

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## **Todd Fox: Three Poems**

Todd Fox · Wednesday, May 24th, 2017

Todd Fox, a teacher and writer, is a product of Long Beach State's MFA program (1999). Excelling at eating and sleeping, but needing to do less of both, he continues to look for a better, more effective way to push the square wheel forward. His poetry has been published in *Sheila-Na-Gig, First Class, Heeltap, The Brobdingnagian Times* (from Cork, Ireland), *Angleflesh*, and elsewhere. Beyond poetry, he is making steady progress on the American poet Gerald Locklin's biography, but there's lots to do there. A visual catalog of Locklin's work, which was the impetus for the biography project, can be accessed at www.geraldlocklin.org.

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## The Girl at the Coffee Shop

Who told me she found a new job Leans forward on the counter, saying my order Before I do: "Large French roast over ice, right?"

I ask, "Is this it?" She forces a smile, her eyelids Meeting slowly. They touch, then reopen. "Wish me luck," falls off a breath her mouth Previously held captive.

Her brown hair is pulled back loosely. Longer strands Wrap around the bundle as wispy threads dangle in her face. I attempt to plead, "Don't leave," but cannot evict the words.

Grabbing my waiting coffee, I look into its blackness And smell the bitterness as the hot aroma condenses and cools.

Looking up, I say "Good luck." The sun momentarily forces it way through a cloud bank, Thick and gray—then is forced back, like a solicitor Getting the front door slammed in his face.

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## Why I Like Champagne

Corks don't go back in.

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## The Color Surrounding You

(For Julie Kimball)

I see you, standing alone, Tall, with platinum hair, against The haze of a cadmium-cerise sky.

I was alone that night, too. Our empty hands could have held Each other's—fingertips tracing the outline Of lips and shoulders, soft, round, smooth. Nightfall appeared Sloe-black, Then finally, just black.

You wait alone, forty minutes After sunset on a Sunday in late August. The heat of the asphalt warms your sandaled feet, Toenails painted emerald green.

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