Papa's plan.
Children of such a man carry his schedule
and watch for the time of arrival. In boys,
to track what's coming is to alert
the men they'll be by spotting the switch
ahead. The boy agitates at the vantage he attains
where his reverie tailors his stupor, and
the car wobbling that disturbs the primary
pit boss is the very thing he fills
his interest with, that and the tiny townie
articulation, an elbow out, elbow in
behavior. Some barrels here holding what,
nickel per bag, simulation mulch.
A squirrel, too, looks for what to see, her way
headed. A piping sheet of pink townies

emigrates on the rear cargo car of the main
line, slowing at the three-way
stub switch, son and station and he who
says so, and pulls into the infield, in form:
an innocuous midlevel executive
having a sandwich, a girls basketball coach
covering cross-handed his boner, a car
wobbling quality control specialist battering
a tie, everybody still on the vine.
Coverall Papa himself crawls under
the reality skirt to the primal yard to
snip them, fit his jewelling monocle, rods
and cones magnetic, and mix the liquid acrylics.

Eclogue of Sig Alert on the Ten East

after Larry Johnson

The car three back liberated itself from the line
and rolled ahead on the shoulder to the exit.

And, on this occasion when a car carrying no one you knew
or thought you knew passed your passenger door, you honked.
I pressed the horn as if involuntarily, a moment longer than desired.

You were upset?
It was a jealousy honk.

Hm.
A salute. I saluted the manumission I myself wanted.

Is that analysis of the behavior or the behavior itself?
I spoke with my father this morning, the one married to my mother.
When you come to a contradiction, make a distinction. That was William James.
William James quoting someone. Is your father, the other, alive?
Both. On the one hand a car of joyriders maneuvers out of the path
I was forging in the presumption presumably that to move is better
than to proceed.

Your father called with a matter of significance?
I called him. He has had a medical disappointment, followed by
a health setback. He said of his dire straits not to bother worrying. And
then added, this is the whole ball game.

Were you at any time pressing him to feel an emotion?
It was like the joyriders were a hustler I could
in a more mobile situation proposition. All the way,
he might say, if rolling my window down I asked—

How far were you going?
—How far are you going? That, in the walking way of standing still.

The question is concealed, expressed in that manner.
The turnoff was already in my rearview, by the time I saw
what they had in mind. It may be apparent that I admit nothing
when I write myself such a ticket.

Did your father, either, honk, in the manner you imagine?
The price is written right there under the name of the game.
The name of the game is the names of two opponents,
followed by the date and sometimes venue. Free of a charge.
I write them out myself. I might never be rid of these. Free
of a problem.

A sort of share, an issuance. In that, are you much different than
every father's daughter?

One was way ahead on the highway, son and heir in his hair.

Is there a problem officer? I'd like to speak freely.

I hadn't meant to say, Imagine.