

Tom Konyves

TOM KONYVES

AN ERASURE POEM FOR KEN NORRIS

Because Time is not always "on our side"; the sands often bury a noun here, an adjective and a verb there, until it's impossible to tell what happened or did not happen.

PS

the Church

crawled out of bed
wrapped
the blue sky
and you in it
with its fallen leaves and blue despair

on Amsterdam Avenue
on Spring days
now Autumn

New York, tell me
Central Park's

slowly filling up
the Kansas City
champagne
and in a sense
we're all still alive
fuck

uptown
calculations

Oh God
get into bed

too much living there
and smoking

KEN NORRIS

A TRANSLATION OF FRANK O'HARA

STEPS

How funny you used to be New York
like Gene Wilder in *The Producers*
and the St. Mark's Church was always
rocking with poetry

Here today in Maine I have just slow-
crawled out of bed
early on Veteran's Day, a rolled towel
wrapped around my neck to cradle it from
stiffness,
it's still early morning November dark, but I
think
the blue sky will put in an appearance
When I was young and living in Manhattan
all I wanted was my bed in my fourteenth
floor apartment
and you in it,
the late night traffic roaring by
on Amsterdam Avenue below, heading
noisily uptown.
On Spring days I'd wander the cluttered
streets in a crowd
and not be concerned about anything other
than what the day might provide—
now Autumn crowds me
with its fallen leaves and blue despair.

I was just there a few weeks ago
taking in the music, taking in the air.
New York, tell me,
where is Taylor Swift—
*she's just getting home to her condo
after a night of drinking and dancing with
friends,
and Woody Allen's on a shoot,
some people are out early, walking their
dogs*

*in their fall coats, and Central Park's
slowly filling up with runners getting ready
for a morning jog
before they head off to work—
why not
the Kansas City Royals shower in
champagne because they won
and in a sense we're all winning
we're all still alive.*

In those times when we were young
your apartment was on West 10th Street
and I lived on West 86th
We'd drink downtown and mostly fuck
uptown,
money for a taxi always part of my
not-so-innocent calculations
when we were having an evening out.
We'd drink at the White Horse and then
depart
not that we needed liquor (we just liked it)

And you're still living there in New York
on West End Avenue,
having moved uptown with your husband
after several years in Brooklyn,
and though I'm so far north
I can never get back to you,
the compass of my heart
still always points to where you are,
my true north, my true heading,
and certainly a part of me
has always stayed behind with you.

Oh god it was wonderful
to be young
and get into bed with you
after drinking too much Jack Daniels
and smoking just a bit of weed
and then loving you so much