

Tobi Alfier – Two Poems

Blur of Roses

New Year's Day.
Landmark Theater.
She goes to the early show
when westerns play.

The day is so clear
it seems shocked by light.
Yet still, for her it's like a ghost
visiting a dream she used to know.

When others chow down biscuits
and Bloody Marys to force
their hangovers back to last year,
she gets her annual small popcorn,

slowly makes her way to the historic doors.
She can barely see him, knows he is waving
from the second row up, smack in the middle.
Her feet make their way with memory.

They hug, speak in whispering protocols,
she checks his left hand and the ring
still exists—she knows her boundaries—
runs a hello across his one-day stubble.

The agreeable monotony of a two-hour sit,
hands held, listening to fake gunfights,
train robberies, card-cheating saloon fights
and the odd goodbye kiss in a dusty street.

She's known love by many names
but only this man—this man
will never dance with her again.
This once a year remembrance

as her walkways become foggy and obscure.
Final credits roll as train horns bleed away
in the distance like no one who wanted
to leave town. Like a sky full of birdsong.

Merciful Graduation Night

The night they truly met,
the campfire was popping wildly.
The rowdy crowd had already drunk
their share of spiked rainbow punch
and were dancing in the waves,
clothing a to-the-water signpost to naked,
their crazy laughter fueled by bourbon and sugar
not yet trundling their stomachs—tomorrow's legacy.

She was the shy observer
and he observed her, watched the moon and fire
mottle the plains of her face—she was a Rembrandt
out of time—the magnet of her drove him to her.
Breezes carried her faint scent of sandalwood
as she shyly looked down from him. They knew
each other from many classes but this was different,
and school was four painful years done.

Two fingers that had never before touched her
lifted her chin gently, followed a heart-beat later
as she raised her eyes to meet his. They did not talk
about worldly things—all questions were unasked
yet answered, the way a new sun clears the horizon
and lights a sleeping town. Undeniable and without
question. And so they walked the shore, warm hands
pocketing shells, footprints soon to vanish with the tide.

Tobi Alfier is published nationally and internationally. Credits include *War, Literature and the Arts*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *KGB Bar Lit Mag*, *Cholla Needles*, *Galway Review*, *The Ogham Stone*, *Permafrost*, *Gargoyle*, *Arkansas Review*, *Anti-Heroin Chic* and others. She is co-editor of *San Pedro River Review* (www.bluehorsepress.com).