

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Jordan Smith: Two Poems

Jordan Smith · Thursday, January 30th, 2025

The Amateur of Consciousness

He pulls on his old jeans and then a sweater over yesterday's t-shirt
 And stands barefoot in the kitchen watching the coffee brew,
 Still lost a little in the dream's half-life

Where he half-heard her going down the stairs,
 And the greyhound's soft-shoe shuffle behind her on the steps,
 But he couldn't wake until the dream included her voice calling him.

And now, although it's unlikely she'll hear, a room away,
 He says, *I had a dream I couldn't shake*,
 And knows, if she hears him at all,

That he tries her patience, speaking so quietly, as the dream tried
 His impatient resistance to interpretation
 Or even attention so early in the morning,

Which is why he wants to tell it before it slips farther into guesswork
 And revision and detail,
 Into this sharp waking he's brewed for himself, knowing

How small and brief the space between them the dream takes up,
 A little steam
 Above the cup he carries now to sit beside the dog beside her.

*

Trillium

For Malie

It doesn't matter how often we walk this trail
 The greyhound at your side, down the old road below the ridge
 The moss-covered cistern, the untrustworthy bridge
 The path hollowing out under two arched pines above the Kill,

And it doesn't matter what we talk about, the garden's
Failures and pleasures, the reverses of verse, the kids'
Reverses and pleasures, or how the slow days slide
Through summer. If there's one thing I keep hidden,

That trillium just off to one side from where you look,
That triple blood-purple flower we'd planned to find,
Not here, but when we reach the lowlands where the pine
Plantation makes for a cooler, quieter walk,

That also doesn't matter. But how we get there:
Past the downed tree where you saw the snake's
Ribbon of black and lace and then the climb up the stone-flecked
Bluff where someone left a purple folding chair,

The root-crossed route along the edge of the ravine
Our old dogs used to tumble down than scramble up,
The morels' honey-combed inverted cups,
The way things have of letting themselves be seen,

But not until we need them, not until
Love calls them into being. *Birthroot. Wakerobin.*
Just where we thought they'd be, as rare, as common
As patient as a walk along these hills.

(Featured image from *Pexels*)

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