

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Rachel Neve-Midbar: Three Poems

Rachel Neve-Midbar · Wednesday, November 25th, 2020

Uncoupling

Two train cars releasing
each other—one arm lifted,

the other dropped into the clang
and black stench of the yard,

a barbed hook unclasped
from a fish's lip before

he's cast back into the river,
the latch raised on a gate,

the front entryway lock
disengaging bolt from metal bolt,

a tire hoisted from its hub,
a chain fence marking

a closed military zone unlinked,
Velcro ripped from a flak jacket,

the clatter of a clip set free
from an M-16, soldiers transferring

people out of a Gush Katif
synagogue as they bear the weight

of their own tears. The thread
pulled from a needle's eye,

pencil marks
erased from a letter,

the slash in arithmetic
that makes everything less.

The unbuckling of a belt,
a hook unfastened,

the buttons on a blouse,
unfixed from their stitched

eyes, a zipper slowly unzipped
down a long and naked back, the shift

of his hips that pulls him out of me
and over to his own side of the bed,

the large expanse of his back
that faces me each night.

*

Desert Rain

Your tongue in my hair,
in my mouth, your mouth—the circle,

the complete meaning of round, an egg
held for the length of a prayer.

Your skin, your skin—let me touch
the soft pouch of your belly,

smell the smell of your fir
trees, rusty and fragrant with fire—

we are nothing
more than what we cherish,

a night jar left to beat in the canyon
of my palms. I am ready

now to sleep
with your braid in my mouth,

for you to be the wife of my wife,
or even my wife. You

warm against me, your breath
deep on my neck. That I would hold you

when the desert rain wakes us,
that we could talk quietly together

about the melded meanings
of rain: its dams,

its flows. What it gives.
What it takes away. Then

I could lift the covers for you,
tuck you close into my lap,

my arms around you, each of your breasts
an open eye wide under my hand,

my nose in your hair and
behind your ears, your most human

smell, crushed mushrooms and old apples. Let me
lick you, lick you, there.

*

Boiled Carrots

Standing in my housecoat at the kitchen counter,
steel knife in hand, and a full pot of carrots

boiled in their weary skin. I wind the knife
around and around, peels falling away, revealing

bright orange life within. I put one in my mouth and feel
it warm and hard and pliant and suddenly I am plugged

in, switched on and open, remember running my tongue
down the back seam of the shaft, straight into a musk

of hair and sweet-meat, then up again to take in the whole
deep into some oral g-spot fullness, and I am a pornographer's

wet dream, the woman who loves to give head–sex goddess
dressed like Wonder Woman, hauling steel boobs

and ballet slipper boots, bullet-proof stockings, bouffant hair
and a waist cinched tight enough to suggest abduction;

arms crossed, raised wrists as if ready to deflect any advance,
I twirl and twirl, and each twirl pops

with power, each rubs like the thumb wheel of a BIC,
flint against stone, ready to ignite, ready to burn.

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