

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

Lo Galluccio
Way Up High

Because of listening to *Bone Machine*
and that song about a vampire hero I sang at Fez
with you on your slide guitar, as always, arranging
the whole thing. Because you were on slide guitar
and I was singing about the vampire angel guy Tom Waits
invented, I remember now that I never learned to play]
the guitar but the pull between forces of arranging
and deranging have always been strong.

Polarities and alchemy. Your tiger brown eyes
lit up in amazement when you first heard this record.
"Amazing," you said, about the percussion, his growling
voice, and I still remember all the words to this
song about when *the moon is a cold chiseled dagger*,
I still remember the angle to the audience at Fez.
Lights, applause, our first \$75 from the door of a NY club.

In New York, it was new, beginning, to use your word
happening. Why didn't I smile more? Buy you
steak dinners instead of burning it down, slowly,
with my nightmares and impatience? "*You don't*
know how to let go of things...," you'd say.
What am I doing now? What lasts?
The moon will be here for almost forever.
She will be here. Up there. In her cascade of stars.

How come we both wound up in Boston?
How come you left the enchanted city for
a college town? You went Pro the other way.
And I'm just getting by. Still the song is
beautiful, guileful, amazing, bad. *Bad as Me*,
is his new record. It isn't this good. It isn't
as good as the beginning of this. This voice,

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those beating drums. I just know it.

Rolling down a hill-side on tour. I had a baby
back somewhere who'd call me on the phone
in the motel rooms. I had this alarm clock
under my pillow that got stolen by the wind.
And voices came and stole my dreams,
right outta my head. She said, "Maybe they'll come back."
She just said it straight like that over the phone.

But I know the static on a TV screen can last
a long time, or the darkness of a cave stripped of

its hieroglyphs. Yes, you told me I'd paid a high price
for that record. When we met again out on the avenue...
They say you're a Buddhist now. You were all AA back then
and group therapy. Wounded myself, I just couldn't
stay even with the healing modalities of you.

It won't be as good. And I can't afford it.
Pretty sad situation. But somewhere out
there is a potent ghost of remonstrations
and remorse who would just cleave to that
moon and suck at her silver brilliance for any
new chance at a real tango, a real waltz.
To be a player; to have a name. Way up high.