

Michael Fix

Ernest Hemmingway is dead

But he would still like
some good, thick bacon,
cold beer.

If there were a
talking typewriter,
a muted trumpet would suffice.

And Ernest Hemmingway
is dead.
Like one-thousand Romans,

a million
Spanish soldiers,
crouching in tents—crying.

El todo que yo quiero
el todo que yo quiero,
el todo que yo quiero.

Typewriting
only
Ernest's remains—all

that is left,
the frying bacon,
coffee plates spinning,

the hidden cracks
smashed and frightened,
clacking like a, b's, or c's

keys, lost and uneven
in darkening Havana,
or Hawaii's desert.

Even I know
that Ernest Hemmingway
is dead

as the typewriter,
silenced,
waiting on fingers.

For mother—una mama.
Another plate of good bacon,
another frosted glass

of clean beer,
coldly lighting a cigar,
a beautiful dancing

woman,
to slide through
her own space.

Ernest Hemmingway
is dead
and I am

eating thick bacon.

A Snowstorm Greater than Frost

You are tucked
away inside,
cozy, snug
and nipping,
the snow and wind
are pictures.

Satisfied—quenched,
range to your window.
When you're really
stranded, know that
it's a godsend.
No snowstorm is mighty, and yet...

Pray for a terrific snowfall.
The kind that frightens
St. Bernards—all
other parishioners.
Tuck away your heads
and pillows—slow down.

I watch the broadcast.
“Stormwatch!”
So many breathless,
biting away yellowed nails.
But *I* yearn for it!
Just to slow down.

Who are the others?
Why the worry-worts,
the stock-piler—snow removal
specialists, weathermen, generator
brokers—ice shields, ice blocks
ice pickers—ice vendors?

For once. Stranded.
Stuck in life-traffic.
One, glorious unheralded, un—
interrupted chance. To stay.

To garner food-and-drink
like bored collegiate awards—pulling out, on sweaters.
Ah...

Slow—to a point.
Stop. Where imagery
as snow—vanishes
unto itself. A
seamless icecap
crown for time.

Bring on the storm!
Negative winds
multiply my atmospheres,
bury my car—my work,
and travel, blanket
my watch, all timepieces—all its pieces.

Slow. So that we
never twist our wrists
for a segue; we never look,
or peer—we only stare. Let time
hit us, slamming its arms into
us, as if Atlas not shrugging—hugging.

And please, no more time.
Snow—igloo
us. Soften eyes
with ice-flows, real and white.

No metaphor.
Just gentleness;
stolen—ticking snow.

Now
no need for Robert Frost.

No winter ambassador;
simply time,
the snow
without fancy.

Where is the man who lives across the hall?

I made an effort to ask Joe,
and he got all, “never
sneak up on a man with a hammer”.
So, I smilingly hurried out.

Cynthia was the one who really
kept asking. “Meet me in Mexico”
she kept saying—but I had to
“find out about this guy”.

Deeper and deeper—it got.
The deeper I got. My dad
used to say that situations such
as these were, “only worth a dog’s
balls”. Now, as then—it was strangely
uplifting.

Suddenly: “Get outta here, you rat fucker!!”
O.K. Then I knew I was on the right trail.
Indignation from strangers; doesn’t
just happen when you walk in on ‘em
placing dark objects in a safe—Something
smelled—something interesting.

I made FLOOR TWO.
Paco—short kinda guy—came out of
40B. Told me he’d seen, “a swell-looking fellow
dark, real dark, but swell-looking—like Cary Grant
or that dude from Cheers—Miles Davis?”
“Great, a real lead”.

A feeling came to me—a strong one.
He—was with The Minx.
That’s Selma. Who used to
always yell—especially at dinner
parties with little sandwiches: “Tell
me more! Oh, please entertain me; tell me
more, more, oh more (swirls) oh please, MORE!!”

I now realized.

The poor bastard didn't: how much of a snook
he really was; she was gonna eat him alive
digest him slowly—acidickly—and eat him again
as a light snack. Things could get, “uglier than the inside of a whore's handbag”.

Selma lived on FLOOR 60.

The kind of place—no one from 59 down
knew anything about—a place only conjured
by muted trumpets and unlit cigarettes.

