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Perfect Landscapes, Rich Branches of Blossom

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“PERFECT LANDSCAPES, RICH BRANCHES OF
BLOSSOM”

It is your world to make
and you choose to fill
rooms with necessary objects:
a Chinese vase, a painting of a woman
arranging flowers by moonlight,
a book of poetry by Basho.

A rose leans, revealing its moist stamen
within a halo of fragrance.
Why not a Spanish guitar
leaning in a sunny corner?
Why not music: Villa Lobos
or Rampal and his sentimental flute?

Your women are French, Oriental,
your men: artists, dancers, poets.
Don't you see? Even love
is a luxury. And now you have
cactus blooming in the sun room,
an oriole chirping from the flowering plum.

Someone is quoting Garcia Lorca.
A man wearing white silk,
a woman in a dress of pale cotton:
they sit at a wicker table,
on wicker chairs, looking away,
thinking in image, not word.

In this luxury of sun
they hold crystal goblets
filled with a glittering rose
or thin blood. They kiss,

the nature of their desire revealed
by his restraint, her surrender.

Later, when they make love,
she recalls Nijinsky, turning,
his eyes, his shoulders, softening.
He thinks of Degas: his girlish ballerina
practicing: imagining each smooth stroke
along the flushed inner thigh.