

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/1

Peter Victor

SENSES

Hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling and tasting

These five senses

Are by design

Fences

By design

They confine and blind

Us, and occupy

Our mind

Occupy

With blinders in place

Keep the horse in the barn – at all costs

Far from the open plain

Where s/he would run wild and free

Without a care

Everywhere

Driven by senses

Of the outside

Wild

Free

Without a care

Everywhere

Hearing the silence

Seeing the shadows

Feeling

New

And reborn

Smelling the colorful explosion

Of a new morn

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Tasting

Love

But

Wait!

Hear me

Come back!

Look at yourself

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Please

How do you feel?

In response

I glance down in submission

At the stained and faded tile at my feet

I taste

The back of my throat

Dry

And sore

So sorry

It must have been a dream

Both

I fear

Light Blue

Sense filled

Pleasantness

Emptiness

They know I am present

And are pleased

As am I

With the being

One with

All

Knowing

Love

Knowing

Now

That is all

In this light blue emptiness

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Standing alone

Without a trace, without a shadow

Understanding finally

The finality

Of my truths

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THE BIRD CAGE

Tiny orange feet
Wrapped tightly around the perch
Swinging slow
As sunlight glinted
Off ornamental gold colored bars
An occasional whistle
And fragments of song
Pierced the silence
Black eyes
Jerked around the room
The food dish
Three quarters full
The water
Full to the top
A paper clip
Firmly held the door in place
The large windows
Were splashed with bright sunlight
Towering green trees
Could be seen in the distance
Water could be heard
A river far away
But to her
It was only noise
Of course
She would not know
Or recognize
The sound
She sidestepped nervously on her perch
She could hear the voice
She knew so well
"I do not want to sell her"
She knew not the words

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Only the distress
In the voice
She hopped off the perch
Climbed up the side of the cage
And began nervously pecking at the paperclip
That held the door
Firmly closed
Another known voice
“We will be back soon,
Please do not give us a hard time about this”
Then silence
Broken only by
An occasional whistle
And fragments of a nervous song
The footfalls echoed off
The polished wooden floor
He sat at the table in front of her cage
Tracks of tears
Could be seen on his cheeks
She whistled
And sidestepped nervously
Without a sound
He stood and gripped the top handle of the cage
And began carrying it to towards the large sliding glass door
She chirped in alarm, while struggling to keep her balance
The door slid open and sunlight, warmth and breeze rushed through her
cage
Ruffling her feathers...and her mind
Her cage swung from the end of his arm
As he walked to the table
In the center of the manicured lawn
With a soft bang her cage was placed in the center
He again sat in front of her cage
Paused, then reached for the paperclip
He unfastened the paperclip and opened the door

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Excitement and fear rushed through her body
The wind whistled
The song of the river was louder now
A dog barked somewhere in the distance
“Go, you are free”
Free to finish your song
Free to fly where you choose
Free to succeed
Free to fail
Free to be hurt
Or killed
Free to create
An entirely new being,
“Go” he yelled again
He stood and backed away from the open door
Slowly the excitement within her began to subside
Leaving in place
Only the fear
The boy waved his hand in disgust and walked away
She whistled
Fragments of a nervous song
A large shadow approached
The whisper of a new voice was heard
“Shee...it”
The door was gently closed and the paperclip refastened
Then louder
As the cage was lifted
“I will take good care of her.”

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THE MIRROR OF TIME

I step to the mirror, see the reflection
Younger than before
When I step away
It is gone

Yet I remain in all my joy and pain
I look at my hands and understand
Only the reflection
Nothing has vanished

A day is born
I step away
And it is gone
I now know

Only the reflection
Nothing has vanished
I step back to the mirror
And am younger than before

I look behind and see the crowds
And wonder – what do they see
Maybe it is a giant hoax
The world plays on me

If so, it is a long game
I play without haste
But I remain in wonder
At the beauty of your face

I step to the mirror in low light
And see the reflection young
I pause, put finger to my tongue
And then begin to write

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*"Know as you read these words
You live within me
Your image dances in front of me – yesterday, today and tomorrow
But I am too young now*

*Through the eyes of a child I see
The world's great mistake
Assigning importance
To things that do not matter*

What is truly important, I now know

*Moist hesitant lips
A deer running in new snow
Round and rhythmic hips
Dancing low and slow*

*A sunset over mountain and sea
A fire on the beach
These I freely offer
Just do not look for me*

*I know I can only be trusted to hold
That which grows within my soul
This garden - takes all of my time now
So with moist eyes and a low bow*

*I offer all I hold dear
Love, light and happiness
And final words
Whispered in your ear*

To thee,

Love me"