Image from Orakel

John Grey

Tin Man

Tin Man is shining. Combing his hair, he grins.
He bathes his body in onanistic amber waters.
In rooms papered over with visions of money,
Phaethon can only look on despairingly.

Later, he will fade into muted chiaroscuro,
where the phantoms of Wall Street,
prefab cubicles, factory stairwells, go home to die.
But for now, he's subject of his own gaze in the mirror.

Tin Man knows every cloak room attendant and psychiatrist
within a four-mile radius, likewise the power slobs, the dollar mavens,
titans who will get their own ticker-tape death, the ones who
know that hiring and firing is as easy as farting and belching.

Outside is cold and motionless.
Tin Man passes it all off as a rumor.
The crowd is dying but one or two will win a prize.

Maybe a scratch ticket. Maybe a war.

Tin Man would like nothing more than to be Tin God.
Sometimes, the ghosts of prophesy meet in secret,
whisper the possibility in his clanging tin ears.
Then he'll put his raiment on, with a mix-and-match halo.

For now, he feigns indifference.
The earth doesn't turn on his say-so.
Yet there'll come a time when waves
will have to accept that he's the ocean.

Tin Man wipes the dribble from his chin like it's ambrosia.
He opens a magazine to where someone last wrote about him.
He pounds on his chest. The sound is loud but hollow.
That's all the noise his minions need to hear.

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