

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Victoria Lynne McCoy: Three Poems

Victoria Lynne McCoy · Wednesday, July 11th, 2018

### SONNENIZIO ON A LINE FROM NERUDA

*Girl with the feet of the needy, accustomed to stones,*  
 girl with the thirst of a river, canyon-deep,  
 troublesome, the way, it seems, only a girl can be.  
 I grow drunk on my need to call something beautiful  
 until I believe it. I have not been a good girl. I have kissed  
 my way up to the glass casing of my inevitability. A wall  
 of palms, pressed and paling against what hunger  
 they cannot claim. I have not been a good girl. I don't care  
 what ire fattens the stones. I risk fragmentation,  
 girl with graves dancing at her feet. Let me not be afraid  
 of sweetness when it crawls to me with my name in its teeth,  
 needy little thing. I have only ever been a good girl  
 if good means freckled with pleasure, means taking  
 the world in my mouth, and swallowing what I must to keep it.

\*

### THE HEROINE KNOWS A FORESHADOW WHEN SHE SEES IT

Halfway through the second date,  
 he explains how I ooze sexuality.  
 He explains how I should just be  
 myself instead of quiet  
 and when I tell him quiet *is* me,  
 he explains how he can *fix it* with a shot  
 of whiskey. He waits  
 until the blaze in my throat settles  
 into smoke before he takes aim  
 at its delicate slope, a skilled hunter—  
 I know the kind, churning liquor into a blind.  
 He leans across the barstool, bites down,  
 his breath lead-quick  
 as he explains just what he could do to me  
 in bed, explains that's *just how he is*. He is

an echo chamber and I am the sound  
 rattling around which he mistakes for his own  
 name. Two-thirds of the way through  
 the second date he explains how he embraced  
 his rape fantasy—well no, not his, this time,  
 this one always someone else's and isn't he  
*kind* to oblige. All this from the muzzle  
 that minutes ago pressed to my neck  
 to convince my body of his body,  
 its wet ring a scorch mark, a round burning  
 room with no exit. The verb *to chamber*  
 is to put the bullet in. Is this why  
 in some other contortion chamber serves  
 as another word for bedroom?  
 He explains he had to take a shot at it  
 as I verb every way I can away from him.  
 My body is done being chambered  
 at the end of dates that then never end  
 for me, not fully. I bullet into the early night air  
 before the third act can circle back to the rifle  
 on the wall, before another man's hands  
 fulfill the promise of a trigger.

\*

## 50 WAYS TO SAY GOODBYE

Driving home along the coastline  
 the catchy song comes on the radio:  
 the man's been left by his love  
 and, pride-stung, devises elaborate lies  
 to tell his friends instead how she died.  
 The water on my right is blue as a body  
 and pierced through with restless bouts  
 of light. The song pricks my skin  
 even after I've changed the station  
 and I'm left in a deathlike silence  
 to concentrate on getting home safely  
 where someone no longer waits for me  
 because right now, in cars across the county,  
 countless people are singing cheerily along  
 to the commonplace refrain: it's more acceptable  
 for a man to kill off a woman  
 than be rejected by one.

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