

T. CLAYTON WOOD

from "*The Lace Liar*"

6.

Last night, full moon over the rooftops of the world escapes  
Almost above the landscape. A fine film of refinery smoke curls  
and unfurls,

Leaves the moon guttering. The world inescapable finally.  
The moon a pearled remembering.  
Its surface wincing and burled remains though it wants  
To be forgotten and into some impossible sea hurled.

12.

Lily is i-cumen in—  
Express on the local, let fall begin,  
Leif croon lhude a little din,  
"I-cumen is Lily, my kith & kin,"  
Rock on your heels and knock your shins,  
Repeat it with a Tin Pan Alley grin.

19.

Let's roll all our stones and all  
"Ands" and "alls" into one ball.  
Let's roll some moss and rocks  
In there as well. I saw in a legible scrawl  
Rimbaud written on a subway wall—rocks and sticks and stones  
And bones—and the words were a French cliché and small.

20.

Leif says the tea at Nam Wah tastes like rust. Empties the cup.  
Mira says it's OK to eat the tea leaves, lucky, and he does, one.  
Dust lines  
The golden hands of 1000-armed 100-year-old Buddhas that Leif  
calls "silky buddhas"  
After his blanket. A freak, brisk gust interrupts our talking and  
makes the rusting leaves grip. A thieving

Lust, reaching branches, each ancient breath, just reaching  
The building's brick. Scathed. Leif eyed a  
cockroach scaling the restaurant wall. Supposed to go unseen,  
undiscussed.

22.

Light of the laser and you  
Are made as heroes are: Go  
Light on the mayo—  
Inside you there's a trained tiger waiting for its cue.  
Release it from its leash, bring it into view,  
Relish it—and hold the relish too.

34.

Light is all there is and you are light.  
According to Buddhist thought, a blue light,  
Love light, above the blue that infuses the light  
In anticipation of morning. Light  
Repairing what is otherwise only desire and history and prayer;  
a light  
Rarified, storied, sired. An aubade, an orbit, a body begotten of  
light, in light, from light.

40.

Loosely speaking, the tongue-tied orators are united by their  
untried ability to speak in tongues.  
Amour is more about the sum of accord than the drape of the  
parrot blue sarong. Looking,  
The Bodhisattva, hanging over a precipice, plucked and ate the last  
bright red berry on the breaking branch to which he clung.  
In the liberty bell the crack has taken its toll; not tolling, the bell,  
finally at liberty, rung.  
Regardless clouds in their white glow puffed up like lungs.  
Retrospective stones are stung with logic. Among them, a secret  
pile of frozen dung.

49.

Learns that the urn of the ear  
Earns the ash of song by trial and error.  
Lashed to the mast, Odysseus will hear  
Intolerable sirens sing. His worst fear  
Remains: that he will strain and tear and only stare,  
Restrained by rare restraints; or, worse, that he can bear the  
desperate song he hears.

51.

Lingering over the matter of matins,  
Accept, except for prayers in Latin, no imitations.  
Lingerie, my love, and all its intimations  
Implied by the plié of snow drift through windows laced with the  
ice's laminations.  
Remember the first time I took the train to you and couldn't even  
pronounce the destination,  
Ronkonkoma? "Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?"  
—Lamentations.