

Cornering the Sivvy Real Estate Market

by Crystal Hurdle

Prologue)

people have been thieving her hair for years
the braid now thin as a horsetail
--the plant not the animal
a consortium!

buy everything!
never mind the piddling lots of a few letters
a handmade card or two
a carbon for luck
her Japanese-y outfit
her fishing rod

real estate is where it's at
and land land most of all
her footsteps created fault lines
even deep within the earth

Dorm rooms at Smith
West House at Yaddo
her bedroom (and his) on the first floor
her study on the 3rd
but brief visits
9 Willow St. in Boston
these sites of little consequence
and I have to consider my resources
levels within levels
but cornering the market is important

1)
worth considering:
3 Chalcot Square with its puny bathroom
hard for two to have used it at once
Sylvia and Ted
Assia and David
Assia and Ted

gassy grassy
acrobatic in the tub
with rose wallpaper swatches to Aurelia
still fresh and new in the archives
but is it leasehold or freehold?
no real land

2)

possibly:
the flat at 23 Fitzroy Road with its two levels
still faintly reeking of gas
A gyre of Yeats and Plath
an ever-connecting loop swoop
spirit heads on tap
like Nick's popped balloon
like something out of the original *Zoolander*
everyone wants a cameo, a guest spot, and no charge!
again, just part of a building
the bad synecdoche of real estate

3)

more likely:
26 Elmwood Road in Wellesley
a destination for visiting scholars
rent it out for the night?
could whittle down the mortgage with the short-term rentals
rent to own Sylvia, or as near as
 could sleep in the same bedroom where Plath had her dreams
battling with Aurelia's
no room of her own for that girl
what hatred develops in the crucible of a shared room?
get caught up in the same dark cloud?
Esther wanted to choke her bobby-pinned mother
surely we all long for matricide at some time
 a literary Airbnb
but the clientele too limited?
and doesn't everyone want Sivvy for free?
don't you?
 maybe make it a comfy bed and breakfast within driving distance of Boston and
those still working but bedraggled swan boats
of Massachusetts General

should you need a job or a procedure
abortion? electric shock?
how convenient!
include a hopped-up car in the price of the rental
good central point for visits to Harvard
where Ted not Sylvia had a poetry reading
and even close enough to Northampton in a pinch
 with that rental stream secure,
buy their apartment, third floor, of 337 Elm St.,
Northampton, Massachusetts
still with its tall dresser
in which her bras would have resided
cup in cup?
folded in half like valentines?
before Marie Condo, oops, Kondo
she had so little
let's hope all her scanties sparked joy
for us, the places still spark joy
positively electrifying!
 room in the Wellesley fruit cellar/crawl space
for a blow-up mattress
come lie with me
come die with me
complete with jelly belly pill bottle replaced
after each guest's departure
 or for writerly retreats
one could
 you could try your hand at poetry
pot boilers lit crit
in the same breezeway
 I've got the bricks
patio stone hopscotch
a typewriter permanently affixed to a patio table in all weathers
I'll try to find on eBay
a duplicate of what was on auction at Bonham's

4)
the rain in Spain falls mainly on

should I locate Widow Manga's house
or the one where they stayed for longer
Benidorm then too ethnic
Alicante now a cruise ship destination
resort rooms with rain shower and Jacuzzi tub
where Sylvia and Ted had once stayed in slatternly conditions
no, I don't think I'll bother with Spain
so many shared bathrooms
even at 55 Eltisley
filthy toilet seats and smeared taps
sponge bag with toiletries travels daintily
from private to public

5)
many elsewheres

Ted an expedient colonial
her Heptonstall grave in grey Yorkshire
plantation displacement
his space, not hers
profit, return, rent
what value to put on decomposition

I will seek to buy it up and up
too teeny for a writerly retreat
or a pod hotel room
I will erect a wall of niches
so death leaseholders can have a nice view
--St. Thomas' Church
Stoodley Pike
even Mytholmroyd on a clear day--
while anchored in what's left of Sylvia
sternum, fibia, oh, the hair!

true fans' cremains—for a price—
can be tucked around her leaky coffin
I plan to plant more than the Golden Lotus

aren't we all dying to be with Sylvia?
was that a hand?

be honest
you with the blonde braid?

location location location
is everything in real estate

6)
best of all
we surely agree:
Court Green
and the acreage!
vintage flea market find to get the same wallpaper,
that carpet
could recast the innards in duodenum red, vaginal so fiery
Carol informing Ehor Boyanowsky
there is to be no photography
privacy or just withholding? canny
hoping later for the highest bidder
that would be me

let them pant with whetted appetite
not instant gratification for the Plath or Hughes estates
well, Carol, you'll be gone soon enough
and I will buy it up
the garden, the cottage, the driveway, the would-be daffodils, the timber, the beams,
and the motte, too,
the air, the very air you now breathe under my sufferance
let's not forget the air space
not that I'm thinking skyscraper, at least, not now
must busy myself learning the UK building codes
but property both ground-level and high
might take over the cottage for personal use
rent out the house
to what lengths will I/you (who?) go?

Epilogue)
in Vancouver, we're densification-crazy
a Sivvy subdivision?
a laneway house for each of her kaleidoscopic selves?
a Disneyland ride with slow choo-choo trains on tracks

suitable for kiddies
but I want none of that
I will hibernate in that strange room
the dark enclosed space off the kitchen
miser counting my property deeds
shuffling my paid-off mortgages
where I still will reside
close myself off from the rabble
like at a high-security bank
arrow on arrow off
those who believe themselves to be fans
I'm giving you notice
I'm putting you on notice
no, not they, no, not you
I am manager of
I am owner of my Sylvia
I want none of this fucking literary sharing
I have cornered the market
It's my house now