

Wilderness House Literary Review 13/2

Lubbock Electric
by Annie Elezabeth Pluto
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Review by Zvi A. Sesling

When I used to think of Lubbock I thought of Buddy Holly of “Peggy Sue,” “Oh Boy,” “Rave On,” fame and so many other hits. I remembered the plane crash which took his life along with the lives of Richie Valens and The Big Bopper. I recalled the Class D movie of his life.

But now my thoughts are focused on Annie Elezabeth Pluto’s Lubbock Electric that is filled with images that make everyone wish the poems were written especially for them. Pluto’s true love is unnamed, but her love poems assure readers there is an object of desire,

Texas Love Poem #2

*Big is your heart
and grave to your making
I will set myself to your love
a thunder to the landscape
rain and flood and wild horses
in your father’s corral
I am standing opposite your desire
slender and humid to be opened
kissed and make more than content
you are the very heart of Texas
never subdued but all ways
singing to your self – soul to the tempo
soul of the story
soul of the earth
soul to my soul
heart of weeks and roses
play and sing
and dance me to the end.*

Lubbock Electric

*Indiscriminate and irretrievable
the past splinter before us
like broken glass
there are times
when I am afraid to
move as if I will break
and break again your hands bind min
against all that we have lost*

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*lone – together – and found
by chance
by luck
in the name of god
at a time when all roads
led to the middle west – we we
each other without searching
I treasure even the minute
the clocks that do not work
unwound – left fallow to gather
up the splendid dust of hours spent
alone – together – the sound
of your heart against mine
the lights of Lubbock electric
all alight with midnight*

Aside from her love poems, Pluto is an astute observer of things around her:

King's Chapel Burial Ground

*The dead are pressed together
In the charnel house, an abundance
of ossuary riches, forgotten for centuries
turned to ditches, the crypts are sealed
off, each portal no longer has a door
but grass recedes to form a floor
in the cold spring evening, the electric hum
of skyscrapers distinguish us from the dead.*

Putney Bridge Station

*You are the ghost that keeps on coming
up the stairs from the tube –
walking ahead of me on Putney Bridge
your hair reaches the edge of your collar
and I know that you have nowhere to go
destination unknown – the grass in the brick
overgrown – each footprint as quick as air
evaporating in front of me – a torrid column
smoke stack – burnt paper – another way
to always say goodbye.*

This is a book of evocative recollections and keen observations. It is an enthralling compilation of poetry by Pluto who is a Professor of Literature and Theatre at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA.

Pluto is also the founder of Commonthought Magazine, and the artistic director and one of the original members of the Oxford Street Players.

Zvi A. Sesling is the author of *The Lynching of Leo Frank*, Editor, *Muddy River Poetry Review*