

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Tony Magistrale: Three Poems

Tony Magistrale · Wednesday, November 7th, 2018

### Let Me Die Like a Dog

In place of her usual five o'clock supper  
without any whining despite the pain  
surrounded by those she knew and loved her still,  
the perfect dog inhabiting a less-than-perfect  
body, her sixteen-year-old arthritic hips and legs  
gone inflexible as metal bars,  
placed her soft face one more time into my hands  
at the moment the vet injected her left thigh  
with a combination muscle relaxant and blue  
end-of-the-world cocktail. I watched  
both weary brown eyes,  
adrift in milky cataracts,  
descend slowly into slits that would not again  
open, and I was never more uncertain  
whether to curse the curse of earthly mutability  
or issue eternal thanks for the gift bestowed.

\*

### Making Plans

If you please, no cold, dank earthen hole  
for me. After an expeditious and thorough  
burning, the distributing of my dusky parts  
upon the brightly-lit ground floor of Saks,  
a thin coat along the marble corridors of commerce,  
where what remains of me might cling to the bottoms  
of fabulous shoes, transported across Manhattan,  
while the rest is left in close proximity  
to *Women's Fragrances*, their aromatic blossoms  
crushed into liquid mist.

\*

## I Once Dated a Countess

Standing alone together on a balcony drinking champagne  
above panoramic seascape display  
strands of errant hair blowing her perfume into my mouth,

she exhaled something softly in French.  
I begged her to repeat it,  
or at least say it in *Anglais*, damn it,  
but she gave back only a tiny  
sequined laugh, shake of coiffed head,  
and, Daisy Buchanan-like, floated out of the room.

She told strangers she was a countess,  
though her couture handbags

were all knock-offs  
purchased from bearded Algerian men  
huddled on blankets in shadowy passageways  
off the *Champs Elysees*.

She drank tap water from ornamental flutes,  
ordered the most expensive Margaux on the menu,  
bathed in porcelain tubs filled with Evian spring water,  
sauntered the length of crowded beaches  
wearing ball gowns and a tiara,

invited me to meet for cocktails at four  
only to remember at three-thirty  
an appointment with her manicurist.

This was how it was with her:  
*mousse au chocolat* every meal, every day,

until I couldn't stomach another bite.

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