

Dylan Kinnett: Recent Work

Reflection

that's my reflection on the slick stone floor
 not so far from the inside of the glass
 barely a distance between us
 barely the black
 space
 separates
 or brings us back.
 It's curious.
 Bending over to look at me.
 Dim dumb mumbling lips repeat
 I remember being small,
 a triptych of mirrors,
 a fitting room from every angle.
 I had crawled into a kaleidoscope,
 just to say hello
 to wave
 and to wave back
 just the same from every angle.
 it's a self-same expression
 on every face
 now and from every angle,
 and on every surface,
 the eyes are always
 exactly the same

There Are Rabbits in the Woods

There are dead fish in the run
 Go out and have fun, boys
 Strange men linger by the tracks
 Before the dark, boys, come back
 A truck's stuck in the mud
 Throw rocks at the sun
 They'll laugh at your games, boys
 You build a fortress

Graduation Day

They taught us to argue
 Never whether to win or to resolve
 Nor anything about the difference
 And now it's time to go.
 We tasted spirits
 The kind kept in bottles, left on shelves.
 No feeling but fun. No thoughts, only words,
 And now it's time to go.
 We plied our voices,
 In quantity and volume clambering.
 The spirits are shelved.
 And now it's time to go.

Doubt

Do you know me
 as a word—
 something you can spell
 something you can whisper
 something you can yell
 something you can say?
 Do you know me
 as a name?
 Do you know me
 on sight—
 something you can describe
 something you can remember
 something you can overlook
 something you can recognize?
 Do you know me
 as a face?

An Acquired Taste

No florescent, linoleum, walkways and rows
 No marketplace to influence decision.
 Wandering, hungry, seeking shade,
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.
 I chose which one seemed ready made,
 But I was wrong.
 No light to spoil the fruit's repose
 No spots to mar its perfect skin,
 The smoothest one, green, brightest, taut,
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.
 The only one I wanted was one only I would want.
 It was a new thing.
 No recipe or menu to describe the food
 No tools to use to prepare for it,
 Sustenance in the wilderness.
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.
 I savored the first bite's bitterness.
 I never knew better.
 No one told me which was good.
 No one there to share my dinner with.
 Tangible, edible, so I ate.
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.
 It left me in a sorry state.
 I was ill.
 No ripe fruit had ever left that place.
 No ripe fruit would, till I came back
 Later, wiser, considerate.
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.
 The choice I made was deliberate
 But I was right.

Out of Range

The song changes
 to a faded station, static,
 harmony all but lost.
 Reaching, over and out,
 changing the frequency,
 over.

Listening for Rhythm

Study how the present begins.
 It is a thing best done
 listening for rhythm in the wind.
 There is no rhythm in the wind
 but listening helps.

History

Look up, Woman and Man
 sky is all you see.
 You break the bread.
 You made the bread
 out of the ground.
 You made the plow,
 and mounds out of the dead.
 Dirt knows nothing of them.
 The only thing it feels is feet.

Sonnet on the Occasion of a Wedding

When love blossoms, it isn't a flower
 Picked from the earth and ready to wither.
 Rather, love gardens to keep its power.
 Where blooms wilt or roots rot, love goes thither.
 Love plucks the dead parts, brings what's lacking, mends.
 Attend likewise to every living part
 That ever, slowly, to the sunlight bends,
 Whether it be a limb, a spine, a heart.
 Mind flowers, but also what thorns they wield
 And hope that they sting for a good reason.
 Mind cultivation over what fruits yield
 And so come to know the greenest season.
 Love is work, but it's done like keeping friends.
 Do it right and you'll find it never ends.

Dylan Kinnett grew up in Shepherdstown, where he published a zine, the town's first. Now, in Baltimore, Md., he manages the website and recently co-facilitated a crowd-sourced exhibition for the Walters Art Museum. He holds a bachelor's degree in writing from Maryville College in Tennessee and has work published or performed by Annex Theater at Artscape, Seltzer magazine, and Les Kurbas Theatre in Lviv, Ukraine.