



KIT PEPPER

Lovers' Fugue

Come be My Moon
necklace of tiny pearls

whisper longings
to me.

upon my chest.

*A one inch grid covers my body and you
place a kiss in each small quadrant.
The way gatherers arrange
seashells and pebbles on window sills.
Your lips touch my skin. Full moon
lifts the ocean at the horizon.
The sheath of planet is tugged
by your lips. Desire, by your kisses.*

I am but a wayward moon
a wastrel, adrift in a seamless sky
where matter still mixes with light
and has no bearing.

Let me find the tug of a planet,
for I seek an orbit, a heavenly body,
an ocean that draws toward me.
Let it be you.

*Tiny oars, my fingers stroke
your skin, pull me through
troughs of doubt.*

*I linger on your arm
inside your elbow—
that small place without name,*

*kelp bed of calm. Far off shore
I paddle into ocean currents
of desire*

If I should live to be 100, then sink
back to the ground
on my knees, let me at least say

I spent some of my time here,
on this tiny earth
liquid as honey
amber as its light
and light as the backlit spray of an orange.

For if I can say this, I'll have been granted
a moment with you, large as the moon-sprung
blossoming of all trees.

*I have always loved the skid of ducks—
mallard and merganser
onto still water.*

*And now you
touch down on the glassy sheen
of my life, dip
below the skim-coat surface.
Sometimes Brave Bird,
you dive completely
beneath, tug at
some barnacle
or treacle of seaweed,
nibble on my toes.
Pull desire to the surface.*

Place my body somewhere
wild and safe, where I can stand

naked in still water or
falling. Where the moon,

tumbles—whole or as a
small silver caliper

tendering fullness. Place me
there, then *Come*.

*Your fingertips slide across the pockets
of my breathlessness. Feathers,*

*they slip into the hollow at my throat.
One hand fans open on top the other.*

*Palms press into my breastbone,
send a sounding, deep into danger.*

*Thumbs trace down my centreline,
splitting the last notch of cage.*

*Under my ribs, you pause—1000 supplicants,
1000 years, then slowly, up my spine.*

*Fingertips tap a braille to my bone.
Begin again. Hand signals of desire.*



LEONARD NEUFELDT

Rooting

If I, a walker, arrive later than usual,
Clumsy with sciatica and weak eyes, at our
Dacha, we call it, and flower and fruit gardens,
It's to find from you a way of walking,
Tentative, between tangles of rose cuttings
And overgrown berry vines, and watch with you
The dimming down behind sun-blackened

Trellises. In the halting night, colonies
Of dark follow you toward the light
As the sheen of each new stalk outside
Advances. We put away old arrangements
And plan our next garden: every row
Will be for you. You lengthen the season.
Where I have rooted there is plenty of time.