

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

Bridget Galway

In the Wake of Ibiza

For only two months
I walked with my father
on the narrow white stone streets of Ibiza.

Crisp white stucco buildings
stood tightly together,
their rod iron balconies,
bursting red
geraniums in terracotta pots.

The walking rainbow of people,
faces from a Fellini movie.

Drinking Hierbas at Estrella
or La Finca,
talking to Kerstin,
laughing with Clive.

The abundance of those days
formed in music.
The acting out of characters
in plays of passion.

Those inspired passages
we left behind
on our way
to his home.

There
a stacked landscape;
of soft
and
hard covers

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formed on ash ridden surfaces.

A few clothes hung in the dark.

Scraps of his writing
scattered about.

The smell of red wine,
and limburger cheese
wrapped in cloth in his closet

The sun set
as he grumbled
accounts of life into sleep.

My thoughts went to places,
some real,
more imagined.

I gathered myself to the window,
to the sound of night life,
its music,
people's voices in anticipation.

I wanted the possibilities of that life.

I looked to the stars,
no longer wishing like a child,
but knowing
he would always be
to me a dream
undone.

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I returned to the worn out sofa;
where past characters posted,
in sober or drunken merriment.

I fell asleep
like a half written poem.

Then in a weepy morning,
through the light stream,
moving quietly,

step
to
step,

with hardly

a breath
to
breath.

So
I may not be
discovered in my retreat.

I stood in the bright of day,
in this human thing,
I
was stormed in
as I walked away.

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My mother Joyce Galway; maiden name Jacobson, and my father Steve Seley; were best friends. They spent many hours sharing their love for books. They were immersed in the bohemian lifestyle of the 50's and 60's.

My father was the author of the novel "The Cradle Will Fall ", published in 1945 by Harcourt and Brace, and "Baxter Bernstein: A Hero of Sorts", published in 1949 by Charles Scribner's and Sons. His last book "The End of Mercy" published in 1969 in Amsterdam by Bosch, Utrecht. He spent the remaining 20 years of his life in Ibiza Spain.

I did not meet my father until I was twenty two; he was living on the beautiful island of Ibiza. Prior to our meeting we had corresponded for many years. I believed that I would live there and start a new and interesting life with my father.

My time with him was both amazing and sad. The many interesting people I met in Ibiza left a wonderful lasting impression. Unfortunately he had fallen into the cliché of the drunken writer, yet held in high esteem by the locals because of his wit and intellect.

He will always be in my heart, but I left with so much unresolved between us.

He passed away in 1982 right after my son was born.