

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Lee Rossi: Three Poems

Lee Rossi · Tuesday, September 2nd, 2014

Lee Rossi is the author of *Wheelchair Samurai*, his latest book. His poems, reviews and interviews have appeared in *The Sun*, *Poetry Northwest*, *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *The Southern Poetry Review*. He is a staff reviewer and interviewer for the online magazine *Pedestal*.

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### No Face

If he had a face, it would include his mother's ears,  
 his father's sharp, insistent nose, the basset's jowls,  
 and eyes deeded by a consortium of Picts and Celts,  
 Romans and Jutes, a thin, watery northern  
 blue in which fog and cloud is constantly  
 trying to form. He is wary of such a face, watching  
 as his sister and brothers battle over breakfast.  
 Every morning he studies himself  
 scouring his already rotted teeth – how many  
 cavities since his last birthday?  
 He sucks his cheeks, flares his nostrils,  
 wears his hair as long as he can, its pale  
 surf barely cresting his extravagant ears.  
 He is proud that he does not resemble any  
 of them, that he doesn't even look like himself,  
 but like a grave digger, or a grave robber,  
 like a backyard mechanic, or a salesman  
 selling Bibles door-to-door, like an albino  
 gypsy, like a refugee from some television camp  
 for the dispossessed in Africa or the Middle East,  
 some genetic freak left on a hillside to die  
 who miraculously survives only to be sent  
 into exile to foster with these strange familiars.

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### Puzzle

If you should ask me when or how,  
reluctantly I'd answer why –  
the soil that rises from the plow  
but does so with a sigh.

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## Undergrowth

When Brer Fox tossed the Rabbit  
into that dense tangle of thorn,  
he was doing what we all do,  
condemning others as we  
would condemn ourselves.  
If he had spent his youth  
among the canes,  
he'd have known  
how companionable those  
narrow halls can be.  
I think about the women  
on my computer screen –  
all those clear-cut hillocks –  
and women I've known,  
their genital fuzz or fluff  
downy as dust bunnies,  
and then I consider my luck  
in finding you, adorned  
with sprigs of tough  
wiry hair, a dark halo  
surrounding each nipple,  
and the insistent scribble  
from navel to nest,  
where only the most  
delicate coaxing –  
tongue chafed and littered with thicket –  
reveals what the fox  
could only dream,  
a secret passage, the way through.

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