

Family Life

Moonlight tangled darkness,
dancing with shadows,
where a toothy intruder
knitted into moon's weaves.
Mother raccoon won residence,
high in the laughter of rafters,
safe from rapacious males,
hungry for the supp of her pups.
Her haunting charged my garage
with her spirit. I sneaked from the car,
ears seeing sounds of ghosts.
Chains clanked on the extension ladder,
signaling her ascent high under eaves.
Babies squeaked hungry innocence.
Her growl grasped silence, her snarl
like a rasp on brittle plywood.
Time saw mother raccoon
drop her pups from the eaves, over
the sill of the night.
Grounded and gone forever,
she never leaves.

Flirtation

The doctor's voice came through
the landline like Clint Eastwood's
at the outdoor movie: *There's coyote tracks
in your colon. Remember kid
there ain't nothin' deader than dead.*

Outside at the block party,
a man wearing my father's fedora stands
near Jessica Lange, dressed in white.
Her eyes peer through
the veil of her seduction, beckoning
me to cross the river,

to the cemetery ground,
quiet since the 1840s.
Mulberry trees supply
fruit for the living spirits
of the dead.

Coyote tracks abound,
fledglings fly free
high above the rabbit bones
licked clean by death.

Time Travel

in the 19th century

after Horse, by Ted Kooser

A workhorse rests
in the cradle of stability,
its bridle hitched to the stall
where it stands.
It awaits feeding
at the celebration of the 19th
day of June, in the century
before the automobile,
and its brown-eyed dream to hide
herds of hoofbeats
from a field of travel hot
enough to make the earth shudder.
The horse whips its tail freeing itself
of horseflies on a sweaty coat of satin.

Naked Truth

The vegetarian cafe was brimming with women proud of their standing in the community. In one corner, a woman wore loyalty on her t-shirt, emblazoned with the logo of her local baseball team.

At the next table, a well-rounded woman with gluteus maxima and breasts beyond potential. Gleaming golden zippers on either side of her sweatsuit suggested easy removal.

The next table seated Sister Superior, wearing the habit and veil, symbolic. The dancer's face flattened, the floor show fizzled, imagery of nudity neutralized. Sisterly peace danced to silent music. She gave no audience.

At the next table, two men blushed at the naked conflict. They enjoyed their Gazpacho and the diversity it offered. One man asked the good sister how she was enjoying the soup of the day. She laughed, saying she enjoyed the taste

Undergraduates Studying

I enter the periodicals room, to study
love odes poetic, finding freedom
in the written aesthetic.

Inspiration abounds when a muse

sits kneeling on her chair,
so inviting, elbows across her table,
so exciting. Jeans curved 'round
her half-naked butt, tanned, biologic,
a silent little strut. She radiates heat
by osmosis, enabling her boyfriend's
hormonal hypnosis.

He is trapped, this altar boy,
his face bathed in red.
Hormones coursing,
he is readied for bed.

My balance sustained,
by poetry's six senses,
my mind caressed by love's
fleeting fences, I manage
to escape to quieter clime,
Spring's powerful feelings
memorialized in rhyme.