

In The Small Of Her Back Another Illusion Sets Sail

roil away and wash down
 into the city's gargantuan quarrel with itself
 your mind alive in experiments and codas
 night sirens bleeding the daylong
ting-ting of silver metal glances in the skin
 the city that you are, fused to all seas

 don't dare try to scatter her ethers
 or mold her ribs or clip her into a savior,
 who better than she who accepts you?
since every boy knows all women are mystery, the other
an irreproachable connection to nests of tender

 see how she pauses her head there on your slag of a chest
 and as duet you heave through eaves of summer
eyes closed as you hear regulars shaking loose out of bars
 commuters scuttling to their bills and harbor views
 pasty, depleted, serving the peace

 hours later, still fused, you awaken re-forged
hearing the shouts of children from below your window
 in front of the Fulton Street Project, their home
 one black boy shouting fuck you at a pedestrian
 one girl warning the boy to mind his tongue

rotten not these kids, only the misery and hate they suckle,
 your pity is useless
 you kiss again the dimples of sweat under her breasts
no words and no wants to imprison you
yet a rowing discontent teems

Color Spectrum Thoughts On Racism At A Traffic Light

Trance-groove-drum-and-bass venting oppression murders me as I wait,
the city air thick with bandaged wounds, sky of angst percussive
confusion of thinking little it seems has improved here for the poor.
Why seek raps when I don't have to? Urban anger finds me,
like the sun, and tells me what time it is since I'm not one to know
much about trends, membership, clothes, cars and fast booty.
What little I know leaves me idling in the question of racism,
the trafficking in lines that keeps anger fueled, class war divisive
and the poor black male incarcerated as if he's at fault. Poor is not
a man's name. Poor Negro should not be a prison. Poor Asian
and Latino is a force not a demographic equation that darker skin tone
equals poverty times two. Why sing about unity when you can shout
about blame and violence? Unity is dangerous. It raises us through grace.

Can't have change without vision. Imagine a unified underclass with hope
and ideas. Imagine them thinking, focused, engaged. Will it happen?
or will it divide, shuffle and conquer like barbed words that rhyme
where stopped drivers in cornrows roll up their windows and tremble?
Grab. Don't let bean-counters erase you. Come of age with a dove
in your hand. Arrive. Your music is now, made to be ambient,
disruptive po'boy rage that may earn 15 minutes of *the moment*.
It's not my music, but I'll celebrate your fame if it matters to you –
I'll help vanquish armies of imitators with all their cunning techniques.
I'll stand up for you, original voice, here to do more than just scream.
We know nothing is new under the sun. Do something. Improve yourself.

Farewell effete instrumentalist and subdued aesthete. Cities have rubbed you out.
Excuses for poverty spring from fear, the over-fed and lazy that've never been
anywhere I mean in their *minds*. Stop the ones that cry what's wrong with *those* people,
these others, them, them, them? Correct their mistaken assumptions. Change them.
Easy to whine and accuse when you're choosing chandeliers, glued to the mainline distractions
and the pettiness of streets named after extinct woodland animals.
Your house need not be a cake, your lawn a putting green soaked in pest control.

There's a change of light. Three colors telling us all to stop waiting,
to drive on, fuming, and to find that third eye flaming in our souls.