

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Steve Klepetar: Three Poems

Steve Klepetar · Wednesday, July 25th, 2018

Privilege

Privilege is a white bird streaking the sky.
It nests in cliffs, among clouds.
I've been thinking about this for a long time.
Am I a brain or a mind?
My friend puts his hand on a lamppost.
"Illusion," he says.

We're on a street of bars, music spilling
from saloon doors, smell sweat and beer.
We step into the Theatre Lounge.
He orders a pitcher, which he swings
onto our table, spilling foam from which a goddess
could arise. She has skin
like pearls, hair shot through with light.

We are deep into the night, eating pretzels,
watching basketball on the silent TV as the jukebox blares.
We are young and white and none of this is real.
Somewhere a bird dives toward the sea, as sun turns water to gold.

*

Reruns

Your neighbors are drinking beer and roasting corn.
Laughter rises through the smoke of their barbeque,
children shriek and tumble in the yard.
Tomorrow their bodies will float on the TV news.
We'll wring our hands again, a ritual familiar
as evening prayers or anthems before the first pitch.
In the quiet afternoon, squirrels scramble
across a stump, lithe gray bodies intertwined.
You turn away and it's March again.
Already grass is turning green, confused trees

wave bare branches in an azure breeze.
 Angry people push to close the gate.
 Someone shouts, punches a man in the crowd.
 Police move in – cameras and noise and blows.
 So many faces twisted into snake shapes, owl eyes
 burning through the night. Brownshirts on the move
 again, through another bad dream, a nightmare
 rerun that couldn't happen here.
 Mountains of ice crumble at the poles.
 They tumble, white boulders frothing through rising sea.

*

Not a Dream

Snow swirls in early December.
 Early night drops, blots out the sky.

Somewhere two people rendezvous
 near the center of a bridge. They are cold

and have been gone a long time.
 The woman's hair hangs long and loose,

shining with snowflakes. This is not
 a dream, but a meeting, with hands wrapped

against icy wind, a negotiation of lips
 and tongues. The man wears a stocking cap,

whispers her name, breath rising above
 the river. It is an old name, full of mist and thyme.

Syllables burst from his mouth like summer,
 like late fruit releasing its seeds, which float

above meadows and prairie grass. On the banks,
 dark woods loom as shadows, massed and hungry

and old. She remembers his wings, how they
 streaked through a dying world when ice caves

gleamed in the high rocks and all that stillness
 pressed against their aching ears. He recalls her eyes,

how empty they were when the seas rose, when coastlines
 disappeared, when songbirds vanished, and the earth was still.

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