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Quietly, Surely

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Quietly, Surely

Richmond, you are not
merely these monuments gardens still
twilight, nor even this single person jotting
nothing busily upon the wrinkled measure of time
nor the tune that plays independent from thought
in cafés, that bellow sensation nonsensically
nor the faces which sit and drink on the boulevard,
laughing, who converse smoke smile, you are
not only a million little ideas rocketing to the edges
of evening; these things you are and you are all

who is vibrant ephemeral living: you are
the consciousness of our voices friendships confirmation,
you are the gesture by which we express to one another all
which we hold more dear and fragile than yes,
you are the single place we contest our clumsy fate

on roofs barstools rocks we are
peeking, mulling, testing the idea—
when never and forever meet and we are not the same,
but we continue youthful futilely ignorant

quietly above everything the strolling upward ghost
of Robert E. Lee strongly surely walks

By Vanessa Loftus