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ADVICE

“If you’ve fallen for someone, it is nothing
unusual—it happens to the most calculating
as well as any ordinary bum—but *you’re in deep shit, man!*”

he says with the softness of a malevolent grin
He lights a Marlboro as if to stop the ambush of words
from his bottled heart. He’s on a Hamlet mode,
the invisible skull telling it like it is,
& in this telling he eases *that* pain—
O let sleeping dogs lie?—so malignant like a bad tooth’s,
but as in the earth’s tectonic shifts
that rock islands & continents,
this pain is strangely dulled in every beating of the heart.

[Move, move, move! Or you die]

He sees me staring at his San Miguel.
Quick is he to signal that, like the palm of his hand,
he knows the story’s semaphore. He, Kilroy, has been there.

What is there to say?

The history of loss is everyman’s common history.

[& God Almighty doesn’t seem to care.]

“O yes,” he adds, “that cruel rap is just another sign,
a microdot on Yahweh’s nose

whose designs we mortals never will understand.

& so it goes: the street wisdom of flaneurs,
eyes properly grim & sad, hands clutching at straws
like pistols cocked at some dangerous guys;
that life, brief & linear, is a complex plot of truths
hidden under layers of sand & rocks...

She, he points out, is a “girl from Ipanema”
who moves, o slowly moves, out of his radar’s eye.
This, panero, is your given: How shall you grieve?

Is it beyond the alchemy of texts?