

Michael Estabrook – Three Poems

Latin

The conversation comes up all
the damn time:
who needs books
when we have the Internet.
Books take up space,
collect dust, pages yellow, paperbacks fall apart,
they end up in boxes in the attic or beneath the stairs.
You don't look things up
in books anymore. A few keystrokes
or a shout out to Alexa
and you have your answer!
So who needs books anyway?
Me. I do. Why?
Let me explain by way of analogy:
40 years back in grad school a student says
to the professor, Latin's a dead language
so why do we bother learning it?
The prof, staring with that
what-are-you-an-idiot look on his face says
"Because intelligent people learn Latin, that's why."

Beautiful Brunette

Real estate taxes,
gas, electric and water bills,
broken car, torn
rotator cuff, high blood pressure,
crabgrass, moles, mice,
mosquitoes, mold, woodpeckers
and a list of adult
worries and responsibilities,
cares and concerns that would choke
a damn horse, all forcing
a nostalgic reflection,
a glorious beam of light
slicing through the gloomy smog,
back to high school
with its homework, exams,
part-time jobs,
with gymnastics tryouts

and trying to get the attention
of this beautiful brunette
across the room in Miss Roth's
Language Arts class –
a simpler, less-troubled world –
but was it, was it really?

Breathing

Cold November night
I breathe in the chilled air feel it
filling my lungs
life is a good thing.

Stare up at the moon full and bright
etching shadows from
the trees across our lawn.
Stars are out too: Orion the Hunter,
Taurus the Bull, Gemini the Twins,
behind them the vast
infinite darkness of the universe
and its timelessness.

But not for me.
Part of the human condition is living
knowing you'll be dying
and you don't know when
and there's nothing you can do about it
except seize the day.

Time is all we have. And strangely,
even though I didn't love it,
I'm reminiscing about my life
as a sales and marketing
"businessman" feeling sad
I'll never be in business again:
imposing in my three-piece suit,
my company car,
making another sale,
hitting another target for the quarter,
my bonus for the year.

I take another deep breath
the cold air reminding me I'm alive
and for some reason the infinity
that is the universe

is sending me back to when
I was a young
man, my future
stretching out before me timeless
and mysterious
as the universe itself.