

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Alessandra Bava: Five Poems

Alessandra Bava · Wednesday, August 6th, 2014

Alessandra Bava lives and works in the Eternal city. She holds an MA in American Literature and she manages her own translation agency. She is the author of two bilingual chapbooks NOCTURNE (Edizioni Pulcinoelefante, 2013) and GUERRILLA BLUES (Edizioni Ensemble, 2012) both published in Italy. Her first US published chapbook, THEY TALK ABOUT DEATH, is now available from Blood Pudding Press. A forthcoming chapbook will be released by Dancing Girl Press.

Enjoy the poems below, and then read our interview with Alessandra Bava by clicking [HERE](#)

Never Thirty-Seven

There you walk into the hazy streets of Montparnasse, not yet thirty-six,
Modi, as they called you, *maudit*, the accursed, spitting Lautréamont
and Dante, recalling Akhmatova who tiptoed to your charm. The blazing,
dark mane of Jeanne setting the Seine on fire, as you hastily recite by heart
La Vita Nuova. The new life she is bearing, maybe a son this time.

A half-smile at the corner of this icy winter day makes your face glow as
you dance your Last Waltz with consumption. Her long neck, her fiery,
young smile takes your breath away. "Take me home, Jeanne," you say.
She nods. She leads you through the dim alleys and upstairs. "Paris no
more," you think, as you watch the Boulevard for the last time.

It's dawning at Rue de la Grande Chaumière 8. Among empty bottles and
sardine tins Art is delirious. An Angel of Death sits at the bedside with shiny
eyes that are birds of prey rocking her lover. Her voice hums a feathery lullaby.
Wherever Art is going she will follow suit, pregnant and barefoot from the balcony

in due time.

(for Amedeo Modigliani and Jeanne Hébuterne)

St. Baudelaire

I dream of you at night
entangled in the spires of evil,

tied to a living pillar in the
profane sanctuary of Poetry—

the spores of wild flowers in
your nostrils, the ecstasy of

“the Word” painted on your face
& slowly dripping from your

St. Sebastian-like wounds
in sanguine lines.

I twist the arrows in your flesh,
I dip my fingers in your scars

as you spit out your own
poisonous mythology

into my soul.

Milk And Bread

I gave birth to poetry
and to you with
distant eyes – in order
not to love too much
your tiny hands that
would not write yet.

I left you in the arms
of February winds –
a window flung open,
two mugs of milk and
some bread on a dish
at your bedside.

*(Sylvia Plath's farewell to Frieda and Nicholas.
Early morning February 11, 1963.)*

Exquisite Corpse

for Henry Miller

The morning ritual starts
as Henry walks into the
café and sits close to me

holding the cup in his
hand, demanding the pen
to add line no. 2 right

after mine. André Breton
has taught us how to
write these poems.

My first line is the head,
you add the neck then I
pen the torso.

In the end, we stare at
our beautiful corpse of
a poem.

The Parisian light envelopes us
and the terrace, as you repeat
the mantra the Surrealists

pronounced every time they
met at 54 rue du Château
“Le cadavre exquis boira

le vin nouveau.”* We nod
our heads sipping the fat
belfries of St. Sulpice,

watching the world go by.

* “The exquisite corpse will drink the new wine.”

Vision

Your voice breathes
into my open page.
A cry echoes in this wood of viscera, as a startled
rose-window
crumbling in tiny shards over my
wide branches.

As I carve my own poem, I hear the
apse rustle.
The vivid stained glass windows on my bark shake with might.

The sap oozes.

The nave collapses and I am left to contemplate the

Apocalypse

of the

Word.

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