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Three Poems

by Richard Krawiec

Found

After Monday's sunset
Arlene parked
her practical Toyota
neatly by the locked gate,
removed her shoes,
lined them perfectly
together on the dock
beside the pill bottle
that would be found,
then walked beneath
the heat-thickened water
of Falls Lake.

I rushed to her house
to find a dazed husband
taping TV shows, a son
smashing vases, guitars,
glass to fill the living room.
Old memories surfaced;
the noose
around Charlie's neck;
the shotgun
in Michael's mouth.

That Sunday
my friend's daughter
in the carefree thrall
of twenty-two
drove 90 miles per hour
into history. I saw again
one night's empty highway
the wailing, broken boys,
my friends, their car sliced
in two by the Exit sign,
steam and fluids
hissing, popping.

None of this happened
to me, yet this shroud bows
down my shoulders, bends
my face into itself.
Even my smiling son
cannot draw me up to listen
to his happy prattle.

Frost was wrong.
The choice is not one
of divergent paths.
The roads not traveled
all threaten bracken ponds,
heat-slick roads,

the possibility
of blood and darkness
just waiting to be seized.

you stood on the stool

so you could reach down and cradle
my face up to yours
we slow-danced to Van
Morrison's 'Have I told you
lately that I love you?'

You above, pressing down,
me yearning, always this
pressing and yearning

Earlier, your hair in wanton disarray
you kissed and laughed
your way down my body
I stroked and glided down
your arms, stomach, legs

until we tucked our feet
beneath the covers,
drank wine, pecked
at tortellini, salad,
each others' lips

Once I closed your eyes
circled you slowly, the two of us
barely breathing as I touched
gently with my tongue the places
you wouldn't anticipate a caress
when I lifted you to the bed,
pressed into your yearning,
my hand slipped over
your wet thighs, the rush
of fluid thick and amniotic
desne as the ocean
pulsing with life

what is this we have?
where nothing is more loving
than anything else - a kiss,
a phone call, the flash of eyes
at the market, feather-slip
of hand on your back, lips
on your neck

they say the spirit yearns
to God, or the universe, yearns
to be absorbed back home,
join the cosmic symphony

when we press against each other
our mouths consume, hearts entwine,
bodies dissolve - we are already there,

absorbing, dispersing, singing
as one. What better home
could we possibly find?

When You Say Love

Do you think of the bathrobes
entwined on one hook in the bedroom,
or the crumbs of dukkah
scattered on the rug by the fireplace?
Or is it the displaced guitar, poem
on the coffee table, the long silver
strands of hair streaking the tub?

Do you remember the emails
spread across the bureau,
or the glitter dusting
the kitchen floor, a key
that fits the back door?

How do you measure the weight
of the shaving cream, toothbrush
moved in before you? Are these less
than the purple bruise on the freckled neck,
the eyes that sparkle and tear, the eager
hands and mouth, grasping legs, the head
resting with a sign beneath yours?

Carolina Literary Review, Connotation, etc. He's received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the NC Arts Council, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He teaches online Fiction Writing for UNC Chapel Hill, and won their Excellence in Teaching Award for 2009. He has worked extensively with people in homeless shelters, women's shelters, prisons, literacy classes, and community sites, teaching writing.

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