
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Tresha Faye Haefner: Two Poems

Tresha Faye Haefner · Wednesday, January 2nd, 2019

Swan Wedding

See the bride turn into a swan.
Her neck sliding out of the satin dress, a waterfall rising
up from light.
Her eyes glaze over the heads of visitors,
her tongue extended like an obsidian fountain
from the black spigot of her parted beak.
Look how she walks, spreading
broken egg shells among the roses.
Their insides roll, shimmer, rock backwards spilling
the secret of love.
Look how she scythes through the lawn, loosening feathers
among the jasmine,
how far she ballets,
over the broken skulls of her fathers,
the crippled hands of her ladies in waiting.
Queen of birds. The look illuminates us, like lemon
slipped into a glass of vodka.
In her dress, made of bird call and clouds,
she can see beyond death.
Over the canopy a blossom of mock orange
falls. A leaf remembers
to tremble. The groom straightens perfect
in her sight. An egg. A silver
fly swallowed down the gullet. A tree.
The mouths open like water lilies.
If you smash her open now,
she will escape.

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For My Last Meal I Drink an Entire Pot of Kona Coffee

I. Because I hear you can taste the fire in the aroma.

Where the volcanic ash fed the trees and the berries
and the beans. Where the Japanese settled the land
and pulled the plow and left dirt in the scuttling steam
coming off the cup, and the history of the island,
indented in the dirt. I want to drink something heavy and religious
as the underside of expensive flowers
and the beginning of new leaves.

- II. Because I want to imagine those horses are mine
who tugged the immigrant wheel
through the field, the palm trees singing
their wet song into the tanzanite wind.

I could walk through any grove, pick any coconut from a tree
and taste the subtle milk, slippery as eels
vining their way through a melancholy lagoon.

- III. Because Los Angeles in the morning is nothing
like Honolulu at night. Honolulu, where the smell
of roasting coffee is bright as pineapple,
and the little yellow rim of volcanic ash circles
in the cup, and the sun rests, a pearl in a blue
oyster bed of clouds.

- IV. Because we are all only a little footnote
in history. Because the foot that treads
the earth takes us away from our sorrow.

- V. Because the day is getting on with itself.
My old lovers, the crows, fly away,
the palm trees sway like the dry hands
of deposed royalty. And I am full
of ancient sorrow, and have nowhere left to go.

(Author photo by Alexis Rhone Fancher)

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