

C. SHEFFNER

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AN ACCELERATOR WORK

2019

1

Swirls, empty expressions
One-room theater, 3 seats
A dim lightbulb, three people
A cigarette's scent lingers.
"Silence." A priest in the audience says
A candle is lit, a choir of 3 voices
A blank expression on their faces
Sotto voce—they whisper
Their voices in the back of the air
Simple concepts—simple understanding
"There is no need for your intellectual understanding"
The priest's voice fills the dusty room
"There is no need for your desires"
The priest goes on, walking to the projector
A river of scattered thoughts
A movie by an anonymous director
With the voices obfuscated by noise
Birds chirp—waves hit
Yet no speech.

2

No motion—no sounds (no motion)
No words to be said (no mirror)
No moments remembered (no feeling)
No time regained (no spiral)
No time lost (no circle)
No moment empty (no square)

No moment full (no image)
No moment felt (no feeling)
No moment dry (no repetition)
No moment sad (no individuality)
No moment happy (no serendipity)
No moment remembered (no feeling)
No moment lost (blurred voice)
No moment suffocated (feeling, for once)

3

No time to pick up the pieces—
All is in action (it could go)
All is in movement (it could disappear)
All is in flux (it could be here)
All fluctuates—in the last 20 days
There's been tides
And there's been waves (in your heart)
And there's been you (me, me)
And there's been me (you, you)
And all I really need (why do I need it?)
is that split second (it's so long)
before you go (when?)
before I go (although, I know)
The candle dims
The priest trembles
The movie in its pitiful silence
Continues on

In the absence
of light
of feeling
in the absence of anything, really
the night calls...
“Oh night! oh night! oh night!
Oh the glorious feeling!
Oh all the holy!
Oh all the beautiful!”
A lone poet in the third seat,
Proclaims his love for the dark
In the dark he lives
And in the dark he thrives
And in the night sky he finds solace
In the second seat a man with glasses
A literary critic
Right beside the priest

4

In its naivety, its grand shine
The movie lingers on
The literary critic—eyes wide
Gazes at the screen
A scene he had been surprised by
Two men on a balcony
One shot dead
His face obfuscated by a bird's wing

“That’s quite the scene.”
The portrait of an American family
Always—empty. Always—in rage.
Always—without feeling
(Candles lit, candles empty)
(Candles felt, candles gone)
(Candles burnt, candles overboard)
The literary critic kicks back in his seat
Looking at the screen—mesmerized
His eyes—wide
(Candles dim)
Everything—is anything, and then
It all could be here.
It could be in “that place”
And “in this place”
Values incinerated
Words exterminated
People burnt away
Memories unfelt
Memories unbroken
Memories suspended in time
Memories gained—
And memories lost
And memories—
Eternal—
Murmurs.
Emptiness.

(Voice—sotto voce.)

It's all fuel for the fire. (The old fires.)

It's all fuel for the bon. (The new fires.)

It's all stopping. It's all feeling. It's all awoken.

An island—deserted. Continuous—empty.

Nothing new.

All reserved

All given meaning

All given value

All given everything it could ever have

All forgiven