

Elaine Equi

SENTENCES AND RAIN

The rain
waters
the sentences.

The words
grow taller,
more supple.

The sentences
previously
too dry

now bend
and reach
toward meaning.

Like us they thirst
for liquid cadence.
As the rain reigns

all morning
and afternoon,
its lullaby

hushes the sentences,
allows the words
to drench us all at once.

ZUKOFSKY REVISION #2

Upper limit thought

Lower limit noise

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My thinking and logic

are by nature fuzzy.

If I wish to convey this accurately,
I must choose not the exact right word,

but rather the right inexact word
that allows for a similar amount
of vagueness and ambiguity.

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New York is a noise Mecca
for horns, sirens, drills, shrieks,
whoops, harangues, and rants.

Here we are all Cage-y connoisseurs,
Calibans lulled by “a thousand twangling instruments”
and noisome airs.

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It's hard to hear, rare to see a thought
present itself fully-formed like Venus-
on-the-Half-Shell.

More often an arm or leg appears
caught in some sea monsters maw,

or just a stray word-shoe
floats above the waves.

BACKWARD GLANCE

I live in a dormitory
of discontinued names:

Thelma, Irene, Estelle.

The combination of letters --
lost essence of another era.

Who were they?
What did they do?

They were Thelmas, Irenes, Estelles.

DO YOU THINK A PHOTOCOPY OF A SNOWFLAKE IS MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE ORIGINAL?

for Joanna Fuhrman

Few know the gender of snow
or can tell at a glance, the menacing design
at the storm-center of its crystalline mind.

But Williams, our dear doctor, speaks of
“the male snow which attacks and kills
silently as it falls muffling the world.”

I'd like a meringue crisp snow
under a thick blanket of synthetic bells.

I'd like a menagerie of snowflakes
running wild in a blank thicket
of wind tunnels and glass air.

Give someone a snowflake,
like one note from a symphony,
and what can it do?

But a photocopy of a snowflake
will hang forever in dazzling obscurity
above a bed.