Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Harry Northup: Two Poems

Harry Northup · Thursday, April 30th, 2015

Harry Northup has had ten books of poetry published, the last one being *Where Bodies Again Recline* (Cahuenga Press). He received his B.A. in English from C.S.U.N., where he studied Verse with Ann Stanford. Northup has made a living as an actor for thirty-four years, acting in thirty-seven films, including *Taxi Driver* (1976 Palme d'Or winner at Cannes), *Over the Edge* (starring role) & *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991 Oscar winner for Best Picture).

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birthday poem

amidst cruelty in the daily family
newspaper, the youngest son & his
lovely wife ate at true food kitchen
& saw a meditative vastness in line
plane & color — no shill for conformity
attempting to silence the poet
you would think that old age wouldn't tie
its hands with bitterness — for each
thing is holi — lincoln highway is holi
fbi guns are holi — everything that
lives is holi — meanness holi, hunger
holi, denying family holi, disregards
are holi — the hunger has gotten
such that cruelty springs from nausea
the religiousness not being the creator
the sickness comes when the middle
class wants all to be money hungry
materialists — love & work, honor
them, nourish the creative, don't
live in fear of the other — every-
thing howls, yelps, hides, walks,
rises — multiple images with narra-
tive underneath — the youngest son
& his wife — both poets, ate good food
& saw diebenkorn's ocean park series

& for awhile the youngest son
forgot how cruel his older religious
brother had been to him

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menus reply

the man loaned his studebaker station wagon
to his friend who drove to a ladies house
the loaner hid on the folded down seat & covered himself
with a blanket
the friend drove with his lady to the grove & made love
to her while the loaner listened

the same man who loaned his car to his friend
had another friend who owned a lavender thunderbird
while the driver stood outside the man sat in the passenger
seat
& the girl with the large freckles hiked up her skirt
pulled her panties down & sat on top of the young man
in the passenger seat of the t-bird
she moved up & down until he came
the two men worked together in a men’s clothing store

the same man went to a town 80 miles away
with a man who owned a salmon-colored ford convertible
the owner was going with a cheerleader for the jr. college team
after the friday night football game
the two men & the cheerleader drove to a seamy part of town where
the younger man went into an indian woman’s house &
on the other side of a curtain screwed the indian woman for $9
while her husband watched television in the first room
the young man from an other town passed through

when he was 17 he asked a cab driver in san francisco where
he could find a woman to fuck
the cabbie took him to a hotel & in a room where he could see
the bay she washed his dick in warm water
she unzipped her gray dress & they fucked before he sailed
to hawaii for duty at pearl harbor

all this to say the young man was hungry
& he never really solved his loneliness
until his passion for acting took him to manhattan
his devotion to poetry took him to a finality
that has never seemed final nor free but
he found a woman who loved him & he never ever disconnected

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