



Rococo by Philip Hammial
Island Press Co-operative 2017

Fetishing

First they said good things.
Then they said bad things.
There is only one day: Thursday, July 7, 2045.
I'm tired of cuffs; they dig too deep.
It's all about a woman's pretty feet.
Do we want more *we*?
Big question, I give small answer.
An ugly loom (I meant to write *room*).
Here comes Moscow! Here comes Frankfurt!
Blow that bugle! Beat that drum!
What to do? — they had a hose on me.
It made about a dozen sense.
It was funeral and foolish (& a bit of flourish)
That's it — the basic feed.
Why ask 'What's with Lulu?'
It's obvious. Her tutu's trouble (with a small *t*)
In which position you want me now?
If there's an alignment it's with the Klaus Klan.
No truck will I have with Thee, or Thee, or Thee.
My take on history is not a winner's.
Aholo, am I worthy?
Child of a mock-doctor, a medical offshoot
that gives me license to hang with fetisheurs.
Be one of those in-your-pocket men.
This is my corset.
This is my collar.
This is my poem. I made it myself.
I'm the poet, a special. I speak from a book.
Maybe you like.

Friday November 11, 2016 (Black Friday)

Doors

I'm lying on a trolley, waiting.
In a pasture as green as the Green in Gables.
At the far edge are seven doors, closed, no walls, just
doors etched against a cloudless sky.
Come night, I'll be pushed through one of them.

Testing

I'm testing with my tongue: the taste of the paint on the
walls of this corridor; the noise in the rooms on either side;
the smell of the nurse who is speaking to me.
So far so good.
I can take a few more steps.

The Measure of a Man

What are they saying, the whisperers out in the corridor?
Something about 20 fingers long, 5 wide.
Lying here in my bed unable to sleep, am I 20 fingers long,
5 wide?
Of course it depends on how long the fingers in question are.
Mine, apparently, are *average*.
So if the fingers in question are not average then the
whispering could be about someone else, about some other
patient in this hospital for incurable insomniacs.

Page

I've been here for three days. I've been waiting for someone
to come into this room & turn the page.