

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Alexis Rhone Fancher: Two Poems

Alexis Rhone Fancher · Thursday, October 24th, 2019

ACCUSTOMED TO DEAD KIDS (sung to Lerner & Lowe's "Accustomed To Her Face" from *My Fair Lady*.)

1.

I've grown accustomed to dead kids,
they almost make the day begin.
I've grown accustomed to the latest
locked down campus on TV,

the thoughts, the prayers,
the *no one really cares*

are second nature to me now,
like breathing out and breathing in.

I've grown accustomed to the sound of
gunfire zinging through the air,

the kid who shoots his classmates in his
impotent despair.

I've grown accustomed to their screams,
the ending of their dreams,
accustomed to dead kids.

2.

I've grown accustomed to the sobs,
of parents frantic as they call.

I've grown accustomed to the terror
when their children don't respond,

the pleas, the cries,
unsaid goodbyes

are second nature to me now,
like breathing out and breathing in.

I've grown accustomed to the anguish,
when they learn their child is dead,

hit in the aorta of their heart
or in their head.

I've grown accustomed to the thought:
guns matter, kids do not,
accustomed to dead kids.

3.

I've grown accustomed to the lies,
the gutless thoughts and hollow prayers.

I've grown accustomed to the rants
the NRA and *no we can'ts*,

the maimed, the dead,
the platitudes instead

are second nature to me now,
like breathing out and breathing in.

I've grown accustomed to deceit,
– blame backpacks, Ritalin, or God,

never will the truth be told,
it's just too goddamn hard.

I've grown accustomed to the game,
politicians with no shame,
accustomed to dead kids.

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From *THE DEAD KID POEMS*, (KYSO Flash Press, 2019)

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UNSOLICITED ADVICE TO A FACEBOOK MOM

Stop plastering the site with photos
of your strapping boy on the cliff
of manhood, pitching a no-hitter,
practicing guitar,

don't publicize his tuxedo'd beauty
posing with his prom date,
or family jaunts to look at colleges for the fall.

Better to shield him from happenstance,
mistaken identity, the evil eye;
protect him from what you won't imagine:

a drive-by.
a street race.
an overdose.
a dare.

Pass an egg above his body while he's sleeping.
Make the *mano fico* over him with your fist.
Sew small mirrors into his clothes to reflect misfortune.
Tie a red string around his wildness.

When someone gives him a compliment, spit over your shoulder three times.
Then touch wood.

Stop flaunting your boy's shining face,
his sweetness, how he still
lets you kiss him goodnight.

Listen to me:
Like you, I was once besotted.

Don't tempt the gods.

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From *THE DEAD KID POEMS*, (KYSO Flash Press, 2019)

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