

Crimson and Clover

by John Olson

It's 2:00 p.m. on a July afternoon. I wonder what John Keats would be doing if he were alive today. Would he still be couch surfing? Sitting in someone's background composing great poetry? Why is there a single wool glove on the bureau in the bedroom? Where is its mate? The day begins to convulse with inquiry. Images of the external world crash among my ganglion, creating impressions of light and air. My inner world is a reflection of the outer world. I'm sorry if that disappoints you. I wish it could be different. But some things are not within my power. I have hired five expert divers to locate Prospero's book. Nothing yet. I am reduced to posting silly little pleas for your attention on the computer. There is always the possibility of creating other worlds. A little paint goes a long way. Just make sure to check you've still got your keys. Why are pillows so popular? This is not my concern. The world follows me everywhere. I can't get rid of it. I'm being stalked by a planet. Maybe it's time to visit the local bookstore. I want power. One way or another I 'm going to seize power. I'm not going to do it like a politician and invite a bunch of pricks from Wall Street into the apartment. Here is what I will do. I will burst into magnificent octaves. I'll go for a drive. I don't know. I find it hard to make decisions. Meet Pete. My pet mosquito. What makes a hot air balloon rise? A sentence blowing a flame into a void. Four hundred tentacles juggling my heart. The employment of sticks and grommets. A dollop of umber augmenting the spirit of pink. There are numerous phenomena that elude analysis. That elude, even, the inquiring tip of a paring knife. My left pocket, for example, is haunted by the ghost of a dime. It feels acute, and gestural, like an attitude still in the embryonic stage, and so capable of assuming magnitudes of reckless assumption, and becoming something greater than a mere attitude, or mood, but an entire city, a quilt full of monkeys and stars. There is so much life in a rupture, in a sudden dizzying grasp of the subjunctive. And yet there is nothing like the radical present to

remind us of our true instincts and power. Suddenly Zukofsky enters the language and I feel subversive. I feel the need to explore movement and character, to recite odes of bright principle, and drop from the sky in a chariot of fire. We delight in our senses, aside from their usefulness, they are loved for themselves, and most of all the sense of sight, which brings to light differences between things. Algebra and handstands. Bluebell and adjutant. Why is it wonderful that the moon is inevitable? I think I'll go for a run. I love running. Pain alerts the brain that something is happening that may or may not be good for you and that my friend is the essence of love. Let the cows be my witness. And the sky explain its secrets in crimson and clover at the end of the day.

