

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Jeanette Powers: Two Poems

Jeanette Powers · Wednesday, March 18th, 2020

Dandylion Riot

I am in the dark soil of winter
when you can see through
my canopy for miles
when I've lost all my leaves
and I'm hiding deep
when it's endless snow or 30 below
and the blank white of life is blinding
and we stop believing
we'll ever be warm again
I'm rootbound to this earth
when new moon and blackest night
when frozen mud chokes the earth
when all but hawks are hiding
I'm there, beneath the snow
pushing up through the ice
and one day in January
you will look down
and there
full yellow head
green shoot, tiny
dandelion
proving I never stopped
reaching for the sun.

*

Miley Cyrus Makes an Honest Mistake

Miley Cyrus finds herself
in the swimming pool
and the water is sick with chlorine stench
and the children are playing with abandon
which is to her horrendous
and she holds her guts squirming

because her head-ache
is a poltergeist shrieking at the sinking moon
and her stomach is full of butterflies
with chain-saw wings.

She doesn't know why
her body is at war with her
and she doesn't know why
she cannot catch her breath
and she's bobbing in the water
and her heart is exploding in her chest
she knows death is knocking on her rib cage
shaking the bars of her heart to rattle
rattling like the poison and desert snakes.

The children are caterwauling
her throat seizes, she's caught suddenly the water is too cold
too cold, she will get hypothermia her body will collapse.

All the children will find her dead body
in the deep end, they will dive into her body
lifeless, limp, hair snaking, bloating away
they will have never seen a dead body before
and Miley becomes frightened
she reaches out for a life jacket, bright orange
but grabs a small child instead
she can't see the difference between
innocent life and a life preserver

she carries the child out of the pool
she cannot hear the child screaming
over the lacerating panic in her own head
the child's frenetic kicking
feels only just like her own throbbing heart
the scratching nails are only the pain
of not being, of having never been
she doesn't even exist
she's not even moving away from the pool
she can't even move.

Miley is on the ground
her teeth breathe wet concrete
and ten knees are imprisoning her body
the safety ring flotation device
is moving away in a blur of orange tears
she sees it is not a buoy
it is a little girl.

Grown-ups are weeping and signaling
she can't read lips or braille
she knows that teeth are bared
Miley relaxes into the dark floor
whimpering ...

it's me

it's me

it's me

I'm not even here.

(Author photo by John Burroughs)

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