

John Tustin

The Conductress

She raised her open hand
up toward the sun
and the sun stopped
beating down

and when she snapped
her fingers,
the clouds began to sob
and all the rain
fell from the sky.

She whistled
and all the beasts of the jungle
rustled her long skirts
as they surrounded her,
each looking out
and I could barely
see through them.

And then,
for her last trick,
she held the moon
in the palm of her hand
at night,
closing her hand
into a fist;
the moon dripping
all down her arm
like melted butter

and as the oceans stopped
swirling and the
floor ran yellow,
all the lights went out.

Searching for Love

Searching for love
That rests eternally
In the smallest nook
Within the flower's
Cotton-soft ovary

And flames out and
In and out of the
Brightest star in the
Winterlong sky

And lives momentarily
In the brief sparks
Of the human eye.

Searching for love
That reasons not,
Exalts not others
Forsaking sisters,
Disengaging brothers;

Believing but never
Asking why.

Searching for love
That answers I.

Tango

I don't dance the Tango
but I like to listen to the music.
Sometimes I'm like that with sex, too.
It's better to talk about it
than it is to do the do.
You know what I'm saying.
Maybe you do.
I mean, it's all so exhausting
but it's easy to talk about it,
almost no effort at all.

I imagine that people who dance for a living
would, sometimes,
just rather sit down and close their eyes;
listen to the accordion, the viola,
the beating of the other dancers' steps
all over the floor.
I worked a 10-hour shift today
and I'm beat all to hell.
I'll put on Oblivion by Piazzolla,
then let's just talk about it instead.