

various verses

by strannikov

month without a moon

what blight on the souls of children born this month!
a month with no moon is not common at all,
no moon full for this February—alas!
they'll be thrown off for years, if not for their lives
(ahhh, if only this could have been a leap year!).
hard to say what calendar reform could do—
the Year of the Dog is now well underway
—but still, this February gets no full moon!
when a month can't accommodate a full moon,
something somewhere is amiss: but if the cat
can fiddle without dish eloping with spoon—

coastal Bermuda summers

the summer days of one Carolina youth:
dew melts in the sun of the next field for work
astride steel trailers jolting with bales of hay.
driven to the fields red Ford pick-up roar
at no less than forty along rutted roads
with us on the back no matter the road's shape
or rattles and kicks galore with windows down
drove me through the best four summers of my life.
what could make baling twenty-five tons of hay
a day—its mem'ry—such a pleasure today?
(why would I ask myself? I'd be sure to lie.)

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her beautiful toilet

grass waves blue by a river blue.
in a willow garden lush shade

drapes dark the young woman's small house
with the lone window, the white door.

the beauty powders her face red
lightly lightly with her white hand.

after the courtesans' house—here,
ignored wife of dissolute lout,

absent, missing dissolute lout
who left behind an empty bed.

the friends' leavetaking

where the peaks north of town turn blue
from where their white water bends east—

that spot is where we both depart:
one, dry grass blown ten thousand miles,

mind and soul of an aimless cloud,
the other, too sad for sunset.

hands barely get lifted in wave:
two horses neigh, turn heads, take paths.

