

NEVERENDING RHIZOME – Pierre Lepori – Translated by Peter Valente

black, the city has white windows
white, the city has black windows
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each window like an eye
a hidden destiny, spit out,
a hidden destiny each window spitting out
like a hidden eye every black window
and behind the window, behind the city,
behind an eye, behind a face,
black faces, white cities, hidden eyes
at every step in this city spitting out
black eyes from windows eyes in windows
eyes without eyes or face
the whites of the eyes that remain silent
in the white city in the dark of life

put your foot down, your weight and
advance into the city with a thousand windows like eyes

unfortunately
you always wonder
if behind the city
behind the faces behind the eyes
something pulsates, something proliferates,
something you call life
not a life like any other
a life as you wish, a rich life
of deeds and gestures, sometimes shattered by screams
a double or triple life less than zero yet a life
a garland of sweet thoughts of troubled thoughts
what kind of life? Just a life with its up and downs

its hazards and especially

memories

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days spent as a child in the countryside
or in the city what do you know
of the happy days or the horrible emptiness of life
the memories of hazards
alleyways covered with red leaves in the setting sun
early mornings in the thick fog of a winter that does not end

of the keys that jingle
boots that speak
the lapping of curly words just to
warm the heart
since it won't work when it's banal
and still more and more eyes
their eye sockets full of celestial orbits
planets stars galaxies in an early morning sigh
little milk little grief
the rest of the drool clinging to the corners of the lips
un baffo di latte
what do you know about the bustling life
that beats quietly in the rustle of the windows

the moon is rising, it's night
the snow is falling, a blue day like any other

do you know, do you believe, do you want
people who meet
graze each other, bump into each other
that little heat that circulates,
and sometimes yes! sometimes hands touch
not necessarily out of love, despair
sings silently of a better future
in line with the fault of the rumbling tarmac roads
morning noon evening

piss stained asphalt cracking
all those voices that speak
flutter
the eyelids: never!
open your eyes my friend, in the white city,
in the black city like milk,
or the dark body of the snow that sucks up the frost
open your ears
to the four winds

from one cell to another
from one radius to one radius
a cymbal crash
not a spiral but in rhizome in reticle
fishnet stockings network of dead skin
from one synapse to another
goes up and down this little bit of

this nothing

that you call the others
behind the eyes but what do you know?

and finally - are you dreaming? -
square, hortus clausus, locus circinus,
a city sprinkled with clock hands
a vacant lot at the edge of fear
a gunshot and the scathing cries of a strange bird

face to face, you ask for a face to face
to avoid the worst, to escape the crowd
to trample the eyes the black houses the rumbling pipes
sometimes it's said like a motto
in the city a drop of water,
a bowler hat, is enough
to find each other, to caress each other

a brief moment this caress
it's not windy, you meet
you graze less, you touch
the city changes color
rainbow and cotton candy
shooting *stella*
oh yes, how ridiculous, quick tongue
eyes half-closed and finally
like child's play
hopscotch *gioco del mondo*
rough alligator skin, you see?
sadness goes away
ombra mai fu
nei suoi nei tuoi occhi da sempre

less than a caress
but still more than the winter cold
less than a kiss
but the certainty that the other's skin leaves a mark
minimal epiphany
lacustre un'onda
no more tobacco residue in the mouth
honey of dawn, sugar of evening
all windows open
in the open air
airplane tarmac playground
compass that spins and small holes
wind holes storm holes
e bonaccia apparente

un'esatta sensazione
touching toccare skin
di essere meno soli
lo sai lo senti vuoi lo vivi

too little, *questa amnistia*

and then and then and then
the rope unwinds
the speed catches up with you
eyes always by the thousands who judge you
who judge your caress and erase your desire
why do NO's
rise up like pickets signs
istrice violento
NO's like javelins
and the city shuts its windows
shame, that's it? *Vergogna!*

corri, fuggi, the shame and the race
pollice verso the swarm of bees in pursuit
gravel that penetrates and pierces the feet
misery of the city burning
but the black flames eat the heart
Angst essen Seele auf
more room to breathe if you linger
the threshold crossed pointless beliefs
brooding it's the only thing that remains
breathing heavily
spare yourself the shame
out of pity that fury that lashes out
licks your bare feet now
your nakedness is a fall from eden

and when calm returns
like a sinking ship
when the city constricts your forehead
and you finally understand
like a dog you whisper
you know that at the end of the road
shame will outlive you

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