

Sébastien Smirou

[from] My Laurent

3 the tournament

Translated from the French by Andrew Zawacki

the may of the states' pax plays i accept all while the love
of lucrecia belle donati rose's flesh forges the force at last
of his twenty years thrust him chlorophylllike thru a green
plant so thither to the tourney of anthology my magnificent

(to the hurried reader the high feat the grand anthological
tournament ain't a world cup lifted from books but a game
of jousts that pierce the screen of time they're joshing us
around and mark the memory of the newborn and the un-)

o

in the preceding procession laurent's toque fumed escapes
an 'in or of what are thoughts made' thought up briskly
whisked with a hand puffed out the torso returns the eye
of my laurent bunts bypasses far from fixed on the fanfare

florence doe-eyes bows before its prince has twenty milord
springs this spring straddles a bay stallion a gay gift we assay
from the kid hands of the king from where from naples to
wit whistles one who elbows his neighbors hey easy there

o

a plume pins the there fedora adorned with pearls cream
truffled with diamonds peony scarlet blush with rubies like
a wind of love hovers on the scarf flurries flush with roses
embroidered fresh desiccate where 'time returns' egresses

where 'time returns' scurries as master my laurent reigns
splinters his short device clack the banner swells the shield
of the prince touts the tree of gold lilies three on blue melts
this cover-girl diamond-de-medici we call the the the book

o

following page julien vows his brother in blood red blazes
silver a sight for sore eyes starry on the index finger a lock
glued with the glazed tears of a forget-me-not i love you fly
'myself is nil' julien to win 'i'll win i will let my brother win'

sixteen jousts effortless who lost his head who guzzles
the ocean who let love pass him by or else who touched
the heart of his sister forgotten a second but all the same
enrival their eyes the citizens glance at their lances aglow

o

(the lances laid down elongating with history and the legs
elegance augmented in grass to grow beautifies the length
then weight separating one lance's tip at the top of its lane
from the other's end at the other end hence are denser)

wisp down for me see if my horse's hot let's have a drink
squire touch my word thy horse is boiling my prince drink
the wait aiding the pressure rises in the wings the crowd
counts in iron din in throes of throats for a drink a drink

o

my laurent launches his steed if the armed arm lunges its
armament his adversary battles back symmetric balances
of the wrist force the lances lower to aim or else divide
(as oneself remains divvied) at the speed of a gnat-a-tat-tat

at the swivel of the seesaws the jabbed tumbles his luck
turns from the hand elastic my prince prances his charger
to the tail of jousters chuffed unscuffed and huffs a visor
guards the vision from others can view viz. if it should veer

o

the rain helping to true say to not say all center flower
flesh or skin of things in this tournament tossed besides
into oblivion's oubliette laurent is bored neither triumphs
nor feels he's trumped (raising florence he seats his power)

spilling few memories no i didn't quite shine he'll reckon
massively of good heart however i knocked off a helmet
soft at the sword you're victor as if by magic of the contest
of lucrecia's kiss and a helm of silver insigniafied with mars

o

'time returns' having went with the wind tomorrow soon
the week who court laurent arrive at the palace to flatter
with their long ahs ah i imagine the bouquet of reverences
sugars the chamber swaddles it and swilling it he's thrilled

here fairly far from paintings they brush in passing (poplar
golden rule the egg swells) by exotic wood coffers they sip
brandy edgy in the drawing room bandy their bravos about
a pleasing 'thank you' ricochets in less time than it takes to