

Wilderness House Literary Review 7/2

Psycho Kanev
1980

is the exact year when I opened my eyes and
swallowed a little of this air with a scream.

And so it goes.

And so it ends.

But this looks like something else.

Imagine a forest at night,
and you are just a little mouse
filled with simple existence.

Minding your own business
all through your life.

But that night from the dark sky you could hear
the absence of noise. Two wings, like icy eyes
cut through the air, the crooked beak opens
and you rise up to the secret. Without a scream.

Light depression

When I lift my right hand
some obscure shadow is following it,
when I lift my left one –
quiet music sounds.
What kind of hell is this?
Schumann?
This is funny, you see.
I play on the chessboard of my life,
and all of the pieces are black,
yet the 64 squares are of white light -
but that's not improving anything.
It is Depression everywhere,
but they call it Recession.
It is Darkness everywhere,
and they turn on the neon lights for us.
I open the door and then
close it.
My bathtub is dirty, and my trash can
is full of empty bottles and memories
no longer needed.
And tomorrow,
when the morning crawls like a roach
into my plastic coffee cup,
I will still be waiting for an answer
from my walls.

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Someone

Someone opens
the door
and someone
close it,
someone sits next
to you,
someone is watching
the TV
and someone sleeps
in your bed,
someone drinks
coffee, someone
drives the car,
someone flips the birds,
someone
works
from 8 till 5,
someone is a child,
someone pet the cat, someone
wears
the tight necktie,
someone is gasping
for air, someone
talks to someone,
someone is dying
right now,
someone writes
this poem down,
someone is
someone, someone is not,
someone is you.

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The Dog of Poetry

Here I am. Hear me out! I am
Sitting here, finishing this poem,
To the last line, the last word, and
Then leaning back, lighting my
Cigarette. Enjoying the moment
Of quietness. Suddenly my dog
Jumps at the desk and snatches up
The poem from the typewriter.
Running toward the open door,
The white sheet waving in its ugly
Mouth and then through the open
Door, outside where the sun is
Wailing. And now I jump and run.
Ugly mouth and my beautiful words;
The black tail is waving.

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Valediction

I.

There are no men and no women.

The chaos is inside us all.

Themis is more than blind, and the scales
in her left hand are vulgar.

No skies, no kids.

String of days like a train
entering the tunnel of the darkest night.

I would like to say:

“Farewell foolish, little objects!”

The earless and the eyeless celebrate
their minor victories.

While kings with forgotten names
sleep in their majestic tumuli – forsaken and
accursed with the sweetest damnation!

But what about my right hand?

Now...

Holding the glass, like some holy scepter,
as the world keeps on turning, going nowhere
with all the insignificant things upon it.

Maybe there is some hope?

II.

We are all blind men,
searching for a candle that was never lit.

Gods, idols, apostles, crusaders, stones
and stakes, and lions. Such a lovely horror show!

It is not my fault;

I didn't raise my hand!

There is one cross,
where Buddha is laughing.

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III.

My blood is my blood,
but there is nothing else!
No yesterday; no tomorrow;
just this endless today running in my bloodstream.
No shade, a little bit of sun –
keeping us warm just enough to endure it all.

IV.

Into the greatest eclipse of the everlasting truth,
I will be here – dancing with the meek and the demented!
Waiting for the
eternal stupidity,
waiting for the times when the hours and the stars
will be ours.

V.

No!
I don't want them, if I can't share them.
These tears, this lovely pain...
Yes!
Like the first pioneers,
we will dance around the camp fire until the sky collapses,
thick and greasy like molasses.

VI.

We will be in stupor.
Lying down,
dressed in garments,
made from scraps of the same sky.

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VII.

It is dark now. And God is somewhere else.

The bottle cannot make it any brighter. And hell is hot.

It is nice enough that we understand these things;

it is clever enough that we can sing, with our souls

flapping on the very branch where even the high oriole is, oh, high it is,
indeed!

Like Sisyphus we keep on going with the rocks in our

brains. There are no cracks in Time, precious Time,

because we know that it will never end.

Humanity?

Lost it!

VIII.

And now, there is nothing wrong about the snake.

There is no ugliness in the spider, the roach

or the rat.

Nature is perfect,

without us.

All that is impure is hidden within the man.

We got our thumbs.

So?

What did we make out of this?

First we've made clubs to beat

our brothers down,

then we stuck the thumbs up.

And now we are voting.

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IX.

Now,

three women walk by my window, on the sidewalk
among the trees, and the squirrels, one after another,
the sunlight shining in their hair, on the tops of their
fingers, in their eyes; they are dressed in grey robes
with crosses hanging on their necks; they walk slowly,
now they are gone, and I lean down again, sweating
on the next absurdity, wondering why is all so quiet.

X.

No more me and no more you!

Adagio for the summer rock

and it rolls under the pebbles like

a snake biting its own tale.

Time...

Over!