Max Earnest

Jah Provides The Bread

NIKO

I was standing on the balcony talking on the phone about a dream I'd had, which was animalic as usual, when I noticed far down below on the street a figure.

I remembered a conversation I'd had recently with my father. He'd just moved into a condo on the beach on the west coast in order to properly start his retirement. I couldn't imagine how he'd been spending his time, in fact I avoided thinking about it, but I learned that he'd taken to looking out his window with binoculars, observing the weather and the people on the sand. He sent my brother and me regular reports.

With my phone still to my ear I kept watching the figure, it was walking from corner to corner. I watched it, but I was afraid to say anything about it. If I said something, it would make it real, or disappear, and I wasn't sure I wanted either. It's deadly to live with absolute certainty.

As I turned my back from the balcony and walked into my dark flat I felt as if I was on the edge of a silver coin. I drew the curtains and laid down on the couch, facing them. Behind my closed eyes I continued following the figure. It did a few more paces then finally turned the corner and walked to a point shaped like the tip of Manhattan, towards the edge of the water, which was grey and churning. I heard some keys jingling.

I woke up in the dark breathing heavily, blanketedly, and I stayed very still for a long time.

Finally I opened my eyes and looked at the ceiling, I could just make out some words there.

Talk and spies ahead
Tall and full of lead
Birds in flight
Stray and light
Full my hollow head
Every line I read
Sticking to my bed
In the throes
Lilies grow
Lawful I thee wed
Cauterize what bled
Mottled skies turn red
Prey in sight
All so bright

I closed my eyes again and went back to sleep, and when I woke up I remembered nothing.

Text by Hayley Earnest