Come Home Lady

for Natalie

Tim Seibles

Without you, the seconds limp
like sad millipedes
in hard shoes. Minutes sag
like bad lectures
in the late afternoon. Like old men
out of smokes, the hours
itch and fidget
but soon

your smile—that shard of shooting star,
that softly candling chandelier
will take my room. Your hips
slick wheels for a hot race!
When I see you, my soul
is a sous chef—my heart

rubs itself a zest
worthy of your mouth.
Your kiss: April clarinet
for this grim November, big
Orange Crush for my
dust-bunny life.

O, let me be that one
come-hither morsel, that
savory flavor and shine
on your lips: what's sorrow
but a grown man
stuffed in the trunk
of his worry?

Your legs! Lady,
your legs—long as an Alaskan
summer day! That easy gait:
your velvet thighs, your deeply
wise and wicked ways—

when I see you
we will dance like bumper cars
on rubber streets, like lazy ducks
on crazy lakes, like hippos and hobos
in toe-shoes!

Tim Seibles was born in Philadelphia in 1955. He was the Poet Laureate of Virginia from 2016 to 2018. His poems engage many aspects of life, from the romantic to the sociopolitical to the mystical. He is a former National Endowment for the Arts fellow and Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center fellow. His seven books include *Hurdy-Gurdy, Hammerlock, Buffalo Head Solos*, and *Fast Animal*, a finalist for the 2012 National Book Award, winner of the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and the Pen Oakland Josephine Miles Award for Poetry. *One Turn Around the Sun*, an extensive examination of his immediate family was released in 2017. In the last year, Tim has also written poems for two monuments. One in Norfolk, dedicated to the *Norfolk 17* who began the fearful process of integrating Virginia public schools, the other for an installation in Dallas, Texas, that addresses the many race-based lynchings that took place there. His poems have appeared in several anthologies. Among them: *In Search of Color Everywhere, Seriously Funny, Uncommon Core, This is The Honey,* and *Villanelles*. Seibles' works have also been featured in *Best American Poetry* 2010, 2013, 2023. His latest collection, *Voodoo Libretto: New & Selected Poems* was published by Etruscan Press in 2020.

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