

Review - Mitch Grabois - *The Arrest of Mr. Kissy Face*.



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Book Review:

The Arrest of Mr. Kissy Face by Mitchell Grabois

Do the poems in most contemporary literary journals give you a headache? Are you tired of not knowing what the heck they are talking about? Then *The Arrest of Mr. Kissy Face* might be for you. Mitchell Grabois grabs his readers by the short hairs—his poetry is described by Robin Ouzman Hislop of *Poetry Life & Times* as “lucidly readable...delivered in a paced, snappy, even raunchy style, a mix of compassion with often hilarious black humor.”

Think Charles Bukowski meets Charles Bukowski. All kinds of stories make their way into these pages—stories about women, family, neighbors, random encounters, women—did I say women? As in the title poem:

I kissed the woman who slices lunch meat
at King Sooper's
She shoved smoked turkey at me
leaned away
and called: *Next!*

I kissed my doctor
I'd been wanting to do it

since she first told me to stick out my tongue
and complimented me on its smoothness
and the elegance of my taste buds
I kissed her and she asked
On a scale of one to ten, how have you been feeling this week?
I kissed her again

For me, Grabois is at his best when he lets his imagination run wild—which is often. In "*One Universe Too Many*" he writes:

The alternative universe
in which you're not a colossal disappointment,
where is it?
It rode the Diphtheria Nebula
slid into the Oppenheimer Black Hole and hid there,
rested in perfect silence
before disappearing

He doesn't shy away from the big questions:

What if my grandfather had not stopped in the Bronx
and become a presser in the garment industry?
What if he had continued west
to become a bronc buster in Colorado?

Grabois covers a lot of ground—from an Animal Control Specialist who picks up the corpses of birds at a wind farm, to having car trouble at Walden Pond and getting help from a nun, to hiding overnight inside the Van Gogh museum in Arles and sleeping in the artist's bed, to becoming a Dumpster diver at the behest of a landlady who drives a pink Cadillac.

One of my favorites is "*The Moment Gone,*" where he recounts a childhood memory of wandering off when he was two years old and sitting beside a swimming pool:

A huge mass of possibilities began to coalesce
and I felt certainty begin its approach
an unprecedented feeling
No one had yet asked me what I was going to be
when I grew up
a silly question for a two-year-old
but I had a sense of the future looming...

I sat patiently waiting for the answer...

Then my mother
whose approach I had not heard
grabbed my arm
and pulled me to my feet
She knelt and hugged me fiercely

*You could have drowned, she cried
You could have drowned*

Pski's Porch Publishing prides itself on promoting passionate, weird, unfashionable poetry, and *The Arrest of Mr. Kissy Face* is a prime example—far, far away from the MFA poetry mill, and a breath of fresh air.

About the Poet:

Mitchell Krockmalnik Grabois has had over 1,500 of his [poems and fictions](#) appear in literary magazines in the U.S. and abroad. He has been nominated for numerous prizes, and was awarded the 2017 Booranga Writers' Centre (Australia) Prize for Fiction.

[Click here to purchase Mr. Kissy Face](#)

[Note - click here to view info on another book - highly recommended by Rich Soos - Mitch's fabulously hilarious novel, Two-Headed Dog \(\\$7\).](#)

[Note 2 - click here to see another fabulous review of Mr Kissy Face in After The Pause.](#)

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