

# “The Stranger”

Karl Young

light  
on the water  
red or green  
austere silence  
insults intensity  
kind people  
kind acts  
slap  
mirrors  
cupboards  
toilet bowls  
unjust laws  
poisoned fig trees  
bark at the absolute  
buy acquiescence  
overwhelm acceptance  
accumulate bitterness  
entangle decorum  
legitimize disease  
renounce aversion  
fatten vexation  
exhaust equilibrium  
in the suns's full glare  
stop  
each  
chain  
make yourself comfortable  
in spite of the trial  
emptiness vibrates  
the victim calls witnesses  
plaster machinery  
naked laughter  
slimy wheels  
see yourself as adversary

or the winch of jealousy  
the magistrate is an invoice  
a coffin of confused noise  
a splash of nervous clarity  
or simple nausea  
hardly necessary  
ice cream or cranium  
habituated hate hates breath  
dirty tricks  
charming cheeks  
preoccupied carrion  
while fortune's funeral  
classifies file cabinets  
automatically authorizes  
heart  
collar  
eyes  
shirtsleeves  
anger  
boiling mouth half closed  
empty bottle  
collaborate to calm down  
sweaty vigil  
teeth  
lace  
departure with nothing to say  
prisoner's stage fright  
ruled in squares  
prosecutor's functioning madness  
starched with kerosene  
cell's hope for flame  
canker's song  
afternoon's ash  
lime's weariness  
float on your back  
deface information  
purge procedure  
carry luck  
fascinate fish  
swim forward  
scatter the droplets  
let waves  
comb your hair  
taste salt's constancy  
swim tranquil  
swim lazy

swim silent  
swim singing  
swim as in dreams  
swim through partitions of chemical constraint  
swim against mischance  
swim beyond hope  
swim beyond punishment  
dive into the open sea  
descend  
carefully  
slowly  
sensually  
hear  
motors  
dreaming bells  
profound vibrations  
descend into cooler layers  
withdraw into nothingness  
anonymous joy  
imagine being  
condemned  
to life  
courtesy  
flows away  
like memory  
of Chinese chocolate  
nail down  
association  
knife's blade  
wave  
streetlight  
abyss in your pocket  
flee funeral smoke  
embrace the rush  
obliging kindness  
fried face  
scab of years  
cymbals of typists  
well adapted to  
amorous wetness  
blushing silk  
tacit as the tide  
rub on oil  
wake up again  
wash dishes  
get dressed

wash your face  
go outside  
it's my city  
balcony  
bluejeans  
ticket  
ink and wings  
plumbers and cops  
caretakers and pimps  
luck and fear  
movies and brandy  
turning fan  
railroad  
remove money  
unscrew astonishment  
pardon  
window  
spaghetti  
lotteries  
sugar  
luxury  
shuttering logic  
skin  
pavement  
shells of pleasure  
shrug at the faint light  
hammer memory  
circle minutia  
notch  
sink  
streetcar  
tobacco  
stairwell  
frying pan  
bloody sawdust  
rolling apple  
sudden rain  
raucous drunks  
open skylight  
sweaty waist  
morning radio  
red wine  
smooth glass  
smells of gasoline  
of coffee  
of fish

sunlight falls on  
window sill  
curtain  
walls  
this room  
streets  
city  
river

[The vocabulary for this poem was derived from English equivalents of  
words and phrases in Albert Camus's *L'Étranger*.]

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