

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Gregory Gonzales: Two Poems

Gregory Gonzales · Thursday, June 25th, 2015

Gregory Gonzales was born and raised in Los Angeles. He left when he was thirty, after making a paltry living as a dancer, to go to school but ended up married and living North Carolina, raising a son and stepson.

At last

falling for you on a crashing plane
 terror and panic filling the cabin
 and there you sit, like me
 we look across the aisle
 and simultaneously say
 So this is it
 and what with everyone clawing at each other
 trying to find the best spot to survive the impact
 lone survive if need be
 it's easy to move next to you and hold your hand
 feeling every swirl and ridge of your finger tips
 marveling that the lengths of our life lines match
 We're over Arizona I say
 and you begin to say
 I love the desert

Quake

the loft shook and I thought it was the door slamming
 I took the stairs two at a step
 ready for someone to be there
 but I was alone and the hallway was empty
 yet the clapper on the old steel bell
 swung just short of sounding
 and the cups on hooks beneath the cupboard
 rocked as if an arpeggio had been trailed across them

my skin prickled and I thought of you, brother
before I thought of fault lines and tectonic plates

I felt that if I looked slow heartedly
you would be there, embarrassed in the corner
with a wry message like, Don't die
I turned with a nonchalance you would have admired
but you weren't there to see it, I'd been thinking
the part of me missing since your lungs filled
drowning you throughout a long day
when your wife said so lovely
you don't have to keep breathing
had suddenly returned
it was the cups swinging so regularly that made me believe
except in the waiting I knew it wasn't you
a bell almost ringing and cups
you'd never be a tinkly ghost

then I remembered the loosely knotted sage
that you gathered and tied into a smudge stick
when each step cost you and your fingers barely worked
and I lit it, trailing thick smoke around
like I was somebody who understood chakras
just in case you weren't as dead as I believe dead is
the truth is though, if you appeared to me now
the only new thing to I'd have to say
is that your visit Richtered out at 5.1
and the empty cups swung for eighteen minutes

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