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Three Poems

by Michael Estabrook

Ode to My First Girlfriend

For some reason, when I was 15
and you were only 12,
you sat next to me at my father's wake.
You were the prettiest, most ethereal creature
I had ever seen. You held my hand
in your slender hand,
so soft and moist and warm.

Today, 50 years later, a friend told me
that your father had just passed away.
And though I haven't seen you
or spoken to you in all that time
I have an incomprehensible desire
to hold you close and tight
and feel your precious heart
beating surely and softly against mine,
in the hope of easing your pain
just a little as you had eased mine
so long, so very long ago.

Angel

At first it was a comfort truly
almost a relief
having you back
huddled within me where you ought to be
but as the days progressed
you began to take me over completely
overruling my mind
overfilling my heart with longing
until the distraction of you
became painful literally
and I had to work at suppressing
your presence within me
and that felt even worse
blasphemy really
to attempt such a thing
imagine the audacity of me
trying to suppress an Angel
an activity I have discovered I am
resoundingly ineffective at
but what choice have I really
life is simply too too short
and at times God
has peculiar and seemingly mean-spirited

ways of reminding us
we are indeed only human and He
is always in charge
watching our every move.

Salvation

At the end of another long day
I'm in bed reading *Death in Venice* of all things
not certain why
for it isn't poetry after all
but Aschenbach is a poet suddenly
emotionally paralyzed by beauty's mystery
and I am curious when of course
I find that you are here again
filling my mind's eye and my senses somehow
(but honestly you've been here all day).

Not that you are doing anything active really
other than existing your face constantly
in view my vision clouded
by the mists of memory
distracting me from the routines
and supercilious tasks of my life
from my studies my writings
from listening to my music only Maria Callas
proving powerful enough
to subdue your presence within me
long enough for me to catch my breath.

But what can I do I ask you in the long run
I'm uncertain because I cannot foresee
the future I have no recourse no defenses
to fend you off time and distance
may prove to be my only salvation.

Guidelines

Contact

Michael Estabrook is a recently retired baby boomer poet freed finally after working 40 years for "The Man" and sometimes "The Woman." No more useless meetings under florescent lights in stuffy windowless rooms. Now he's able to devote serious time to making better poems when he's not, of course, trying to satisfy his wife's legendary Honey-Do List.

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