

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Richard Krawiec: Two Poems

Richard Krawiec · Sunday, March 9th, 2025

### Runaways

while others were passing through metal  
detectors at the airport,  
emptying pockets into gray plastic bowls, slipping  
off shoes and belts as if  
to prevent suicide

you shuffled towards a grimy bus station counter behind  
a lineup of skittish refugees; single mothers flaring  
cigarettes and hip-balanced babies,  
men with tattoos and scowls;  
a bald ex-con in double-breasted suit jacket and  
paisley tie asked you for cab fare  
to travel to his next No interview; a purple-haired  
girl proposed a handjob later  
for \$5 now; the jittery clown behind her  
soon cajoled the girl away to suck a crack  
pipe. You were one of those  
unable to afford airports, without dreams of  
trips to Disneyland.

In this lineup of bodies, bone-beaten, dismantled,  
betrayed by illness and empty bank accounts, their  
hearts slamming into their own reflections  
in the windows of the homes they could not  
inhabit, when it was your turn you stepped up to the  
bars protecting the ticket seller,  
looked past him at the black-ribbed menu  
of so many destinations, and could not think of  
one any better than where you were now, where  
you could no longer stay.

\*

## After You Gave Me Back My Life\*

I chose not to return to the world You offered  
chose not to drink from the chalice bestowed  
into my hands. Was it fear of risking what might be taken again, or  
did I pour out the wine in oblation  
to the way You breathed my soul back into  
my crippled body? Should I have lived  
the flesh instead of preserving it in the solitary cell of  
my fevered prayers? What do you do with a gift?

*\*After recovering miraculously from a deadly illness, Julian of Norwich dedicated the rest of her life to solitary prayer.*

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