

1960

Aqueduct

Charles Tomlinson

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Lullaby

dust
 slowly
 dust slowly
 dust slowly gathers
 gathers grows grips
 the surface
 gleamless
 grayly spurns sunlight
 spurns wonder
 copies color
 claims top more than sides
 more than under
 dust slowly
 slowly dust
 gathers grows gleamless
 slowly slowly
 dust

—*Thomas John Carlisle*

Aqueduct

Let it stand
 A stone guest
 In an unhospitable land,
 Its speech, the well's speech,
 The unsealed source's,
 Carrying thence
 Its own sustenance. Its grace
 Must be the match
 Of the stream's strength,
 And let the tone
 Of the waters' flute
 Brim with its gentle admonitions the conduit stone.

—*Charles Tomlinson*

October Pantomime

Fall has set the stage with Dionysus
 for a tragedy. Behind the wings,
 a crippled russet leafing the calendar,
 swings a pendulum—the play begins.
 Winds limp about to cue the cast.

First on
 fragile strings, a dragonfly planing
 amber air in quest of acorns, trapezes
 under the glare of autumn. One twang,
 and fractured is a brittle prow; on the
 proscenium lies a splinted hull.

Act two opens. A crusty bow, and upstage
 tumble mummied weed and panicle
 of goldenrod, until the tangled strands
 of the corymbs crouch into a guise
 of sculptured vermicule.

Next hoary hands, for
 a macabre role, phlebotomize
 the hollyhocks; a whispering campaign
 in leaves, and the oakred curtain-drop
 asphyxiates love-lies-bleeding. Wild geese fly
 honking the denouement.

From the top
 Melpomene weeps; with thaumaturgy,
 flings on the properties confetti
 flakes. All hibernate while the isochronic
 rehearsals pulse a new tragedy.

—*Sister Mary Honora, O.S.F.*