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TEXT poetry

Gershon Maller

Palimpsest

Would it be true, if under the influence of Pentothal, everything I said about truth serum was false. It might vex the patience of the avid reader if I asked, how would you know? My body resisted the trip I shot into my vein, as my truth, which flows straight from the heart, and the serum, each moved by force of erasure, traced over the trace over the trace over the trace in the blood left by the other on arterial walls. It was under the influence of that reliable sera that I report the following incident recorded in my journal. X was a tourist met near Oświęcim, a town in southern Poland. He was taking a selfie outside the gates of a deserted holiday camp, below a metal sign that read *Über Macht Frei*. His face, lit by autumnal flare of late afternoon as the sun slid below distant hills, was angelic. He saw me among gaunt arbour shadows and despite my waxen skin and blue striped pyjamas, embraced me with a flourish of genuine warmth: ‘Bless you, my friend. The woke shall inherit the Earth’. ‘Indeed,’ I replied, ‘I have no doubt that we will.’ He turned and walked swiftly to his limousine. I wondered if his feet touched the ground. I waved him farewell until darkness closed over strawberry taillights vanishing through forest.

Melbourne based poet and academic editor, Gershon Maller, is author of Night Breathing and Nights in the Gardens of Spain. His poetry has appeared in Going Down Swinging, Meanjin, Overland, Poetry Australia, StylusLit, Unusual Works, TEXT, The Australian Jewish News, The Sydney Morning Herald (AU), and The Muse Apprentice Guild and The Wallace Stevens Journal (US), among others.
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