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Three Poems by Glenn Moss

Music, Darts and Other Gifts

Sax, Stax, Soul
Frankie Crocker and WBLS
Voices shattering windows
You gave those gifts to me
Unintended I know
No Wednesday night CBS suburban twin bed brotherly scuffle
This was Brooklyn hot knife edge balance
My eyes sweating fear
Watching your fingers dance along the blade
D train wheels wailing call and response as you turned the volume up
Brass, string, reed and skin
Blending, bleeding chords and harmonies
Memphis, Detroit, Mississippi, Mobile, Harlem
Raising roofs, stakes and desire
Closing my eyes I see twitching toes on Brighton Beach
Curling in shame from the heat of your half-boot
Leathered sole
The comic book muscle builders pretending to sleep, slit eyed watching
girls bounce in the surf
In a few months you will throw a football into my shaky hands
The sound of crunching leaves under my feet staying with me
Later
When you throw a dart
Into my soft stomach
Laughing
As a track of blood broadens underneath my t-shirt
Midnight listening to Coltrane and Puente
Darkness and music covering wounds
Between sets and sheets
I can still wake up, find a way
Guided by Otis and Dizzy, sheets of flatted fifths waving in an ocean
breeze
A child led out of a three room maze of a salesman and gypsy's unnoted
decay
Into the frightening joy of the different

Memorial Day

North African sun,
Still baking Carthaginian bones
Beginning the slow cook of German and American steel,
Finds you and new desert companions
Smiling while sand drinking blood out of frame
Later, behind a desk in Naples
Hair, teeth, B-25 wings gleam
The arc of American victory and your future parallel
For a moment maybe in your black photo eyes
You see them converging in your combined future
Maybe this where illusion kissed your neck
Licking the sweat of hard work
Leaving enough cool dream protection

To keep your post war skin from burning
In the heat of different battles
With county roads and shaking heads of small town shop owners
Immune to your Phoenician charms
So the retreat began
Not with the demanding tragedy of Miller's salesman
Or the sweet swing of the last chords from Joe Venuti's violin
But with the pretend of a failed magician with no rabbit or rainbow scarf
Still reaching into empty spaces
No audience but those who remained captive
Too long and too damaged to stand up and leave
Staring at the frame instead of the possibilities beyond it
One son shooting water into his veins
To escape a war
The other wearing your sergeant's hat to protest it
You drove a jeep once, bouncing over dunes and ancient streets
But never got your license here
Waiting for someone to take you
The back seat
Always the damn back seat
Silent, eyes closed
Dreaming of those thick haired teeth gleaming days
When you did more than survive
Power in your laugh
Nothing hollowed out yet
Sometimes I wonder what kinds of could be-fathers died around you
Stepping out of the frame into final breath imagined lives
Honoring memory and death is tricky seductive
I do the best I can

Walking The Canal

A heron watches me from the other side of the canal
Waiting before wading
I nod, acknowledging its primacy
Walking south towards the Chesapeake
River finding the ocean's vast welcome
An Algonquin village fed by oyster and clam
Fresh and salt water's quickened friction and embrace
Silt and spawn, the scale and cycle of birth and death
I can close my eyes, other senses guiding
Hearing the sandpiper's flutter, the splash of shad and smallmouth bass
Smelling current and tide, mixed with the tears of long dead slaves and
drowned fishermen
Walking in a space outside of time
The flow of tomorrows will come
Forcing my eyes open
To see the vanishing ripple of the heron's step, the shad's turn
Hoping my tears aren't added to the water I have come to love

more honored by his debut here. He grew up in Brooklyn, attended college in upstate NY and law school in Cleveland. He lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with his wife and two children. While continuing to consult with media companies and writing contracts, he still finds time to write about and from his truer self.

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