I *knew* she would be there—minxes
nor spiders—prefer life below 59.

I could already smell her perfume;
lotus? I could hear her fuzzy beret. “God
I hope you're ready for some shit K.,
it's about to go down!”

I followed my nose. It rarely failed.

Right, to her doorframe. The trail was losing
its blaze. ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTIONS:
“Get...the fuck...out here Selma, you leave K. there,
this is a ‘yours and mine’ kinda day!”

Then. Quiet. Only the sounds of rugs—silkworms.
All smells melt downstream. My sweat droplets screamed
“Geronimo!!!” as they fell onto hallway tiles—my folded
arms. My chin locked into place, my jaw slackened.

“Oh, Douglas, is that really you...again?”

She was definitely off

to one side of the door—which side?

I knew her plan. I could smell—sniff out
her location—like a dog's balls
it stank.

“Gimme the kid, Selma. He's got a girlfriend
(Did he? Or, was it his mother?) maybe even
a kid on the way...he's got enough balls for that.”
—Gotta be tough with these liberated types—maybe
even shoot 'em—maybe?

“Douglas dear,
you know what you’ll have to do.”
She tried to click—cock quietly.
The door rushed open
like a forgotten oven,
its cakes and pasties
burning—with its own purpose
from someone’s hands.

I ducked. “Oh, shit!”
BLAM! BLAM!
“Jesus Christ, Selma!”
I jumped around like a loony
jazz tune—it was comical. I
could smell lotus,
and gunpowder, like
the fourth of July meeting
Confucius’ gardens.
Probably a soldier’s
wet dream.

Then—I never would’ve expected—the
kid tackled her. He used his WAR-CRY:
“BURAAAAGH!!” Not a great throat
on him, nice tackle though.
The Packers could use him. “Got her!”
She knocked her head, real good.

“Nice work K., thought I’d need to come
back as my own ghost, just to kick your ass into gear”.
I pushed her with my shoe—saw the tattoo,
and knew she was with them. No matter,
it was too deep. “Let’s get outta here.”

I installed K. back
across the hall. It felt good
to ignore him again. I was
back to, “Look for the silver-lining”
time.

I poured myself the bourbon. And
one for Selma—her beret.
Leaning back on my chair,
hat pushed back—I wondered,
would I make it to the 60th floor again,
was it all worth at least
a whole dog—or just his balls?
Do I need a guard dog.....

Tracks

We stumbled upon
wet bears.
Perhaps it was five;
or not.

What struck me was
the sopping fur
drizzling from their
huge arms.

When she asked,
I felt afraid too—speaking.
The scene;
whatever its truth.

“Well, it appears
that one,
or perhaps both
are drowning.”

What followed—in turn,
seemed
interminable;
like a sneeze’s overture.

Willy, the largest,
struggles,
chained to the bottom;
Monte Cristoed.

Waves slapping—ask
the bears “hug”.
Give up and sink;
ceaseless—like equatorial sunsets.

“We shouldn’t watch.”
Your voice—a struggler.
“The big one’s eyes...
are shining...is he dying?”

What welcome!
To nature,
instead of dragonflies;
remorse.

Wet bears sink,
wet bears scream—piercing.
No grrr—but shhhhh;
wet bears shriek.

Who was I—judge?
Such a grisly scene,
and Willy—merely
wrestling with his sole?

I am a Stairwell

Déjà vu
when I ate
the apple
I was malleable.

I am a stairwell.

Looked at the
mirror in a passing
saw the face
I hear most clearly.

I am the stairwell.

Three or four—there really
aren't enough mirrors,
not neatly broken
seeing no splintered eyes reflected.

I am just the stairwell.

If my collected dreams
could manifest one poem
it would be malleable
enough

If I was a stairwell.

Memoriam—déjà vu
an apple eclipses a
normal day—driving
rain thundering—a pliable brain.

I climb—the stairwell enclosed.

We talk—a shark leaps
my dreams, back-up
like a fry-cooks sink
plundering substance.

I am a stairwell.

Déjà vu over and over
my head—through
mirror-view dreams,
a poem who waxes too much.

Who is the stairwell?