

EUPHORION

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Two Poems

Kevin Magee

EUPHORION

That what you'd be looking for
is a plot that would show how
the Imaginary is constructed
on the dereliction of the Social Real,
fictive being intense enough
the dividing line disappears

and you swim in an element
where what is real and what is not
displaces actual events and actors
in them like that Faust-Helen story
built on the Achilles-Helen myth
you stumbled on in *Homeric Fragment*.

That the passion had drawn him off
and fallen, he saw the idea of his Being
submitting to be the cunning compact
suppressed manifestations too remote
events that instigated craving for more
from every idea she had ever wrote.

The time was the worst in the year.
You had to drive me to the extremities
to extract this simple sentence from me.
The Helen we have invented defending
everything we no longer had divided
into the time before the stanza and the time after.

I know the name that kindled it,
though I have left that name unthought.
He needed her name to prepare for war.

If only you could wipe out that name,
not only from memory, but from history.
If only you could burn it out: Achilles.

Who could prevent the thoughts
that came into the hard, heavy helmet
called his head. Apollo approached me
then changed into a wolf surrounded by rats
and conferred with a casual gesture
his taste on my tongue when I awoke.

Why did I want the gift of Prophecy?
Who will find a voice will it be the one
whose skull is split racing each other
into the slaughterhouse, and nothing,
nothing I could have done or not done
could have led me to a different spot.

Whether or not we knew this was goodbye.
I abandoned myself to my apparitions
and fled the precinct into the citadel
where I got caught up in the word "girl"
and caught all the more by her, threw
myself at her spewing the new Troy.

Passing each other by name they pass
by my name, "Out of the hollow realm
of shades Achilles too became yours,
his love defying all the decrees of Fate."
I stayed alive long enough at last,
rescued by Simon from a brothel in Tyre.

Faust [approaching with a man in chains
at his side]: Branded, striking the table, sings
There was a rat in the cellar who lived
on fat and butter and swelled himself up for
a match with Martin Luther, and the world
got too hot for him as if he had love in his body.

Unless it would be to smash her windows
I'll hear of no greeting accumulating

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from the rankness of continued Prosperity:
See Helen, who brought about a bad war
which lasts forever, and great Achilles
who in the end was in combat with Love.

Is it possible that it all happened
in order that two souls should meet?
Helen: I must not punish misfortune.
I'm the one that wrote the lure to ruin.
There was bitter discussion and hate.
The winters were ruthless and bleak.

Can one weigh the thousand ships
against one kiss in the night?
The phantom and the shadow throng.
Has he lost in a game of chance?
Now therefore you will say to the many
who fell, Where is my son?

No atonement could restore her.
It is the lost legions that condition
their encounter, among the legends
few were the words we said, nor knew
each other nor asked, are you Spirit?
Are you Sister? Are you Brother?

They meet (encounter/love) one another
only as dream figures, FICTIVE BEING.
For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen
then, collaged out of Gautier's *Histoire*.
The Witch material comes from my German.
She lives at the entrance to the cave.

Egypt—her mummification, her skin
bloodless is wrapped in layers of yellow
lace and the lines in her face on the porch
the children stare, a cow's tongue hangs down
repeat after her *guten morgen*, Grossmutter
on the porch in her rocker said, *mein kinder*

He rushed past the encounter
without a thought that rose from the folktale
honeyed over with Modern English.
A black rat pokes out of her mouth.
The child in the cradle is strangled
and the mother is clapping her hands.

Or lighthouse beacon guiding storm-tossed
children in their eternal and enormous nights,
swallowed beyond the illumined father's
eyes around the glaze he was groping his way
opening the cave that he was verging toward
the blinding attributed to a strange house.

In the light encompassing him now he saw
the straps and bands and heavy cotton
that comprised her heaped in exposure.
Motionless, impassive, and monumental,
all the girls at the school called her Calypso
and my text is something funny you said.

It was an attack of Spectacle,
a crisis of suffering spectacularly
though the attack was also a festival
and feast day. She has sung at every crossroads,
she has kissed every face, and that woman
was his first thought (Simon Magus, Acts VIII 9-24).

Quando Iasón vider fatto bifolco
and I began like a man desire confuses.
Three thousand years melted away
ch'alma beata non puria mentire
s'io ti fiammeggio nel caldo d'amore.
The treasure became the sacrifice.

The curse that key to the house of Atreus
hangs in rows on meathooks, I lived
on my slice of wall while the towers fell.
Was he the envoy of the gods of that city?
His will to live was the will to remember
the faith of the prophets is faith in power.

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“—but to free the birds—”
“—and found yourself entangled—”
Exile. One of the circles of Hell.
Who in his delirium sees Helen
as he saw her for the first time.
Lightning out of a clear blue sky.

BALANCE OF A HAPPY DAY

This isn't what doesn't preoccupy
this thought scarcely
It increases by one tome,
withdrawn

This share is the same for everyone
What everyone then secretly says
Why are you still there in the place
I am lingering

and when I go toward you
as though I weren't supposed to
why did you let me talk to you
Maybe one maybe no one to think

let them think on
What are you
who give me nothing
promising nothing

I keep you,
this way words
to you that won't reach you
What calm near to you,

come in through,
my steps come to meet me
You can't be what you are.