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# Light, Lines, Points, Planes

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# *Light, Lines, Points, Planes*

(for Howard Nemerov)

R. K. MEINERS

## 1

Here in the quiet night we bend above  
the desk at what we clerics call 'our work.'  
In this narrowing circle of light  
we track the lines creeping on their way  
out to the margin's vanishing point;  
or, conspiring with the hand and eye,  
the nervous mind must pull them back again  
to find the starting point in this central light,  
this nothing, that all surrounds, where we play  
we're Faustus trying to find the will to say  
*in deinem Nichts hoff' ich das All zu finden.*

## 2

We have this paper, then. It lies there,  
slightly off the square from the table's edge,  
plane bordering planes, lines cutting lines.  
Through this illumined sphere run planes and lines  
in their silent war of geometries.  
Below us the fragile floor, and on it  
rests the paper, and the table, and the chair,  
and our restless selves, just above the surge  
of this shifting plane, this not so solid earth  
which is the only place we have to rest  
to draw these nightly tangents to our sphere.

3

Above us in the waiting night the roof's  
intersecting planes confer and begin  
their mutual climb into the known universe.  
Known? Yes. This the game we work out here,  
at this point of light, in these quiet movements  
in the night, restless in a universe  
crowded with potential resting points:  
the game of words and laws and perspectives.  
Here the mind presides and thinks the eye, busy  
sawing space and time into crosscut vectors  
and intervals, our routine cosmic jigsaw.

4

That sounds too light. We need more light. *Mehr licht*  
on these planes and lines. Our planes. Our lines.  
Huddled here, jointed, holding this bony sphere  
dreaming of hue and tone stretched from *here* to *there*.  
Ask again: what are we doing here  
in our usual place, the apex of this cone  
of light, this point of lines, point of planes,  
where each goes straight out from where we wait  
until it curves back through infinity?  
Here. At this table. With this paper. Now.  
Mind and eye and hand poised in this space.

5

We say: in this sphere lies the seed of light  
that grows in lines into the fabled tree  
of our pictured world. Or: here perspective  
rushes into this place for us to find;  
the indivisible plane divides and  
All rushes inward toward its infinite.  
All these rhythms! I am drunk with metamorphoses.  
And the germ still somehow grows, into forms  
and words and fables and the resurrection  
of our dark loves and the rebirth of the world.

6

Sitting in this circle of light I dreamed  
the night and the comfortable darkness,  
where I sat musing under a fir tree  
in the autumn sunlight, circled by black holes,  
implosions, counter space, negative distance,  
unthinkable darkness beyond the stars.  
We live in these polarities, they in us.  
Sitting here I dreamed I drew Persephone  
sketching her image in points and lines  
that I called *future, past, far, and near*.  
Was it my dream, or was she dreaming me?