

Sixfold, Winter 2019

Righting of the Body Politic

I'm
trying to
figure out the subtle
differences concerning journalism
and politics—a daunting task, given I have
little use for the prevailing ethos of ineptitude and squabble.

Most bewildering, are margins—
take the left for example—I know votes cast in this
direction lost count during the latest, most contentious of elections.

Polling officials now have to
clarify—
for themselves and others—
their reasons for tallying ballots
the way they did, which affects
all of us. Why is there a need to
question anyone's vote with
regard to party politics?

Allowing the right to wander willy-nilly—
with no apparent boundary, while tethering the left
to within an inch or so of its own two-dimensional plane—
is plain ridicules! Just who is responsible for this abomination?

As
a centrist,
I have little regard
for boundaries; left or right.

Trophy Bitch

The following poem, *Contrapuntal Atrophy*, is excerpted from the late Ms. June July's (the former Mrs. August September) self-published chapbook, *Thieves of Class*.

*Standing alone
in a picked corn row,
a contrapuntal atrophy
flees
the withered stalks;
catching the breeze
of passing fame,
filling my needs
with self-induced
empathy.*

*Dawn's grey mist
spills
10,000 tears,
flushing harvested acres
of passion
while denying
freshly seeded
fields of lust.*

Staff members of *The Rhyming Review**, still reeling from a coroner's finding that Ms. June July lent a hand in the taking of her own life, have reappraised *Thieves of Class* in order to understand the motivation for her last desperate undertaking.

—A. September Esq, Editor

We observed:

Ms. June shopping her poems,
pitching her stories,
questing for riches,
dreaming of glory.

Our take:

The words she wrote,
claimed as true . . .
who in hell
was she trying to fool?

Last May Day Ms. June July read aloud the following, while clothed in less than adequate attire, making cheap a public spectacle of her latest glittering appliques of spangle and glitch.

*I was a married,
harried, feelings
buried, never
carried,
TROPHY
—beaten and judged.*

*I've been a poetess,
playmate, cover girl,
gate fold, party girl,
plate full, hand full,
BITCH
—dirtied and smudged.*

*These are fast
RHYMES
—my could give-a-shit
LAST LINES.*

The Rhyming Review does not consider the above a proper requiem for suicide. We deem it a hurried scrawl preceding anticipated debauchery on what can only be termed a pagan holiday.

Our epitaph:

Ms. June's work,
revealing and clashed,
turns love into darkness
reeling and dashed.

Chrome stud and piercing
give words a harsh glow,
hiding wart and wrinkle
who reaps what she sows?

Her form, once graceful,
renders structure benign.
If life were a grade school
we'd say she wrote fine.

Ex-husbands, disenfranchised songwriters, and balding concert promoters, staff the publication known as **The Rhyming Review.*

Gravitational Twist

A dowser hikes soggy berms that offer little in downstream protection. Fertile bottomland thrived before the Corp built levees and the Tennessee Valley had any authority, whatsoever. He follows shifting riverbeds seeking answers. Supple twigs nestle in a quiver strapped to his back.

The water witch steps across polar caps searching out hidden truths. Fine brass rods balance on her forefingers crossing and uncrossing, each intersection exposing myth. She sources north to south, east to west, until a stranger sweeps into her life.

The dowser pulls the thick brim of beaver felt forcefully down on his forehead hiding all but the narrowing slits of his eyes. His hands encase switches that bow earthward as he trudges through matter turned inside out. He journeys south to north, west to east, until he uncovers knowledge that enriches life.

They meet in Watertown or Waterville on the shores of a lake, river, or pond, not that it matters. Whether they marry, no one knows. Soon, rod and switch become community property. In time they produce a child of little discipline who shuns society's edicts.

This son has grown strong exploring rocky avenues of adventure. He extends his hand and by way of introduction proclaims: "Make the acquaintance of the first to circumnavigate all known centers of convention. I am the wayward progeny of those who source ideas that have long been overlooked by contrary public opinion. I have divined this planet does not spin merrily along on an all-encompassing tidal action of thrust.

"I am the latter day equivalent of explorers named Columbus, Magellan and Vespucci. I have crossed horizons west to east, south to north. Unfurl your banners well above the flow of prevailing wisdom. You see, gravity aids mediocrity, sometimes less but mostly more. Earth, like a benign funnel cloud, spins its own miraculous wonders."

Talking Rocks

Imagine if a rock could talk
the silly things it'd say;

*"I've been 'round before man could walk
sometimes going for a roll in the hay!"*

Parish that thought you dirty old rock
or I'll pound you finer than clay!

This is my story I'm bound for the glory,
I'm going to relate it my way.

Imagine if a rock could talk
the silly things it'd say;

"I've been 'round before man could walk
sometimes rolling in the way.

"When first picked up and given a toss
I rolled and rolled, gathering no moss."

*"Oh poet, you must dispense with this tome,
your words read stiff, like take-out Styrofoam.*

*"It's clear you are a literary crook,
giving us rocks the same worn look.*

*"Thoughtful readers will find fault
if we aren't taken for granite with a grain of basalt!"*

There's Always a Catch

Blue eyes and bruises, here comes the fleet.
Her blue-eyed consort works the ship that she seeks.

They spend their moments together down by the bay
blue eyes, the fleet, and the fish that they weigh.

Blue eyes and bruises there goes the fleet
don't worry about the bruises most are discreet.

A year's worth of yearning starts the day
blue eyes the fleet, sails away.

Back home, the brown-eyed woman swats at flies
awaiting a call from her every day guy.

She wrings her hands, then hellos the phone,
her husband's speaking, he's stranded in Nome.

Try as he might, cry if you will,
he's rarely around, but you're married still.

So fly off to the Kenai, or maybe Allakaket,
you could meet in stranger places, I bet.

P.S. Blue eyes and bruises, need I say more,
the catch of the day costs less at the store.