

SÉBASTIEN SMIROU

THE GLOW WORM

TRANSLATED BY ANDREW ZAWACKI

I: ESKIMO

If it's a view of the spirit I'd like it cut out in a cross-section
of pallor phased with phosphor at the core (replica of the fire
of the first men mammoths who rest at the bottom of the savage
ages crevices) all the rage in ice axes and itsy-bitsy flags of the expeditionifary
corps for planting in the soft spot to draw out
a summit of thought how I find myself inelastic to think
how this creature escapes me (if Someone shinier's
listening I wish He'd enlighten me—whatever I do I don't see any better).

2: WORDTOWO

To qualiquantify the intense ity of the light that filters
thru the Lampyris in our fist sparrow style we can always clutch
things remain obscure at the least shard of tail
in the mouth of Fabre on the other hand when we drop the bug
a word switches on we traverse before it passes
the baton along to the next so only one at a
time gleams (a worm illumines a syllable's interval) and we dim
the din to sleep mode to see no further than the tip of our nose.

3: ENTOMO

Pushing the baby of our experience (to play at entomos
by handling with tweezers) to term we'll pull from the belly
the ring of neon milk that thrills us so the creature must die
that we fall under spell of a standalone flicker—kryptonite?
diadem?—molecule-my-dear that catches fire in the open air
she gives herself—and that we brush it on an eyelash out of joy
blowing our horn ahoy—to veer on the duotone eyes'll remark
what they want and you as we say'll steer your way in the dark.

4: HOMO

Awaiting the aforesaid extremes intermarry within their homonymy
and his and hers photogenic genus geniuses: you climb you climb til
the tendrils bend over your underside radiates heavens to betsy
in a mirror you're a natural born shimmerer (they say you embrace
from infancy this career as an actress) and your beacon escorts aviators
among your species laced with luciferin there's no longer but a single
barrier sensitive to their parachuting thru the sweep net
to see a bit clearly I set about gathering males.

5: BLOWTO

I forget to utter rapt in my pleasure that the adventure feeds however
its chap as chintzily as its chick—even though she aspires
the thing transpires quite easily to a lot—and that after the ceremony
each one chooses a garden snail whose lips he starts by putting to sleep
with a kiss mfh mfh mfh poisonous then reduces to a simmer
the pepsin churning the chewing gum of the snotty nose and swallows
the sea so refurbished (all strung out the shells hollowed out
as if by a blowtorch's heat are making goo goo eyes at us guys).

6: ALAMO

We would amplify the *Alpha Bravo Charlie* effect over
to you to craft in summer some mausoleums the size of a shrub
out of slate in the hundred-year-old field—mine needs installing
farther away to be equidistant—and spiky like holiday balls
on a pine the worms spanning the tiles while I'd shaking myself
up a bit cause night to fall amid the runway lights—to render
fortissimo Alamo I'd rent coyotes and a delectation seat
farther away to the masterpiece I'd mosey to close my eyes.

7: ECCE HOMO

Like the rain that advances relentlessly promises
to quell the fires and bellow *behold the man* while leading him astray a sprig
(for I have no thorns) to the hushed tally-ho of some tom dick or jane
you act then as the dimmer to lower the curtain and our eyes
all of a sudden go blank on us: your darkness isn't deep
deep but your imprint quarries a hole (the sparkle of this moon
hemmed the eclipse of the other one in and the chevron motion
inverting the vista he's blitzed by the view from before).

8: DYNAMO

The allure of the flood is finding survivors among the cloud niners
to reproduce we imitate therefore the least leaning
of the scenery to shiver with a view to moving the great leaf
after leaf mechanical we play pianissimo us sissies
and to loosen up the atmosphere we power with our legs
thru beveled glass the light comes back more quickly to us than you
would ever wish—we'd err to speak of its being reborn or
conjure up its ash—if your eyes can no more bear the glow then go.