

Incorporating Malone-Stranger Review

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THREE WOMEN RUNNING IN THE COUNTRY

i

The ground slopes westwards.  
She is preceded by a man  
who bends to the east,  
his white galoshes  
are firmly on the land.  
She runs behind him,  
her knees knock as she runs,  
her left breast falls to the west  
her right is concealed  
by an anorak made in the east.  
She holds her arms up scarecrow style,  
her running resembles a kite  
as it bobs on the grounds lightly,  
before it comes to rest.  
Out of the copse behind her  
countless frightened birds emerge.  
The otherwise empty sky  
she's managed to fill with her running.

ii

She runs from the north.  
Her small feet are hard  
and can bear to run on

freshly cut corn stubs.  
This one can run fast  
with her hands in her pockets.  
Her rain-coat is wide open,  
it reveals an olympic body  
which not just any man could love.  
The meager breasts and shoulders  
make her streamlined I suppose,  
help her speed and her speed  
can save her from being ignored.  
She runs with a storm breaking,  
she rains down the valley,  
she thunders past the hedgerows.  
Keep your eyes closed as she passes  
and please please, don't stand near trees.

iii

This woman is dark  
and fills my life with heartbeats.  
She runs down a hill  
in a southerly direction  
wearing a striped dress  
which is torn in several places.  
The thrust of her body  
travelling so urgently  
is almost unbearable.  
She leaves a breathless man behind her,  
he is unable to catch her up,  
his working boots are heavy  
and unsteady in the heather.  
I dearly hope she is running to me.  
The sky is black and contains lightning,  
if she reaches me in time  
I will tell her lies about myself  
and take her home forever.

FOR THE KEEPER OF THE LONG HOUSE

Each morning I am torn from the earth  
to work for the man who makes skyscrapers.

This is the Moon of Wild Rice  
and still I have nothing saved  
for when the Cold Moons come.

Each night when returning to my home  
as the sun begins to fall  
I pray to the North for redemption.