

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Matthew Murrey: Three Poems

Matthew Murrey · Wednesday, May 27th, 2020

Inky

My son's rat is as clean
as a garden, as calm
as the Buddha's thumb.
When I hold him
he looks right at me,
but I'll never know
what he knows,
what any animal knows:
our dog staring out the window;
that cardinal on the roof
casting out his red song,
or the cows lining up
twice a day to be milked.
Most people think people
are completely different,
better than animals—
but I think of Inky the rat:
he's never bragged
of his patience,
bitten in anger,
or schemed after money.
I can't even say the same for myself.

*

Rapture

"And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." — Genesis 1:26 (English Standard Version)

Garbage bags glassed
windows. Siding hung
from houses like rags.

Kids cried all morning
 but never came out.
 Then a low, loud angel
 roared out of nowhere
 and plunged over there
 in thunder, raised a wedge
 of black smoke the wind
 smudged away. Amen.
 It is good to praise the end
 of the ones in charge.
 Though they fed us,
 they also drove the trucks,
 held the stinging prods,
 and did their best to hide
 their bloodcut blades.
 They were here Saturday,
 then done for by Sunday.
 They became churches
 for ants and flies, the tip
 of the inverted steeple
 of each vulture's spiral,
 relics for their unleashed,
 lean dogs to fight over.
 They never dreamed rejoice
 would be for us, the ones
 they'd penned and preyed upon.
 We bow our heads
 to earth, eat what it provides.

*

Brancusi's *Sleeping Muse*

Ear to the ground,
 oh mellow, brown-yellow
 hollow orb, stay
 still. Behind sealed lips
 tongue hankers
 for pancakes and kisses.
 Missing hands miss everything:
 keys, keyboards, hammers,
 buttons, sand and silk.
 And a long lost dick—
 well, you know
 how pathetic dicks are,
 don't you? Longing
 fills the cask. Art
 has turned my head
 into the golden egg that lies

on the floor and listens
to exhaust and the chatter
of strangers who stop, stoop,
gaze, then walk away.
A thing of beauty is a joy, whatever.

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