

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/3

Thomas Piekarski

The Nightingale's Plight

When your passion departs
in a New York minute
and love loses its meaning

When dreams get chewed
and spit onto a window
for the entire world to see

When memories but serve
as invitation to oblivion
you sulk like a mangy dog

When starvation is nothing
compared to the prospect
of never embracing again

When pleasure disappears
because of your freefall
and life becomes mundane

When hopes plunge
through a steel night sky
and all you can do is cry

When once steady trust
seems like wet linguini
flung against a black wall

When flowers won't grow
although you plant seeds
water and fertilize well

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When your rainbows fade
overloaded with dismay
and squandered good will

When out of the blue
truth emerges and thrusts
a dagger into your heart

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Turbulent Times

Cruising through
the tunnel of love
a femme fatale
longs to snuggle

Rigor mortis sets in
on your favorite dog
and you can't help
feeling stuck in fog

The vendor mailed
a wrong size shirt
won't take it back
so you might burst

Sick of conspiracies
that poison airwaves
you wonder if pride
is enough to survive

Little time on Earth
even less deceased
so you praise gods
as comic relief

Massive fears breed
in primitive minds
which causes distain
for the truly sublime

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Shorts beat bloomers
in summer sun when
at a hundred and ten
you retreat to shade

Find pleasure in pain
you tell the blue ghost
that constantly gripes
flying out of control

Desist you're advised
from braving the rain
that attacks in sheets
and floods city streets
Protective measures
cannot take hold
when the sun tanks
and you may fold

Little critters crawl
inside the box spring
and red spots appear
on arms and cheeks

Everyone scrambles
and nowhere to go
stifling their mojo
and ushering funk

Cable news flips
the world on its side
and internet steals
your lone identity

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Neon lights
reflect one night
you broke a toe
at curtain call

You dream Moors
invading Spain
shudder and fetch
your trusty pistol

Running amok
car low on gas
and rent so late
eviction awaits

Invisible spirits
zip all about
but you won't yield
to their crazy creed

The innocent lamb
would make a fine
meal if combined
with steamed rice

Apoplectic Poet

I'm sitting atop
an obsidian mound
at the zenith of pain.
I would exit if not
for fire raining
down on me.

Barely object or thought,
what went before now stowed
in my sighs and molten tears.

Poetry the only living thing,
truth gone underground.

Pain cycles again and again
neither satisfied nor restrained
as if there is no glutting
the Gorgon that feasts
on my hopes and fears.

I'd recite poems from memory
which might comfort a bit
but forget lines faster
than the mind can access.

Those Modernists, Futurists,
Objectivists, Illusionists,
Surrealists, Abstractionists,
Imagists, Symbolists, Fauvists,
Dadaists and Impressionists,
agents of extraordinary canons
are these days consigned
to an ambiguous limbo.

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Whatever is novel I'll let
churn in a sorcerer's brew,
cauldron of the revamped
trailblazing avant-garde.

Puffing steam it will scorch
those writers who pepper us
with immaterial poetry.