

Two Poems by David Solway

David Solway

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On Reading *Harry Potter*

For reasons that have very little to do with literature and far more to with
me clinging to the plot as I first imagined it, Hermione ended up with Ron.

—JK Rowling

There's much to be said for plucky Harry
meandering in vales, grots and alleys
chumming with the girl he didn't marry.
Here we mangle in certain valleys,
Napa, Silicon, each diminished clone
in an age of failed transpositions.
The lovely Hermione is now a crone
engaged in debilitating missions—
which leaves us only wine and some phony
gimmickry to negate that reeky, ill-
favoured surrogate for Hermione
deep in the valley of Ezekiel.
You lucked out, Harry. Now nothing atones
for the rasping silicates of her bones.

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Asemia

A sign is an entity which, in itself, does not have an actual itself.
—Marco Giovenale, “signs of life of signs”

Two bright spots of tantalizing light
on the comet-pocked surface of Ceres
have sent astronomers into a tizzy:
ice-geysers maybe, or awakening volcanoes?

The shadow-flicker of wings on a scrim of snow
signals a presence where none is visible.

A young woman strolls through the mall,
face shining in the glow of her Android,
almost perfect in the blankness of an inexplicable serenity.

A stone farmhouse with a water mill
appears in the lower right;
a skin-like river winds beyond a featureless coppice of trees
into a grisaille landscape, vast and flat.

One hovers between reading and looking.
Crazy Zhang Xu brings the Tang
into the *Codex Seraphinianus*,
writing that doesn't have any writing in it.

A flashing light on an obscure country road,
a cloud of changing colors,
signifies...what?

What is being written?
Marks on a paper-thin surface.