

TO MERTON & CHUANG TZU

by **Thomas Del Prete**

bent over at the end of
a particularly hot summer morning's run,
I draw up momentarily to see
the escaping shadowy figure
whom I had been dimly chasing.

what dumb slow surprise struck
as my own image I surmised
in the fleeting shimmer of the day,
and what pique of sad dismay to see
the distance between me
and my chief competitor.

I thought briefly backwards
and saw myself not satisfied,
and wondered if
I would ever more than know
that it was myself
I am;

and then a bit of conjuring (not hard)
and I saw you both
in your laughing stillness,
and you waved and disappeared;

I smiled, and felt my lungs
panting for the warm air.

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