RICKY GARNI
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# CONTENTS

- Why Am I So Afraid of Sleep?  
  Page 4
- Cellini  
  Page 5
- Yesteryear  
  Page 6
- Author Notes  
  Page 7
Why Am I So Afraid of Sleep?

When I close my eyes, I see you so clearly
You are eight monks in colorful vestments reading
sacred scrolls beneath a naked eve tempted by the devil
One of you is looking in the wrong direction
Seven are looking in the correct direction
When I open my eyes, where do you go?
I hope that you all pray for me and that
only one of you turns around
I hope it is the right one
The one pointed in the wrong direction
Please keep praying
in my sleep
Cellini

I try to imagine you
and I in the bathtub.

Your back is against
the front. My back
is against the back.

Suddenly, I remove
a broadsword and point
it at your golden eyeballs.

Why golden?

Because somehow, when
you weren’t looking, some
joker, probably from ancient
Rome, painted us gold—
from head to toe. Cabeza a
pie. Think Cellini. Or
Goldfinger.

You almost cover your breast.
I practically hold a fig leaf.
That’s how much in love we
are. From bow to stern.

I can hear the ocean. It is an ocean
of love. Quite unusually, here in
the bathtub, it is quivering like a
baby.
Yesteryear

In the very old days of Old Japan, when a charismatic royal prince chose to follow his destiny, he would often have an affair with an uneducated daughter of a peasant fisherman in a rural village far away from his kingdom, and he did so, with impunity, accompanied by a royal servant who followed his bidding without question, such was his loyalty and faith in his charismatic young prince. Such was the order of the day.

My day begins with a chocolate bar from the convenience store. It doesn’t matter if the cashier is uneducated, a peasant, a woman, or even knows how to fish: if I follow my destiny as I see it, there will be a rumpus.
Author Notes

Ricky Garni is a graphic designer and musician who gave up his instruments a long time ago and then made the sad decision to look at pictures of the sorts of instruments that he used to own, found them, looked at them, and wept with longing. Now he writes poetry (Amazon and lulu.com, various www.), seldom plays music at all, and tries not to weep with longing so much.