

Arse Poetica

T-shirt, cargo shorts, and sneakers,
my work uniform ready. The silver
cased laptop with the constantly
draining battery which I've checked
30 times in the past five minutes to see
the percentages drop and raise randomly,
is on, and awaits tickling. It is my weapon.
Tall, cinnamon flavored, steaming cup
of frothy milk, frothy coffee, served by a frothy
woman, rests like a smoking gun, next to me.
It is my drug. All writers need one, don't they?

The Vice and the Muse. That's what we write
for. We write for our compulsions and triumphs.
We write longingly in the freshly mined eyes of a
woman we can't have; we write regretfully in freshly
dug graves of sorrow and remorse, all for moments
we freely chose but cannot change. The cloths, the top,
the drink, those are just the tools, the means
are a collection of unseen or momentarily seen images
where we dive deep into a pool of fantasy hoping
to come up with a fish tale, a mermaid, or hoping not
to come up at all, thinking that our end is the artistic
statement of the year.

Since 1976, I experienced the ferocious words
of children who came from broken homes,
or divorced parents, or family legacies of egotism;
I experienced a love story greater than any written,
or filmed, or televised, first hand, as the likeable good guy;
I experienced a world of red brick, poorly designed ghettos
where we pack our children in with their baggage, hopeful
that after four or five or six years of college they return
normal and more successful than we can ever manage.
What's past is prologue for the writer who sees his brain
as drywall sections with huge signs reading: CHILDHOOD,
PAIN, ROMANCE, SEX, VIOLENCE, McDONALD'S.
Bins of memories, not like JK Rowling's cutely romanticized
silver memory globes, but ramshackle moments thrown
together in those sorting boxes, waiting for the owner to pluck
them out and put them on paper (what we don't realize
is that when we pull out one or two, we get four or five...
the subconscious is a bitch). Now the play is about to start.

Maybe the audience can provide an answer.
They hope for a handful of quatrains
about the tangy taste of an orange; hope

for beautifully tailored angels dancing a tango
on the head of a pin; hope for a tale about a guy
who gets a tattoo just to impress some random
coffee shop girl. The writer should think
about the audience but doesn't. No, he's
selfish; holed up in a small, wooden cabin
with a shotgun, awaiting the foxes and coyotes
who look for chickens bound by glue
in some faux leathery casing.

A sestina about a porn shop.

A free form poem about a guy wanting a tattoo.

An ABCDerian about childhood.

A series poem to discover me.

The sestina is a nice little casing for all
phallic devices, body lubes, and creepy
dudes. The guy who wanted that tattoo
was, at first, a pussy, sheepishly moving,
hiding, and turning away from a cinnamon
smile girl. Vince McMahon would call
the ABCDerian a steel cage match, somewhat
clever, but only yielding a few outcomes.

No form contains all that we can say
yet will say far more than we know,
we select from them, like an arsenal
of artistic brilliance, when really, our stories
our images, our dreams make for solid ammunition.

The top seems to be at 69%, now 71, now 67.

The lines of this drivel drive me no closer
to finding that white bearded and wild haired
uncle who haunts my dreams with Freudian
precision. He is neither my vice nor muse.
And my frustration grows like his beard,
wild; and my writer's block colors like his hair,
white; until I see one picture, a photograph,
taken by some dude named Steve, not Rico,
or Chaz, or Ansel, just Steve...the pony tailed
girl in the photo stands on a rock, a frozen,
snowed-over lake behind her, a white winter
sky above her, her pose, a testament to childhood:
she is on one leg, in mid-skip. I know nothing
about her, but want to, I know not why she skips,
but will soon, and as I write her into being,
my being tethers itself to her: her smile, her laugh,
her eyes, her struggle, her strength, her heart.
I begin 'Silhouette' and leave this...unfinished...