

The Cabinet Of Kuniyoshi Kaneko

Momus

Leopards prowl the studios of the Duc de Berry's great chateau
Where Cocteau's beast rehearses Beauty's rape
Lewis Carroll marks his diary with a small white stone
As Kuniyoshi Kaneko prepares to paint

Listen to the shells my darling, what you hear is not the sea
But whispering, malicious human hearts
Adults who don't wish to know the Duc de Berry's great chateau
And hate the world of childhood and of art

We who paint or photograph to stop your dying in its path
And fix you in the permanence of spring
Can't stop the prattlers prattling
The rattlesnakes who, rattling, see ugliness in every living thing
See ugliness in every living thing

The calculated insolence of little girls in sailor suits
Whose faces seem to say more than they know
Appetites and ornaments for the libertine in all of us
From the cabinet of Kuniyoshi Kaneko

Follow to the studio where Alice Liddell plays the roles
Of tousle-headed naked gypsy girls
The Reverend Charles L. Dodgson from the darkness of his camera
Preserves her for himself and for the world

Children torn by cruel desires, the handiwork of murderers
Who hack their little bodies to the bone
Somehow live to tell the tale, astonishingly fit and well
They couple in the fabulous chateau

We who paint or photograph to stop your dying in its path
And fix you in the permanence of spring
Can't stop the prattlers prattling
The rattlesnakes who, rattling, see ugliness in every living thing
In every lovely living thing

A looking glass is not a world
A painted girl is not a girl
In games there can be no forbidden things
In life remain considerate, in art the Devil's advocate
Why deny that Pegasus has wings
In life remain considerate, in art the Devil incarnate
Why deny the siren when it sings?
In games there must be no forbidden things

So watch the wall my darling while the gentlemen go by
And mark your diary with a small white stone
Little hearts of marzipan and lacquer work from old Japan
In the cabinet of Kuniyoshi Kaneko