

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Florence Weinberger: Two Poems

Florence Weinberger · Sunday, April 9th, 2023

Whole Grains and Hard, Harmonious Ways

My mother knew heat, she'd hold her palm above the pot
to gauge the force and virtue of the flame. In her wrist,
the heft of black pepper, the troth of flour and eggs.
She knew marrow and garlic, hard harmonious ways
of healing, some days with sugar, some with bitter herbs.
And lying, that, too, buying a blouse, washing it
before wearing it so my father would think it was used
but he was rarely fooled,
he knew when her stew lacked character; he knew her.

Now that I no longer cook the way she taught me,
leaving out fat, adding whole grains, foods
she never understood, like kabocha squash and artichokes,
I still have left what is probably in my DNA; the smallest taste
is enough to implicate my nerves and all my senses.
She also taught me how to serve.
Pleasing a man is not always what it's for. While I add to the mix
I take the measure of time.
What's mine was my mother's first. How do I spend these final years?

*

Bishop's Lull

All things loved are pursued and never caught:
a line I sponged from Dean Young for its frisson of rue.

Made me think of cats at first,
then grown children who slip away, or the biggest fish

or sorrow, a kind of generic grief spill
sifted and culled until it pinned the lover I caught and kept so long

because I could not decide if my love was immortal
or would wither over the coming summer.

So it wasn't missing kids that gave me pause.
 It was Bishop's lull, before she unhooked the fish
 the fish imperiled by the heat in her hands
 remorse coursing through her
 but sometimes the catch needs a longer pause, maybe
 decades, to unravel how much was love, how much was flak.

What I would have lost, had I let him go.

(Previously published in *SALT*)



These Days of Simple Mooring

New and Selected Poems

Florence Weinberger

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This entry was posted on Sunday, April 9th, 2023 at 7:04 pm and is filed under Poetry
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