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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Gregory Goodrich: Two Poems

Gregory Goodrich · Tuesday, July 11th, 2023

### Moonlight Sonata in C Minor

i don't know anything about music or musicality  
only about the way your hands move across my back  
like pin needles from an acupuncturist  
or Botticelli painting *La Primavera*  
and when i hear your fingers string across those keys  
all i can think of is an entire piano landing upside my head  
like in one of those Saturday morning cartoons  
and as you keep that motherfucker suspended  
a quarter inch above my toenail  
i begin to think about that night  
with Cassandra—seven years ago  
where cobalt crushed into the asphalt  
and you called me a fucking asshole  
and how i still keep a stick of her eyeliner in my car  
just as a reminder of when you asked me:  
*who the fuck do you think you are?*  
how i'm still here  
trying to figure that out  
and how we survived doing figure eights of cocaine  
living in a glass house  
that Ocean Drive hotel  
and how we played those keys all damn day  
until i damn near passed out  
and i think about if i would've died then  
i would've been happy about how i went out  
because the last thing i would've ever remembered  
would've been your damn mouth  
but instead i remember right before i went into shock still  
and how it feels like nothing—now that you killed your damn self

[and i think about that night  
inside that brothel on Bourbon Street  
rolling blunts in the back room  
with some bitch named Cassidy

and how if we didn't get thrown out by security  
i probably would've let her take me  
for every fucking penny  
thinking you would've let me  
get away with anything]

or how a couple years later we'd end up in Phoenix  
making out in the backseat—of a cop car  
and how even after two hours inside that bitch  
and hearing all the dogs bark  
they couldn't pin us for shit  
and i think about how much that pissed them off  
that they had to let us drive off  
into the motherfucking sunset  
and how we had Maxwell's *Embrya* playing on a cassette  
thinking that if i could be reborn  
that this would always be my station  
and i would fucking get off  
on all the times i thought i hated  
that time in that Toronto high-rise  
after i had spent the night with the other girl of my dreams  
and you just had to go on asking:  
*do you think Cynthia is more beautiful than me?*  
and i was fucking stupid—enough to think  
that honesty was the best thing  
cuz you already knew the answer  
and you were just fucking testing  
and i already knew then  
i would've been better jumping off that fucking balcony  
forty-four stories down til i was face-flat on the concrete  
but i just fucking sat there  
just like i would for the next four years  
listening to all that dumb shit  
and all those you don't really love me's  
well shit—i'm still here  
writing you love letters  
and you've been dead for two years  
and i can't think of a night since  
that you haven't pulled at my heartstrings  
like an angelic harp—or an arrow shot  
that you expect me to catch in between my damn teeth  
and i think about that first time in Fort Lauderdale  
Valentine's Day 2013  
how you gave me a gift—and like a kid on Christmas  
i spent that whole morning playing with Cecily  
and i think about how many hours we all sat on that tennis court  
coming down off ecstasy  
and how later you'd lose your best friend

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and i don't know what the fuck even happened  
but that shit was probably cuz of me

so all this is to say  
i'm a fucking asshole  
you were right all along the way  
but never for a moment did i not love you  
the only song i sing  
is at the moon  
howling your name

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## Plums

lips like plums  
you tore me up

death rests  
on the edge  
of my tongue

and you stand there  
in opposition  
as a monument  
to everything alive

and living  
as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes  
and i stop  
and think

your frame  
is like sunshine  
and i'm  
subject to photosynthesis

and you  
are a message in a bottle  
that i've been dying to read  
even though i know i'm antithesis

palm dates fall to the ground  
and eventually sprout  
spelling out  
the catharsis in your curves

reasoning creativity  
into such a singular space

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my great-grandfather used to spend all his free hours  
trying to fit his creations into glass bottles

ships that never sailed  
emotions that stayed bottled  
now i'm going off the rails  
now tell me, do you follow?

because we are against two different oceans  
but every day i search for you in sea-foam

because you're a message in a bottle  
one that i've been dying to read

my great-grandfather didn't have the privilege  
of being able to fall in love on a whim  
with someone across the country  
and so he spent his nights emptying bottles of scotch  
that were the same age as his wife  
when he last loved her

folding himself away into delicate squares  
like the sails he folded so close to his ships  
just to make them fit  
into these glass bottles  
that to even to a younger me  
felt like the eyes of fish

he was writing poetry in the wood he carved  
i'm the only one who took the time to translate thus far

and you're a message in a bottle  
one that i've been dying to read

because about you i've already written novels  
and you didn't have to tell me anything

//

lips like plums  
you tore me up

my body breaks down like a chorus  
you are all my wishes

lips like plums  
you tore me up

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