

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Nancy Mitchell: Three Poems

Nancy Mitchell · Wednesday, August 21st, 2019

Back When

You'd crash
the lamp pitch

us black icepick
of moon slitting

the curtain. Silk
bathrobe sash

lashed my wrists
to the four poster

winds. Silver shot
arced slippery

mercury tasted
tart and salt.

Bristles busked
nipples purple

bloomed beautiful
my breasts.

Ah, my man you
were mad for me—

before bike helmets,
yellow safety

vests and a crossing
guard's caution—yes,

you were all
stealth and dark

craft—tricky then
as a zipper.

*

Love of my Past Life

Twenty-five years we never
touched outside of coming-
and-going hugs, so vigilant not

to breach the inch between
our breasts. Her ribs a twig
nest, hair a dry clutch

of fragrant sweet-grass,
a Nebraska meadow full
of it. Last we met—candle-

lit booth, all wine drunk
from the bottle—I took her
hand—curled like a bound

foot—wee as a wren
might be in mine. Unfurled
each finger, kissed her dark

palm's damp heart—I'd dreamt
crushed rose petals, honey
and tea pooled in a spoon,

never bitter lemon of stuck
cough drops, blood of old
pennies in a thrift store purse.

*

Bloated with Edy's and Lonely

I'm floating in an antebellum
bed-and-breakfast bubbled
claw foot bathtub, beautiful but
for the frill of mildew bordering
the peony print shower curtain.

Skittish about shaving—the razor
from the last dusty pack of Bics
I picked up in the Piggly Wiggly,
in this town with all the heat
but none of the charm of the South.

According to the check-out lady,
the natives are *riled up and ready*
to fight the plans for a roundabout
and the guy ahead in line buying
a six pack of Bud, fried pork rinds

and a pouch of Southern pride
doesn't give one shit that his wife
left because her *ass was as flat*
as the bottom of a cast iron
skillet, and every kid in town

has got the herpes or the clap
and *with all the spics coming*
in on them caravans they don't
keep all the gold locked up
in Fort Knox for nothing.

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