

Wilderness House Literary Review 2/4

Orville Lloyd Douglas

White Guilt

You gain pleasure from charging into the bathhouses on the weekends
You're searching, prowling down the corridors for some chocolate popsicles
Or maybe you have a Mexican or Thai flavor?
It doesn't matter you want something distinct
You've studied post colonial literature, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Zora Neale Hurston
You dated someone of a different shade when you were in college
You're immune to having "dark" thoughts
Yet you cringe on the subway if a black guy sits next to you
What would he do rob you?
You don't want that blackness so close
Black people live in Hollywood, in music videos, or on a street corner
They are not supposed to invade your personal space
After all you're a democrat
You support affirmative action and believe in rights for "all people."
On your birthday your twenty two year old daughter announces she's
Marrying an Asian man he may be smart, nice, dependable
He might be sweet, attractive, have a great sense of humor
Yet he just wouldn't look right in "family portraits" that you send off
To relatives in San Diego, Zurich, or Berlin
What would your relatives think of this guy?
How would you explain when your mother in Paris squeals with frustration about him?

You don't want your daughter to know you agree
So you smile and continue the façade cloaked with resentment as you
Carve your disgust into the chicken chewing harder into the green pepper
wishing you could strangle your daughter's new fiancé and dig a shallow grave in the backyard

He's a nice chap you think as you slice open the flesh of the meat and eat it
But you squirm at the dinner table sweating profusely as a thunderstorm
Of despair enters your heart as it sinks
You give a bittersweet smile as you drink the wine as though it was oil
New neighbours have moved on your street you are in the kitchen baking a pie
When you glance through the blinds you notice their skin is not pale as pale
As snow your soul shivers
You close the blue blinds trying to conceal your anger
You smile to yourself and decide to say hello to the new neighbours anyway
After all you're such a nice person
And wonderful people have these kinds of thoughts anyway

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Leaves

Leaves are like lies we don't want to believe
The stems of time are fate intertwined with veracity
The augury of reality is cognizant
They know that mirrors separates us from the truth
Reflections so haunting we do not want to stare
Why is it so hard to tear a leaf apart?
To rip the root and remove the blades?
The splinters of seconds, minutes, the hours,
Yes the hours of dissipation
Although delicate, transparent, thin,
Leaves know us

They know the inevitable is not precarious as our souls
The bright crimsons, sunflowers of gloom, as envious as a
pulchritudinous blade of grass
On an autumn evening
Leaves must not be stepped upon or swept away
Faith is small
And so are leaves
Leaves should be held gently and encouraged to die

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One

Just one touch in the dark
One taste of the venom of apathy
One smoke of grief
One simple embrace
One cry for hope
One beat of the heart
The thumping, the thumping, the thumping
One dream One gasp of breath
One One One
All we have is One
Rumbling, shaking, shoving Crashing,
Running, pushing Crying, grunting, peeling
You wanted just one
Just one just one just one
Just one

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Mythology

Your lips are a tainted mythology
A sunken terrain that is an imprint to transpire loneliness
You are chaotic a volcano of havoc exploding
This lava is a deleterious quicksand that is pernicious
It knows no boundaries it burns anyone and anywhere it pleases
Yet like a force of nature I cannot control this desire
This energy that sucks me into you
Deeper then the Black Sea
Darker then the rage within you
It is spiked memories of doomed French kisses
The journey of deceit
Submerged deeper then this blue dimension of truth
You unlock fables with powerful, purple, pugnacious, bruises
On my stubborn neck
Traveling further to a toxic resolution your cock
The last ounce of veracity has been strangled by
The coldness of your touch, by the rainstorm of your
Fears

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Another Language

If you look at the snow you will notice it speaks another language
The cold winter blast freezes your invitation
You are cognizant at the checkout counter the signs you don't understand are in Swiss
German, French, and Italian
What does chicken and turkey really mean?
As you stand at the bus stop in Geneva, Zurich, or Bern while the rain spits on your face
You feel the texture of this "wetness" is the same as on the pale faces beside you
No need to translate the crinkling of noses, sighs from lips, the blanket expressions
through dystopian eyes.

You've uncovered masks of bitterness, lies, and contempt
No need to be Jacques Cousteau and travel to the depths of the Atlantic Ocean to know
the truth.
No dictionary is necessary to decipher the thoughts that are rotten as a pack of
slaughtered sheep in a field.
The language test is a constellation that their hearts are as hard as stone.
It is the lexicon of disgrace.

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Sleep

She is wide awake when she sleeps
Although her eyes are closed like a vault
Tumultuous noises collide and smash into each other like crashing plates
Its a megaphone of dread every single day
A screeching two year old is the end of her existence
Pots, pans, eating utensils scattered across Satan's lair
This dungeon is where food is prepared, lunch is served, and dinner is made
Rooms to clean, brats to feed, a spouse that is omnipotent
A garden to hoe, laundry to wash, a man to screw
This is sleep
A never ending nightmare that has no off switch
There is no needle that pricks the flesh to silence this spell
No knight in shining armor to sweep her away
Sleep is not escape
It does not provide weapons to battle tomorrow
Sometimes she wonders
What good will any sleep do?