

The Legend of Bagger Jeannie; Hummingbirds & Horses

The Legend of Bagger Jeannie

It was a remarkable sight,
I wonder if they really saw it.
The reasons for this apparition—or was it real?
Are understandable, mind you, if you know her,
How she loves those nervous blurs of couture
The little yellow finches.
They dance in her small latitudes,
Within the tiny garden she drew
In our small south forty.
Then clearing tiny throats,
They sing to her, and me I admit.
Around peppered seed they eat, then drink, then bathe.
Little colored feathers among the flowers and a tree,
Bringing smiles to her troubled eyes.
She slowly opens the low gate,
Dressed with concern and a pretty blue robe,
Steps gingerly along broken flagstones.
But armed, she has that loaded flyswatter.
Lacking only a pith helmet
She creeps between fuchsia and vine,
Scolding her soft warnings,
In tones as firm as five feet can muster,
Yet polite, befitting her heritage,
And all the legacy of her line.
She makes her warning way
Towards larger Clanton doves
That bully her faeries from Elysium.
Away with the avaricious, and those others.
There she goes, savior, knight, protector,
So slow she gives more notice
Than broken wings would need,
Unleashing her 16 rpm attack,
The bare bit of slow wave.
Children would hardly think she's trying.
Even if their own eyes were here to see.
The doves and desperados don't pale a bit.
They must wonder: What the hell is she doing?
Still she comes, tenacious, harmless.
Determined to check whatever Darwin
Has trespassed in our garden.
This brave, hurting loveliness,
Making sure the tiniest mouths can feed.

What must villains think about this sluggish move,
This glacial creep, with—what’s that she’s holding?
What’s her design, or is it some vocation?
Bother us surely couldn’t be in her mind.
Peril doesn’t come to mind from—wait, that’s it.
It’s a large flower or plant, growing close.
Adding color and crawl but no danger,
Slower than old dogs whose tails need new batteries.
Slower still than vines that stretch themselves.
But in truth it’s no vignette.
She knows what she’s about.
She launches a slow wave through heavy air,
And it’s enough.
The intruders are bothered for a moment,
And it’s just enough.
They wave themselves up and away.
Maybe just laughing as they go.
She turns to survey her effect.
The field sits quiet, protected, saved.
Her mission accomplished, for those few seconds.
Yet she’s still concerned, realizing
It’s but small part of the battle she can’t win.
But she fights on, this little Patton
Fruit of her own legacy.
And as she creeps slowly back into the house
To recover from the mighty effort
Smaller feathers dash in on her wake,
For a grateful sip, or a brief bath
Rescued, relieved, and safe,
While the enemy wait on lines or towers
Wondering what that pale, slow flower was.

Hummingbirds and Horses

The little bird finally quit its hovering
To nervous safety of the fountain’s upper rim.
So rare, to see its wings quiet, folded and still.
“They remind me of horses when they do that,”
She said, framed with pink fuchsia.
The hummingbird began to bathe,
Droplets flew in scatters.
“Horses are almost always on their feet.
On their mark and set, for eons now.”
Back at the fountain the business

Of cleaning is well under way.
“So rare to see them calm,
While people come close.”
Done without thought or plans,
They probably don’t know why,
Their parents worried so much,
Or worked so hard, for so long.
Quiet took her away.
Now her smile was gone,
Still sitting there. Where did she go?
Some mean sadness crossed her brow.
What’s behind the green eyes now?
She lingered at the old something,
Her lines set themselves gravely, sadly,
But then she was back.
Back in the garden,
Smiling at fuchsias, and fountain,
And little wings.
They started up again,
A washed blur lifted the tiny bird.
It paused over the bowl,
Searching this way and that,
Then it turned, and darted away,
Having at once brought memories,
And had its bath.