Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Charlie Brice: Two Poems

Charlie Brice · Thursday, October 7th, 2021

Dyslexia

Suzi's long straight hair,
the color of heather,
draped over soft
seductive shoulders,
her 14-year-old body
snug in the shift tightly
wrapped around her;

she introduced me to
Dylan's folksy drone.
We listened to Bob's wild
laughter during his 115th dream,
imagined him in the basement
needing eleven dollar bills
when he only had ten.

Suzi was cool, fab, gear!
My brain almost bled
while I obsessed on what
I'd write to her on the back
of my tiny photo from our
sophomore yearbook.

How to capture, in a
pithy phrase, not only
my erotic yearnings,
but the respect I had
for her intellect, the
silent dignity of her…

I couldn't finish. My
adolescent vocabulary
failed. My pounding heart
pummeled my resolve.

Overwhelmed by impulse
I quickly scribbled, *Suzi,*
you are such a sweat girl,
and handed my photo to her.

I watched her flaxen hair
jerk and quiver, listened
to her snap her tongue
against her teeth, the *tsk*
of death. *I'm such a sweat*
girl? She said incredulously.

I watched her walk away,
down the locker laden
hallway of our high school
and wondered why,
in God's name, I could
never learn to spell.

*

Writer's Block

So new for me. Usually
I suffer from logorrhea,
not its nasty little cousin.

What a strange discipline
writing poetry is. You
create a good one

and then poof! You may
never write another. You
can't blame the weather

for your dry spell or
the pandemic for your
empty quiver—only

your skimpy imagination,
your failure to order
life's scree, find your

soul in a nearby riffle,
or appreciate the composition
of a neighbor's coursed ashlar.

Inside there's a stickle
about word choice,
punctuation, or whether

anyone would find your
work a tiny bit interesting.
All of which adds to your

hebetude until, desperate,
you consult the back flap
of your notebook where

you've listed words like
scree, riffle, ashlar,
stickle and hebetude,

words you can throw into
a poem—literary lifejackets
that rescue stranded bards,

keeps them afloat, prevents
their drowning in self-
criticism and doubt.

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Purchase *The Broad Grin of Eternity* by Charlie Brice

Photo credit: Judy

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