

HIERARCHY and other poems...

By Vern Fein

Poetry Editor Hezekiah writes: Here are some poems from the past, both historical and, perhaps, personal. A tale of someone eating their dog in a race to reach our lowest point; fortunately, I have never been that hungry or as competitive. I do believe that the second is the first verse I have ever read on the subject of bowling. And Naismith leaving the bottoms in his peach baskets—no doubt there was a refundable deposit and he already had a ladder—we are a cheap people—after all the game was just meant for a little winter exercise up in Canada, at the time. The last entry deals with a theme I have never encountered: Love unrequited.

HIERARCHY

At the top of the food chain,
men strive.
Amundsen raced Scott
to the South Pole.
Amundsen ate some of his dogs
to survive.
He won.
Scott said using dogs
was undignified.
He lost.
Eating dogs is undignified
even at the bottom of the world.

COMEUPPANCE

He had been with too many women,
a jaded young man.
Then she walked into where he worked.
Sunset in his heart, blaring bleeding colors.
Flaming, forest fire hair.
Olive skin, snake smooth.
Green eyes, flashing like a temple idol,
a fox with sharp teeth.

Got her phone number
was at her house the next night.
The next night a date ending in bed,
Wild, raucous.
Asked her to marry him—She laughed.
Asked her to marry him again—She laughed.
Clothes strewn, helter-skelter.

She did not answer the phone for several days,
fuck and run as he had done,
dusk in his heart,
hunting through darkness, cut hands spread the jungle reeds.

Finally they talked.
"I too have been not wanted.

A COUPLE OF STUPID THINGS

I.

JAMES BLACKSTONE:

Circa: 1905.

Bowled an almost perfect game,
except one last wooden pin
split in half and wobbled but stood.
The stupid judges refused
to allow a perfect game.
gave him a score of 299.5,
which is the only reason we
know about Mr. Blackstone
and his lucky or unlucky break
depending if you want him to go
down in history.

II.

Dr. JAMES NAISMITH:

Circa: 1891.

Went down in history
and now we pay millions
to watch his minions
speed up and down courts
to shoot a ball into a basket
to cheering crowds.

Oh yes, the stupid thing.

When you have a basket

with a net which we do today
and the ball goes in,
the ball falls through the net
and Newton is proved right again
and again and again.

But in Canada when the Dr.
invented this game to help
young men stay fit,
he used a peach basket
and after every made shot,
someone stupidly
(don't know if they had refs then)
had to climb a ladder perched
beside the basket and retrieve
the ball stuck in the bottom.

We would say now:
It disrupted the flow of the game.
It took five years, legend has it,
to figure out if they cut out
the bottom of the peach basket,
the ball would fall through.

It's all right to be stupid.

We all are at some time.

You can surely add your own

as we figure out why the world is the mess it is
or just to feel better about ourselves.

THE POET SPEAKS: *I am 78 and did not ever write a poem until a bit over three years ago when a friend of mine saw a few poems I had written in my retirement and suggested i submit them. One of them--a two line poem--was accepted and I was bitten by the poetry bug. With my friend's help and a solid, local poetry group, I believe I have been able to improve my craft. I do have a Master's in American Literature and always loved and appreciated poetry, but never aspired to write any. It has now become a wonderful avocation in these last years. (Spacing is poet's own.)*

AUTHOR'S BIO: *A retired special education teacher, Vern Fein has published over one hundred poems on over forty sites, a few being: *82 Review, The Literary Nest, Gyroscope Review, Courtship of Winds, 500 Miles, The Write Launch, Broadkill Review, Soft Cartel, and River and South.*