

SIGHT

By Kevin Stuart Brodie

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... It is like Kevin Stuart Brodie has the gift of second 'Sight' he burns so brightly. "a bridge puts the two-hundred-meter drop / directly beneath your feet." I have a fear of heights, finger nails and bamboo shoots; I have always speculated that it speaks to a former life. "it is difficult to tell / if the water reflects the clouds /or the sky mirrors the water." "Herding themselves to the north / side of the bridge... At the very least, they try to find /a great selfie spot." I won't spoil it for you but "...the detective decided / to just give up." It is a spectacular piece of pathos... Brodie does 'a little thing called the twist—*

Sight

A few miles outside Taos, New Mexico
the Rio Grande Gorge cuts
through layers of sediment and basalt.
Not quite high enough to reach the heavens,
a bridge puts the two-hundred-meter drop
directly beneath your feet.

Cumulus castellanus
arc just above eye level,
but gazing down at the river
it is difficult to tell
if the water reflects the clouds
or the sky mirrors the water.

Tourists populate the west

end of the highway--
they munch on churros,
gulp sodas,
devour fry bread.
Herding themselves to the north
side of the bridge, they take in
the distant splendor of the
Sangre de Cristo mountain range.
At the very least, they try to find
a great selfie spot.

On the south side of the bridge
there are no tourists,
no spilled drinks,
no viewfinders.
There are instead hundreds
of black ribbons
tied to the parapet,
each with a name and age
scrawled in gray sharpie--
Sandra Santiago, 17
Rueben Gallego, 21
Maria Crow Horse, 16
Goldenstar, 14
Unknown, 25.

Unknown?
I cannot help but wonder
if the gorge rushed up and
maimed her body
with such violence
that the detective decided
to just give up.

Or, maybe no one claimed her
because she knew that
the void left behind
would be visible to no one.

THE POET SPEAKS:

Inspiration:

What inspired the poem was my visit to the Rio Grande Ridge and seeing the black ribbons on one side of the bridge, commemorating those who leapt to their deaths. It was such a stunning contrast to the natural beauty that enveloped the area. It also struck me that the tourists were all keeping their distance from it.

Stylistic Influences:

My two favorite poets are Pablo Neruda and Billy Collins. While I love reading Neruda's words, something about Billy Collins voice really stays in my head. It speaks to me unlike any poet I have ever read. While I have never made a conscious effort to imitate him, I am sure he has had a subconscious influence on my approach to poetry.

Why Poetry is Important:

When I was younger, I used to envy poets. I was convinced they had a talent that I would never be able to access. I assumed that poetry was exclusively inherent, not a craft that could be learned. I was mistaken, and found myself writing poetry, despite the fact I thought I never could. I love being able to see the world through someone else's eyes, to experience the images and emotions they feel, to develop a deeper understanding of being human. I would be delighted if someone who reads my work feels the same way. Neruda was right—the poem does not belong to the poet; it belongs to the world

AUTHOR'S BIO: Kevin Stuart Brodie is a playwright, screenwriter, storyteller, and poet. Three of his plays have been produced and two screenplays have been optioned by production companies. He also recently won his very first story slam. Mr. Brodie has won fourteen scriptwriting contests and festivals and been twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize in poetry.