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Untitled

Philip M. Taylor

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While in the slender dusk
of autumnal light bouncing upon the
exposed pink underbelly of breathless clouds,
Gertrude said:
“A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.”

I can smell you temperate on
faded pillowcases dancing
between the tenuous fibers of
stained chocolate sheets when
patchouli, lavender, and coconut
musk spills from where my elbows
sink into patterns of garden-grown geraniums. Not rose not rose
not rose not rose.

The tapered ridges of the glass-green vase held water still as a glacier
just inches above where the thorny stalks were sliced, diagonally, so their rubbery spines calcified into matchsticks until petals fell,
(tiny bits of paper)
pink and crimson against creaming Formica.
Never rose never rose never rose never rose,

but paper,
like the skins of my wrists,
lined with pulsing blue-violet streets.
You savored the colorless cobblestones—
their vanilla amber sugar prickling across that golden pink petal of your mouth.
Absolution is:

How your gin-soaked tongue
tastes between my teeth.
How my hands move across your
browning skin like a ghost—
an apparition.

A theology slippery between the
soft moisture of my fingerprints:
Your body tessellating beneath mine in
triangles gently joining your slender ankles
to the burgeoning fullness of your thighs.

All these parts. All these angles. All these roses.
The summation is a circle. Pythagorean Theorem.
The spheres roll like Sisyphus through
the cavernous veins of my arms.

As your muscadine breath flutters,
moths’ wings beat upon the nape of my neck.

It is a sweetness—a speck—growing like black
honeysuckle within the enamel of my teeth.

A rose is a rose is a rose is a
blooming ruby-ripe grapefruit in my palm.
Its wedges (the touch of your skin)
a bitter tartness stealing the sugarcane
from memory. The pulp:

When your body gilt garnet beneath the
ivory tusks of my palms as we faded
in and around sleeping until our
bodies would wrinkle into a
low sinken murmuring
as you burst like a star
like a rose
like a rose
like a rose
like a rose
blossoming deep inside of me.