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# Opulence

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BENJAMIN WALKER

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*Opulence*

An old eucalyptus, girth greater than three brothers' arms,  
with branches thicker than my waist and curved like spouts.  
Cosmo and coleus, long-legged cleareyed beauty  
standing behind fire-painted shaman crowned in feather plumes.  
Clannish chives, austere, fastidious as butlers  
forgetting themselves only once, when suddenly surprised  
by eruptions of soft puffs, halos of pure lavender.  
Smooth-skinned paperbarked guava limbs  
sinewy wood and crisp, ridged leaves  
so much plant in themselves that all their fruit  
its yellow hide and mouth-pink insides  
seemed wonderfully extraneous, small globes of earthly grace.  
Pineapple: bristling dragon's nest, guarding a golden egg.  
Slender loquat, whole trunk swaying with my weight  
whose dark spry leaves I would parse to reach  
the furry robe of down which rubs away  
revealing pastel-orange flesh.  
And just to vex the eye, one gawky nameless tropic tree  
whose kind I doubt persists on earth: leaves zigzag-folded  
like a paper fan but big as of tennis rackets, brittle to the touch  
and shading their strange offspring, fruits large as an infant's head  
layered tight like artichokes, red-brown like lushest mud  
which when ripely rotten I'd hear dropping to the ground  
with dull stentorian whumps like a deflated tetherball  
as if with voices to announce: The grand gamut of life outpours  
its opulence of oddity, gushing pure eccentric self.