

< More or Less Than > 1-100

Also by M T C Cronin

Zoetrope – we see us moving
the world beyond the fig

Everything Holy

Mischief-Birds

Talking to Neruda's Questions

Bestseller

My Lover's Back ~ 79 Love Poems

The Confetti Stone and other poems

beautiful, unfinished – PARABLE/SONG/CANTO/POEM

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*to the apricot tree, the astonishing arch
and other 'wandering landmarks'*

(with thanks to I.C. and C.V.)

1

not simply the stream but they who thought of following

2

and not just running water – how concerned, sometimes,
a group of people with the movements of the clouds

3

'follow me' means three, the speaker
a page of water and they, addressed, wavering,
as the third beckons as well as it can, hidden

not just, along the way, vines finding light and its myth,
as myth, invisible, unplants one life for another,
but the unrecognizable fruit they will test with their teeth
for the answer to the tongue's question

5

the tongue, the tongue, steps backwards into a web
respun daily by an appetite that thinks never of holiness
the tongue makes them miniature and blind
the tongue caresses and ruins their splendour
in its own land it speaks the language of stones

6

helped by the small swallow the stone is lifted
from what is crushed and lifted to emptiness, its futurity,
lifted with its earthquake to the place where it is learning
to speak, to the roof of the mouth, that cave of fullness
which can feel the emptiness with which it is filled
covered with breath covered with breath

this was their magnifying glass, and not just glass,
but the metaphors, what they see what they see through,
what they see through what they see, one
of the Amaryllis, the face, and the petal is like
a tear dropping down, when fences come down
it is no longer possible to pass from one side to another
incarnate labouring longing the reason won't suffice

it isn't simply the difference between action and rest –
there is solace in the sky's reflection and words
will serve any purpose their meaning can divine –
but following to the place where things and words
leave disappearance lonely and smooth as a brow
that is finished for the night with dreams and the place
where they rest is nothing like daybreak –
all is invisible in this morning that has forgotten the night

they clamber forward thinking about the concept of forgiveness,
the heart forgives, and not only that but the highest fruit in the tree
hanging like a spindle-shaped shell in an ocean of sky, the heart leaps,
and high excitement about what you can see through a magnifying
glass if only it was not covered with breath, the heart sees though love
is blind, and then the storm of hair over the pillow and the ship
as it approaches the rocks, the heart breaks, think, pure, refusing,
burning, and ache in love, the longest eclipse of the self, and the heart
described in writing always makes the heart look gaunt,

10

literally
the real heart
how surprised they are if is said
something that is not written down
and not simply the kiss but the lips
not simply the tapping but the door
not simply the wind but whispering perpetually through the trees
not simply the stone but the stone
a face, a wall, smooth, rough, always broken
these gentle cleaving feet of the spider

not just the spider with its web – one like this
but different, one unlike this but the same –
but the ant rumbling a smaller ground – one small
bit of waiting over, a lifetime – before or after
the event, neither what has been or what is
to come evident in that small word, event,
but a new world spun there, not mistaken,
but still, think, simply of another, and not just
the ant but the cosmos – the enormous miniature
of the universe shaking bones in its palm – not just
bowel, brain and chest but, think, planets and heroes