

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Rick Lupert: Three Poems

Rick Lupert · Wednesday, June 19th, 2019

What I Remember, This Morning

So much has happened since
my eyes opened at eight o'clock
and my arrival at this restaurant.
But I'm forgetting most of it
because this carrot bread couldn't
be any more legitimate. I know
for sure my mouth opened and
the carrot bread went inside.
I have a vague memory of
handing a postcard to a woman
named *Keeley* who made promises
that all efforts would be made to
transport it to our blonde offspring
on the west coast. I remember
getting in a Toyota driven by
a man who wouldn't say much.
I'm confident I dragged a brush
across my teeth and, I'm not sure
I even want to tell you this, but
I pressed a hot iron up against
a buttoned down shirt. It is the
fourteenth anniversary of the day
we put on the black and white Chinese
outfits of our love. Now they call that
appropriation. This is everything
I remember.

From Rick's new book, "Hunka Hunka Howdee!"

*

Unsolicited

When I saw the word *unsolicited*

in the submission guidelines
 I took it as a life-goal.
 I marched straight to my bank
 with my latest non-conforming epic.
 I yelled *nobody move, I'm going to read this!*
 The security guard wept.
 The tellers' screams were real.
 They desperately tried to stop me
 with bags of money, but
 I didn't want it. Just an audience.
 Just an afternoon stopped
 with a stanza. When I left
 no-one tried to stop me.
 I ran to City Hall –
 Right into the lobby!
Tell the mayor I need THIS
passed into law!
 I brazenly recited every haiku
 I'd ever written about the Torah
 and a few micro-poems
 I came up with while
 sitting on a train. The city council
 closed shop for a week.
 I found this encouraging.
 I got myself a barcode. I rewrote
Leaves of Grass on my tongue.
 They made a film about it.
 My words come out of the
 mouths of Chucky dolls.
 People bled in the theaters.
 People sawed off their own
 arms and legs.
 People shouted *Poetry?!*
Why Poetry?! No-one asked
for poetry!

*

Unetaneh Tokef

Let us speak of the awesomeness

I – Fear and trembling

Any good Californian knows
 to be afraid of days that shake.

I'm afraid of days that shake,
of days so holy, you can't stand still.

I'm afraid of books that shake open
and read themselves.

I'm afraid I won't find my name
on the pages of the book.

I'm afraid of things that make
the angels afraid

that highlight the guilt,
of even the angels

II – God judges us

This is where we learn how we'll go
Who by old age? Who before they've

had the opportunity to be old?
Before a single wrinkle comes to visit?

Who by failed election?
Who by blaming the other side?

Who by menage a-hurricane?
Who by the climate changing them

right off the Earth? Who by
freak paper-cut accident?

You never know. You never know
how you'll go, until your gone

and then what can you
say about it?

III – We are helpless

In case you didn't know
you are a walking, living,

breathing sack of dust.
You have always been this dust

and when you forget how to talk

you will dissipate in the wind.

So if you were wondering
when was the time to say you're sorry

it is now, before the wind
takes your breath away.

IV – God is enduring

If we could say Your name
it's all we would ever say.

It's how we would order our coffee.
It's the only command we'd tell

our Siris and Alexas. It's the only
thing that could have the potential

to replace the word *love*. Or maybe
that's been *Your* name this whole time.

Thank You for putting even one vowel
of Your name into ours.

It is the smallest glimpse
of eternity.

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