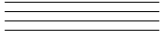


T O R S O M A D R I G A L



L I S A R U S S S P A A R

I admit I pine for it, the belly vulnerable  
& all that goes with that pagoda hall,  
shoulder to hips, a sweet disclose of brute  
my nose traces like stock lineage to its root.

*Torso* whose root is in the Latin “thyrsus,”  
stalk, trunk, so in my night-dreams *vegetus*,  
obviously a tree is never just a tree.

Why should this matter to anyone but me,

except the heart it houses feeds a watershed.

Not just literally. *Please, watch your head*

I might say to me, mentally tracking the route  
I’ve just conjured, & not just for me – resolute,

displaced by lust – but for you, those my claim  
on him forgets. And not for us, the altar set aflame.