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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Donna Hilbert: Three Poems

Donna Hilbert · Wednesday, June 27th, 2018

### He Who Takes my Sorrow Away

*He who takes my sorrow away*  
my friend has named her lover.  
Who wouldn't wish for this,  
if only for an hour or two,  
that sorrow might  
be lifted with the skirt,  
discarded like a soiled shirt.

\*

### Mrs. Pulver, Landlady

*Let your knees be neighbors.*  
Mrs. Pulver's mother never  
taught her that, so, when she came  
to get the rent, I couldn't help  
but see her panties  
and the tops of her pull-up hose.  
She liked to have a cup of tea  
and tell me what I'd need  
to know, now that I was grown,  
about to have a baby of my own.  
She'd repeat the story  
of her terrible wreck,  
gas-pedal stuck,  
the zoom down the hill,  
legs broken, pelvis crushed.  
"If it happens to you, girl,  
what will you do?"  
*Mrs. Pulver, whose pelvis*  
*is pulverized*  
became a song in my brain:  
*duck and cover*  
*kill the engine*

*don't lose the baby  
down the drain.*

\*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Seattle**

Look, Dear Heart, it's me  
in winter cap and coat,  
dressed, for once, for weather,  
posed in front of the old apartment  
where we were always cold  
and often hungry. Meager haunt  
of sauce-less spaghetti,  
of peanut-butter and day-old bread.  
You were a student here, studying  
into the night while I read novels  
and felt abandoned and unloved.  
Sundays, I bawled on the phone  
to Mother and you called your dad  
to talk sports, laugh about my cooking.  
Here is where I lay on the sofa  
aflame with fever, where a punk  
intruder punched your front teeth loose.  
Here is where we fought everyday,  
made love every night.  
Here is where we brought  
our first two babies home.  
Here is where we mapped  
our sparkling future.  
Here is where we couldn't wait to flee.  
Now, the babies are grown  
and you, Dear Heart, are gone.  
But, you would recognize this place,  
it's just as we left it—  
the faded paint, the splintered door  
opening to the asphalt lot.

*(Author photo by Alexis Rhone Fancher)*

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