



BAD BALLERINA DANCES
AGAINST VIOLENCE

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for Kimberly

AT CLUB FAB

An auditorium without an audience. Two women dancing. One dances in a white gown, and she moves with confident abandon— a performance addressed to emptiness.

The other woman is on a swing, center stage. She wears black frilly briefs and a transparent tunic over a beige undershirt. Her black hip boots have spike heels. She fuses the can can dancer to the go go girl.

The woman in white is a bride. She is death. She is a piece of cake with vanilla frosting being eaten by a man with dirty fingers. She has lost her shoes, and she looks for them, high and low.

The can can dancer fused to the go go girl twists the ropes of her swing, winding and unwinding her body in languid arcs. She is asleep, and she lies in the sand of her dreams and feels the warm sun and the cool sea breeze.

Both women have a secret. In these two secrets are all the other secrets.

ROOM

I'm in a room with a door
you can go through
but I can't

You're in a room with a door
I can go through
but you can't

I'm in a room with a door
you can go through
but I can't

You're in a room with a door

I can go through
but you can't

I'm in a room with a door
you can go through
but I can't

You're in a room with a door
I can go through
but you can't

FOR ANYONE

no floor
no walls
no ceiling

what did you expect?

a wanting heart
a burning mouth
tangled nerves

there is a bell
and a mirror
and a lamp

as the bell rings
it begins to crack
the mirror reflects
a broken shadow
the lamp reveals
everyone has gone back

what did you expect?

I WAIT

in this room
full of words

each moment advancing
in the eternal

jumping up, leaping sideways
each foot ahead

putting each foot
up

each step a prayer
and the shadows letting themselves down

I am motionless, beyond doubt
seeing the shadows grow fainter

finding I am staring inward
and the night is there

and I ask
"Am I awake?"

and the darkness shakes
and leaves

MY WORDS

one at a time
each has gone
across

one at a time
each has gone
over

gone
in silence

without memory

with closed eyes
and little hope

trying to avoid
the mistakes
of their ancestors

already they are extinct

ALREADY EXTINCT

whatever
watever
WHATever

HARD

but I want to understand why I'm here
on this planet

in this body
in the embodied mind

I feel small
thinking of the Universe

looking at the stars

and the stars look small
to me, so

far away

SKIMMING

Deport, unfinished

Don't know who the president is
and don't give a damn

Just want to get laid

Raw, ridiculous

Jumping up
and leaping sideways

I cross my fingers

FOR PALOMA

C'est non poeme.

THEY'VE GOT ME ON GUILT INJECTIONS

it's spring in the meadow of noon
the rain is dropping
negative Orgone energy

we're

This is
a test

Test
test
test

Dark clouds on the horizon
a burning beach
and the working of the sun and worlds
the logic of my nerves
my dream bubble

This is a test

One
two
three

TOWARDS THE LIGHT

To make sense of the chaotic flux
the consuming patterns and
the puzzling utterances

I love

A CHICKEN LEG IS A RARE MEAL

Can you taste it now?
Good

Can you taste it now?

Good

Can you taste it now?

Good

Can you taste it now?

AFTER THE INVISIBLE

flipped over, turned around
winter sprawls in space
at everyone

flipped over, turned around
winter sprawls in space
at everyone

voice repeats
because ear retreats

flipped over, turned around
spring twinkling in the antipodes
does not care to speculate

flipped over, turned around
spring twinkling in the antipodes
does not care to speculate

voice repeats
because ear retreats

flipped over, turned around
blissful in uneasiness
hard to tell desire from distress

CONTACT

a jumble

makes a coherent whole

a confusion clears
in order

to let me view
the Trinity

I follow a trail along a fence line
picking up discarded pizza boxes
which I stash in a pile near the base
of a post and cover with a tarp

someone I can't see is with me, has
gone ahead into a field, we
are talking about litter
and I think of a litter of pigs
instead of pizza boxes

I remember killing the runts in a pen
on a farm in Iowa when I was a boy
crushing their skulls with a hammer
and, later, standing in my bloody overalls
and asking forgiveness of the Universe

IN

a forest— an old
cannon in a tree
that could fall if
there was a breeze

later

a boy kisses a girl
and the cannon falls
or not, if no one's there

later

abnormal that
there is a forest at all

after those kisses

later

a sequence
of abstract pictures

placed
between
interruptions

CRETAN LYRE

beyond joy and woe
where I can do what I do
without having to lie

addleheaded in Safeway
Jigme Lingpa arises in the eggplants
transmits mantra to my inner idiot

OM AH HUM OM AH HUM
WICHA TYE TYE WICHA TYE TYE
CUMA ROMA CUMA ROMA HEY HEY

coming before coming before
coming way before coming

CIRCLE

My memory born in a lotus
peacock feathers heavy with poison
our lives jumbled together

You drop your fork and say it's time to go
then remember the show's not over
until the tattooed lady dances

DIRGE

for Joe Saviers

everybody knew
your friends knew

your family
your psychiatrist knew

but you kept drinking
and drinking and drinking

and now your friends say prayers
by the oven where you are cremated

and we did a puja in the gumpa on a full moon night
Tashi heard your voice, it was raining through sunlight

two rainbows appeared, so she put flowers on the shrine
and Jack got a message, "What's up with the dead flowers?"

PROMETHEUS SINGS

RAM YAM KAM
GI SANG JYNG TRU
OM AH LA LA HO HRI
SARVA DAKINI PHE PHE

uncertain
chained, yet

rocked
laughing in the rafters

starburst in his prime
splendid

rage mixed with joy
unsubdued

singing to be free
of his secrets

FREEDOM AHEAD

I pray to the imps at the crossroads
where I clean a window to a broken promise
and my dusty feet are washed in the sea of beginning

the imps are writing dirges
on the bag of bones we call spring
I keep speaking, and they keep writing

I listen to a plum tree rattle its branches—
staccato beats against this empty cage

the imps demand I give them a line of credit
I give them marks on a drum and a flag
but such answers never satisfy

the trick is to proceed without certainty

CARRYING MY BONES

rays of light coming out of me
as I walk down the street

I'm walking an inch above the pavement
skimming the surface

responding to the simplicity of rainbow body
while I mutate into a welcome mystery

ahead of me, temptations pile up

FALLING

off a horse
off a roof

out of a tree
out of a car

preparing to fall
removing my shoes

listening to your voice
knowing the pain

knowing what I owe
what I will do

left to right
left to write

FACELESS PRESENT

unborn
unbidden

the sunlight
fills the unlit

street, and
suddenly, I

turn and smile
leaving the night wind

full of whispers

NEXUS OF ENTITIES

for Darrell Gray

Arrested by material reality
thrown forward into fantasy
knowing "I" am the subject
and "am" is the verb and not
having to go further

Let me relax and the occasion
take the wind out of suffering

AND HERE I AM

mistakes in my mind
but light in my heart

Ol' Dog
dancing to a drum
with feathers on

"Look!"

I'm growing wings
I'm

I'm falling in love

THE CALL

some
lead

and some
follow

or stand back
or hide

there are those that stay in bed
and those that run away

eyes that stare forward
and eyes that stare back

eyes that shift
eyes that are blind

to the light
we spin