



FLORIDA KEYS, II
JOHN PERLMAN

- 1 PALMETTO DR
- 2 CUNNINGHAM LN
- 3 MACS CT
- 4 HAMMOCK DR
- 5 BAILEY RD
- 6 NATHALIE RD
- 7 LORD CT

Southern Pines
Virgil S. Lowe

FLORIDA KEYS II

John Perlman

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constant winds curl palm

fronds in the human pose of

unrequited love

green house
on a tidal canal the
rental agent admonishes

cleanliness :

Don't feed the jellyfish

they're the pulse
of immensity

Two green
iguana pad
slowly west along
the concrete dock
alight in the wash
of sunset

where we see

pilgrimage

parade

processional

promenade

Scurry off

By the canal
landscaped
seagrapes
in mounds
mimicking
visages of
terrible
hilarity
in green
& orange
leaves
oriented
toward the
strongest
light

In a treadmill dream
I stand before the class
imploring fearful of failure
ineffectual I wake with a
start to where I am

an old man
attending sunrise
on an island in Florida
dove song gull cries tides
departing palm fronds
gesturing wildly in
a freshening wind
a faded bamboo
windchime
with few
notes
left

Biking Big Pine Key

In full

sun open sky

bi-sected by a

vulture's shadow

dark mark on

Passover

Fonts of analogues
like hydrangeas & galaxies
like coconuts comets & hail
like the elegant similes
that carry key to
keyhole
like
fifty years'
wife & husband
clicking tight

At windows of
the house across
the canal backlit by
motion sensing lamps
flaring silhouettes of
palms monstrous
arachnids in
a gale fronds
flailing dark
for dark
straining
at the
roots

,

Davit
over the
canal assumes
its evening form as
pewter star-archer
a full-drawn bow
the spell it casts
on the vacant
house a
haunting
spell
by night
a light in a
second-story
window goes
dark

|

The strangler fig's
seeds have ripened
in a week to soft beads
of amethyst strewn across
gravel and the concrete walk

small black-winged birds
iguanas in the shade
miniscule deer

feast on
the purple
sweetness

& do not
flee us

Easter

Cricket's' faith
the land holds
higher than the tides
their songs' descant
against the winds the
winds throughout the
night persist scouring
low islands in a
shallow sea
ringed by
mangroves
rooted in the
unrelenting
waves

Porch Event

Hawk swoops
to the walk
freezes

Anole bursts
into a desperate
dash

Hawk springs
flared wings
talons forward

Our grandson's
aphorism :

It's all good

"Glenn's Trail"

A path cleared
forty years ago
on the abandoned
bed of Flagler's railroad
hand-made signs identifying
flora a Gumbo Limbo tree
seven-year apple the poison
tree (a scattering of rotten ties)
a datepalm (anole sounding dry
leaves) Key deer in the
underbrush readying
to give birth while
off the trail at the
Spanish Harbor-side
another makeshift Cuban
boat has wrecked ashore
most of the placards are
erased by the last two
years we suppose that
Glenn has passed
tho walkers dp
still come

KEY WEST

the steel pan man
praises his new
pan for its
deep sustain
"worthy of
Rudolph
Charles
'the Hammer' "

which he
plays at
my request

a small girl
helps to fill
his jar

•

the endangered
evolved miniature
Key deer feast
on the seagrapes
early April blossoms

•

No Name Key

Slides beneath the flats
under the heavy freight of new
surnames on dead end side-streets

the ranged stations of mockingbirds
denominate the flooded thickets of
mangroves unburdening air
with effervescent

Hallelujahs

Big Pine Key

They've planted clumps of ornamental
papyrus at the edge of a fishless fishpond
filled by yesterday's deluge

Tiny frogs emerge

& croak all night in the indigenous dark

Great barques cruise north along the Nile
eons gone

Scrolls appear intact out of
howling sandstorms scholars of hieroglyphs
commence to chant

texts of beautiful

turquoise painted paper poets' songs
from failed desiccated dynasties

Frogs crawl out from fossil corals
in squalls sweeping
east beyond the Gulf

Schooner's

Old bar singer's
pre-break patter
distracts while he

empties the jar
folds the bills
& slips them in

his shirt pocket
steps down from
the stage onto

the wharf in
Key West

~ for Michael McCloud

Branches of
the strangler fig
scrape against the
screen porch in night
winds rattling in the dark
like a myriad of minute
phantom castanets
far removed
from
home

Farewells

until we return

the years unreel no

likelihoods. We

mourn the

sunsets

like failing

loved ones

evermore

depart

