

Seven Couplets With Crotchets: Why Models Grow Ugly

To begin with a face is a layer of skin
Covering nothing at all within.

(Tongue and teeth don't count, they only kiss nourishment on its way through, and bones are just an ungraceful geometric diagram.)

Held out by cheekbones, stretched by nose,
Unstirred by action, limp in repose.

(What can happen in a cradle? A splintery slat? A steaming drop of milk? What?)

Some faces are born with visual cues
That will a conditioned beholder bemuse.

(Is the eye almond-shaped with pupil large and dark? Is the forehead round, the nose pugged? Will the mouth hold two spoons at once? Are the teeth Flat Omnivore, shiny to Love's taste as a Sweet? And the neck long-sloped beneath hair swaying in slow slow motion?)

That promise such lang'rous patrician delights
Life lived on elegant perfumed heights.

(Breasts circles beneath a straight line, thighs that stretch longer than living limbs could between neither will mortal ever lie, though he strive with the straining of an hundred laxatives, glisten with the gloss of a thousand hair oils, slave his armpits a millenium of mornings.)

But each day prods with molding thumb
Marking carefully what's to come.

(Don't run! That thumb catches everybody.)

And if no resistance arises inside
Beauty sinks in to leathery hide.

(Squeeze a rubber toy a million times: so, so. Now it snaps out more slowly, the paint comes off on fingers; cracks appear in creases that gape into leaks; and the demanding squeal of the valve fades into a despairing hiss.)

A proper filling trickles in
Of what you've seen and what you've been.
(Grab 'em as they go by! bacon and Bacon and Bach; de-
vour the books and smell the sunlight; treasure every
touch of love, hoard each of hatred's hard agates;
press it down until you're as full as a Turkish-
Napoleon-Armenian pastry, poly-delicious-striated and
smelling somewhat of lamb.)

--Robert L. Smith

How It Was

I told her no time
no how
but she only
laughed in her sleeve

and winked a
ten-to-midnight eye
with a flip of
her king-size special.

Later,
by the dawn's early blight,
we huddled in dark ardor,
mixing egos.

--Charles Shaw