

Scribbled Subjects

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in the verdant Azores,
a volcanic archipelago
anchored in the Atlantic Ocean,
an impertinent eruption
from the centre of the earth,
I heard a philosopher

who was rather beautiful
(especially for a philosopher
with blond hair and long legs
in a meticulously cut black suit
and lavender ice blouse
like few scholars favour,
no drab, dowdy bookworms,
at least my keen preference)

with enough lava in her eyes
to shrivel your heart, spewed
her words with a TV evangelical
preacher's scary conviction

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the philosopher said,
stories are not meant
to pull us out of the world,
but to reconcile us to the world

and I wanted to ask,
where is the world?

the philosopher said,
the danger of story-telling
is the failure to look
at the horrors of the world

and I wanted to ask,
how can a story hide horror?

the philosopher said,
stories are a search for revelry,
the reprehensible narcissism
of poetry lost in an evil world

and I wanted to ask,
why is revelry unworldly?

and the philosopher cited
Arendt, Benjamin, Camus,
worked her way through the alphabet
with a Pentecostal pastor's passion
for railing against revelry

but told no stories, not even
an anecdote, knowing how
the wild revelry of stories

always refutes containment
in the linguistic contortions
of philosophers with words:
bloodless, blonde, bland

and I asked,
do you ever laugh?

I guess my question wasn't
sufficiently philosophical,
since the Azorean sun was suddenly
tepid in her glare like a ray gun

and I'm still dabbing Ozonol ointment
on the burning circles of my skin