

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Valli Poole: Three Poems

Valli Poole · Wednesday, April 29th, 2020

### Wonder

Let's just say I am in a state of heightened awareness.  
 I note the ring around a raven's eye, the blue in the black feather,  
 a crease in the fox's ears.  
 Is this my gift?  
 Do I read your palm or cast runes around our feet, making a circle?  
 Every night I ask for words to come, all poets wonder if the words that come  
 will be the right words.  
 I see how a dog is changed when he drops a stick, does not look back.  
 How a thought is lost in the movement of the second hand on a clock.  
 Watch closely:  
 Once I held you, and in this instant I don't anymore.  
 All poets wonder on what they have – what is lost, wonder if this is enough.  
 A raven in a corpse pose. A voice cruel as skin aged with time.

\*

### The crush: it's only natural in an all girl's school

I remember that last year of high school, I can see you,  
 so pretty in your perfect prefect pleats.  
 I shudder at the memory of the shame of being me,  
 in my hoisted – up second-hand cast offs.  
 How I bluffed it out with my angry, troublesome ways,  
 so easy to be bad – to stand out with red hair – the target.  
 But don't you see I had to be bad to get near you?  
 Perfect is the prefect – overwhelming the pain of being imperfect me.  
 I longed for you – without knowing it was forbidden.  
 I can recall that terrible day when you were no longer at school,  
 the agony of your absence – my blame, my fault!  
 When I heard the news of how your brother  
 had hanged himself from a tree in the local park,  
 I wept for him and I wept for me, all the while  
 fighting to keep my arms hanging loose when

instinctively they struggled to hold you.

\*

## Coming from Shadow

I walk the dark.  
The trees are louder when  
the eyes of the day cannot follow.  
Treading on ancient template,  
I join night eyes,  
follow mottled trace,  
scratch, discarded claw sheaths,  
remnant bone, and something gifted in blood.  
There are lover's marks scratched  
on tree trunks that thrust up, reminding  
me that something fits in this night scape  
filled with shadow language.  
The cool imposing darkness;  
the ancient savage, movement, clues,  
charms, and visions the dearest earth,  
the familiar trees still breathe.  
And what presents in those trees?  
A flotilla of shadows, a screech  
in a dark that moats a castle of stars.  
They haunt me out of sleep, but  
where I walk, no ghosts follow.

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