

VERSO

You see it all, xxx I know it. Cloud-mover, did you
give everyone a place to hide, every creeping
thing but me, or is this body my hidey-hole?
Are the trees here to give me shade or shelter
when it's hot? (Am I allowed to sleep with the busy squirrels) ^{iffy}
This is my body, ruffling my tail,
my throat trying to chirp something similar
to praise, you see it? My lips move,
I make them purse, when I see the manes'
flare, like I'm tired, a yawn when I say it.
These tight husbands of the plain,

Soft-whisperer, say it, "lion."
In the damp den, I saw tail whips, you
see them, too, bundled up, lapping cave
water like a puddle of ~~bright~~ morning
gold. See how they cuddle the furry
young ones? See how the littler lions like the hide
when they're playing around? There went one,
hopped out at another, when I peered around the corner.

(You), in the grove, all ^{xxx} day, xxx ^{the long day}, marking the world,
when I put my hand over my eyes, I'm not
hiding. I'm just teasing you, but you
^{xxx} (don't) get fooled, do you? The sun won't xxx ^{keep} (out)
xxx of my eyes, the burning surface of a blade
of wheat grass, ^{of} date palm, ^{and} xxx thyme. See me,

the sweat on my arms, and [^]all the while brushing
fur off my skin, my muscle, Lover,
word sodden, not like the lion's,
but capable of so much strain.

RECTO

Allow me to sleep, there with the bushy squirrels.

What does night bring the day doesn't
already own? I walked through marshlands,
through water weeds, and found the Tree
standing, humming just as much as it does there.

The other night I didn't touch, scramble
over the roots, but stared, this Tree,
Morning-Grifter, ~~and~~ its inaccessibility
and me, the distance between us pulling tighter,

and cleaner I felt for once like you weren't / pushing

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

My sight escapes me sometimes, the things

I want to see in the darkness, the *not*

there before. Head-Turner, Heart-Wrangler,

Water-Weeder, wherever You are where I go,

I went down into the marshland and felt the presence
of a multitude of bright stars.