

any sixtieth century

by strannikov

centenarians? we've had fifty-nine
ninety-year-olds lecture ten-year-olds once
a century, maybe something can lift
from horizon to black zenith one gaze:
no waiting questions no answers await—
as ever, only the cold the quiet the steep dark.

contrarian oh maybe fifty-nine,
an accomplished teen once and twice and thrice,
winding—but down—the steps and stairs that lift,
peeks down into a valley never lit
directly by any proximate star—
the depths seem to whisper but can't be seen or quite heard.

carrion is no longer hauled away:
if the road killed it, it must be the road's,
roadkill does not get its own traffic cop,
its Boy Scout to monitor its dissolve,
its microphone to prod from it mute sighs,
this road that won't be traveled, that neither will be crossed.

a species never consulted eyes things:
predicting nothing, the roadkill eclipsed
by the sun, the road that never was crossed
eclipsed by the sands, buried eaten belched:
one century more not one short mouth left
to tell the tale of an abandoned cactus left mute.

