

Robert Gibbons

SWIRLING PALPABLY AROUND

We made this sort of jagged parabolic trek out State Street, back around Stetson Court to Park, down Congress to the Yoga Center she wants to join, around High down to Strudivant's Wharf. I spotted the *Seneca* out of Boston across the way, a long-liner to the best of my knowledge, & next to it the *Snow Squall*, a beauty of a large white lobster boat tied up to it. The Asian guy with his fishing rod mimicked the top end of a pier pole standing invisible to both of us until I caught sight of him & had to point him out for her to see. Getting to the end of the wharf was a gauntlet run past workers on smoke breaks, & toxic marine paint applied to a number of hulls up on dry dock, but it was all worth it when the *Déjà Vu II* rolled in near the *Snow Squall* with one of the crew yelling out asking if they wanted some good bait. The two guys on the *Snow Squall* were apprehensive at first, but the loquacious lobsterman on the *Déjà Vu* talked up the bait for all it was worth, & free, after all. One of the guys finally nodded & the whole plastic vat passed hands. But the captain wanted the lug back, so one of *Squall's* crew tossed the contents into one of his own. That was it! A stream of Silver & Gold shining in the sun, hundreds of beautiful, free herring flashing in the sun! Miraculous, in a simple sort of way. After one crew member emptied the tub he handed it over to the guy who'd nodded acceptance, who then graciously washed it out in harbor water before handing it back to the talkative sailor still talking, the spirit of generosity swirling palpably around the whole area like a nimbus.

DIRGE

for Guy

White cat wondering. I know what you mean, I say, wordlessly back. Dirge in the air today. Silent dirge, overheard. A man who taught that life's too short to wrangle, now, smiles up from the urn, or down from where the air carries the Dirge like snow. The roof even with the apartment window turns into a long, long meadow, as if two men could have walked out there, never having met in person, their years of words like footpaths at the vanishing point, ultimately converging.

SOPHIA'S

The now, the distant cloud. Voices resonating like hands across a fevered brow. Liturgical purple reaching back to Eleusis, where initiates entered the Telesterion to witness revelation. Imagery of grain, or poppy, shown symbolically, possibly carved in marble. Although some theorize real things were preserved & revealed. Treasures rescued by Demeter every spring. Today, I dropped by Sophia's, far enough away from the original Portland Trade Building at 34 Exchange, run by two present-day hierophants, baker/painters, where on Holy Thursday, over all three loaves, for our own small ritual tonight, or as Steve said, "to break," Rick talked of being at Chichen Itza at the exact moment of the equinox ten years ago.

II

Now, I've been at these investigations for a long time. Read practically everything by Karoly Kerényi, translated into English. When he mentions Eleusis it's a sacred place, *for the survival of personal existence, regardless of death*. How simple, & direct. Steve & Rick's place is that type of architecture the Hungarian scholar alludes to as Sanctuary. Perhaps he'd even compare it to the Anaktoron, that smaller structure within the larger Telesterion. Maximus of Tyre is quoted to say that one is not initiated without having reached it. Kerényi, appropriately enough, compares it to, *the chapel of the Porziuncula, in Santa Maria degli Angeli near Assisi*. Suddenly, ten years ago doesn't seem that far away.