

Left in the Dance

Bryan Dini

1

This boy, here, with lips pursed
and a brow drawn by lines
of too much thinking--
a harsh shadow over a broad nose
and drowsy eyelids, with a neck
that cranes habitually to the left
and a handshake that retreats
too soon and stutters--

I left him in the dance.

This boy, here, who thought
solitude was fashionable, and who
would stretch dirty lawn chairs
over clean-cut grasses and wonder,
alone, how the people who live
assembly-line lives in Euclidean houses
could be happy when the faraway birds
migrating northbound to some unknown
primitive wilderness were calling them out
of their vicarious digital travelogues--

I left him, too, in the dance.

This boy, here, who sucked a tit
that left him cold, and who was
otherwise fascinated by the throbbing
cyclopean stare that drooled
lovely pearls when lit by
thrashing tongues, fevered lips--
who got bent and spread-eagled
because male receptivity was sexually subversive
and proved he could take it like a man

when really all he wanted was to feel like
 the shudders had been lifted
 before a single human gaze
 for one transparent moment--
 I left him, too, in the dance.

This boy, here, who thought
 he was a Democrat, but then realized
 their proposed socialist safety net
 would increase his taxes--
 and who was too tender to flirt with the Republicans
 because they didn't give a shit in the first place--
 and who found himself somewhere in the middle
 disillusioned with media spectacles
 slightly Green but technicolored
 looking for something more real,
 more mystical than politics--
 I left him, too, in the dance.

This boy, here, who thought
 God was first a man got through a virgin
 whose tears were rosary beads to be cried
 and counted before bed every night in prayer--
 and who started looking for divinity elsewhere--
 in equations--in the stars--
 in the ghosts of galaxies
 their spectral light reaching
 from their burnt-out graves
 on the periphery of time
 like the last retreating gasp
 of a dying legion
 looking back over their lives
 before the last nuclear blast--
 and still later looked for it
 in the drugged but lucid eyes
 of someone to whom he just made love
 and the expectantly vacant moment

when
any possibility of discerning
where his body began
and the other ended
was nil--
I left him, too, in the dance.

This boy, here, who distrusted
his senses because he could not feel
with his world-weary heart
the bittersweet prick of all those Things
that tickle our nerve-endings
and make life worth living--
and who was converted to
touch, smell, sight, sound, taste
by the inexplicable grace of
a crushed-velvet space
of substances too coarse for addiction
and too fine to be given up--
all burnt in an offering,
a tempered ring of spicy clove-smoke
blown drunk with tangy red wine
across eager wet lips ready to kiss
and an Air on a G-string
that was played so sweetly
it fell off and revealed
a glistening white buttock
ready to fuck--
all he needed to make him happy--
I left him, too, in the dance.

2

Lover! Lover! See him there!
There is a poison in his brain!

A poison that makes the fireworks



between his temples shoot
like pitchforked thunder
from his static-charged fingertips--

A poison that makes the slowly erotic jazz
spinning

 spinning
through the night
vibrate with cymatic symmetries
he tries to grasp and weave together
with his chi-dripping hands
until he realizes these Things
must not be held
 but let go—



PS

A poison that makes visible
those synergetic spiderwebs
plucked symphonically inside him
capturing the epileptic neon lights
 all around
in their crystal orbs
 broadcasting beauty
 on a higher frequency--

A poison that lifts him up
and dumps him out
 and makes a space
for Things to name
 as their nesting place.

3

You admire him, Lover, don't you?
Like an act, but without an actor.

There is just a body cleaved
with invisible magnetic needles
that reach out from every corner
pulling
 tugging
 gently coercing
in every direction
like a man with elastic limbs
quartered by horse-drawn ropes
on a flower-laden rack.

A body that would rock and fly
as if in maternal lullaby--

or a ship sailing black, uncharted waves
that is sea-sawed by curious winds
from far-off places where



foreign words and fragrances drift by
like lost sprites from another world
looking for the compass
that would lead them home--

a choreography like the sad but graceful
sillhouette of a dying swan
in a glassy pond ballet
with children watching naively
in a nearby playground
and asking their mothers
what it means

to cease to be
entirely.

4

You smile, Lover, at this
peaceful nihilist

because the shadow has been lifted
from his haloed brow--

because the lines have been
sandpapered smooth--

because his contemplative chin
is no longer cleft in fistful repose--

his cheeks ovular, porcelain
his eyes no longer secretive
his expression as happily vacuous
as a newborn calf.

You smile, Lover, and continue to do so
even as this plastic marionette
cuts his strings



and backslides
 down
 a
 column
until he lies almost prostrate
an open lotus
like a tipsy Buddha
who collapses
 dishevelled
beneath his Bo Tree
 not quite off the Wheel
 and feeling the inward centrifugal force
 fling his bones and sinews ever wider
 like his soul is much too big
 and bursts out at the seams.

5

You wonder how it is possible
that small narrative miracles like this
still occur in a world where people
march daily into anonymous money factories
with rank and file tagged squarely
on their cattleswine backs.

You sigh for a moment
as the space around your Lover
 stills....
quietly waiting
 for some
 impending crescendo
a slightly more subtle burning bush
to remind everyone
that their childhood fairytales
still exist--

less biblical, perhaps,



but no less magical.

But you are his eyes, Lover,
and you describe inwardly
this very thing before him
he can no longer see.

6

*This fur you clutch beneath your hand, you say,
Belongs to some unknown, unowned creature,
A dog or wolf, none can say,
That wandered in with a tuft of gray
To lick the night from your face
And pillow your fetal frame
Like a stillborn babe carried back to heaven
On sweetly sorrowing angel's wings.*

*This heat you feel on your face, you say,
Belongs to that same shaft of dawning light
That turned Saul into Paul on the road to Damascus
And cuts now through thick cartwheeling dust motes
To bleed honeydew on your sugared crescent eyelids
And pull a luminous blanket over those tender parts
Still chilled by the whispering cadence
Of the snow-melt river crying to herself
Because she is overwhelmed with beauty outside.*

*This voice you hear, you say, not with a single ear
But with every open pore that drinks in sound and light
Belongs to him, your Lover, who will sing you now to sleep
And blow reassuring kisses into the void
Like rose-petals wafting on an obsidian pool dotted with stars
So that you do not make peace too soon with nothingness
So that you heed the welcoming siren-song of an existence
That still needs us, because we make palpable
And we articulate nature's half-spoken, half-realized utterances*



With our interwoven fingers and inextricable breath.

7

I open my eyes--
and this boy, here, who thought
he was the selfsame consciousness
that impels the unfurling chrysalis toward the sun
the infant toward it's mother's breast
the patient to make his last request
which stares out of all things
and sees you seeing me--
I left him, now, in the dance.

And here I am presently
existing in the pregnant space
between two lovers
always ready to birth
greater wholes--

Because all love and poetry begin
when we put ourselves in another's place--
Because poetry is philosophy
experienced through the body--
Because the body is God's way
of seeing Its own thoughts--
And my last thought is:
YOU.

Bryan Dini currently lives in California where he is a philosophy student. He promises to be a brilliant philosopher in the vein of the mystic Osho. He is a “so-postmodern-you-cant-even-see-me-yet Zen motherfucker.”

