

Rabbit and tortoise find each other on the windowsill

'Where am I? It must be a dream, this place
with no green: just a mountain in the distance and what
looks like a dead tortoise. I'm hungry already and how
will I drink without my fountain-head water dispenser?'

Tortoise raises her beak. I've had enough of holding up the world;
my shell the vault of the heavens. Across a wide sill full of shadows,
a mother tree's carrying a small moon above the sound of water.
I'll follow it until I reach the mountain.

'It's a good job I've watched so much TV, Perma-frost's
twenty-five percent of the world's surface. I could do
with thicker fur under my paws. Hey snake head, wake up!
I know all about you- your shell a source of divination.'

She's muddling myths. I'm seeking detachment.
Thousands of years I've been talking with humans, but a rabbit!
Dreadful. What could she have to say that I'd want to hear?
'Where did you spring from?'

'I was in 'before' yesterday and here we are in 'after', Mrs.
House Bearer. I had a hutch with two storeys in a room with
non-stop TV and a mirror: a world within worlds within worlds.
Do you know how to get me back there?
I don't sleep well in emptiness.'

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'There is only now, little one, only now to live in.
My shell is my shell is my shell, not the shield of a black warrior from the North,
nor the heavens, nor even a zither. That's enough-
I've had my fill of chthonian imputations.'

'My head's stuffed with information, all of it un-rooted.
I'm a hoppity-skip in the flux of cyberspace
scared of dehydration, raptors, starlight; nowhere to hide.
The question is what now?'

'What now? My heart is singing its own reasons.
I long for the mountain, a sound of goat bells;
resinous air, fresh as a sea wind from turbulent currents.
Will you run ahead, like hope?'

'If you want'

'Want will always be my master, rabbit'

