

Orpheus in the Download Underworld

We make our disappearances day by day,
absence speaking for absence
through a waxed veil of leaf and seed-pod.
Territories are marked with a wing beat,
the bounds of tenderness negotiated in magpie semaphore
as we are subsumed by books,
magazines, downloads, DVDs,
gewgaws, gizmos, all those pretty
fig leaves bought to cover shame.

The house is hollow,
an echoing cave of certainties lost,
where Persephone picks pomegranate seeds
that catch in her teeth, spits them out and curses.
Cats howl around her like furies
after mice, scraps of paper,
the dust born of silence,
screwed into fists of guilt.
The goddess cries for us to stay indoors.

There is majesty in certainty if you can stomach it
but I prefer the random melt of stars,
waiting in the darkness for trees to bud,
listening for the metallic scrape of growth
as foxes slice the winter with their tongues
and owls stamp prints of mice on frosty turf.
I am walking the path away from home,
a love song balled foetal in my hand.
Follow me. I'll not look back.

Adam Horovitz

(From 'Turning', reviewed in this issue)