

SPLASHING IN THE... .. MUCK

... WITH CHARLES + (3)t-h-r-e-e

By Peter Witt

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... I, for one, on behalf of Fleas, was intrigued by Peter Witt's meta-poetic bent. In his salute to Bukowski (there is always a little mud on middle fingers), he shares his dearth of concern for readers regretting any "...lack of polish, / ...lack of rhyme, or meter, / or complicated metaphors / that no one including [he] understands." Witt proceeds to engagingly identify and abstains from addressing all archetypal themes—inviting us to write some ourselves... 'Wandering Poem' also captured my third eye, while Peter "chases a poem across the field / butterfly net in hand," guided by a pastoral succession of captive, inspired wild fauna, "Voila." 'Suzanne Knows the Meaning (with thanks to Leonard Cohen)' offers a cornucopia of fruity voiced, richly deep notions: "until the new dawn arises on a plaintive pastel morning / when all considered worthy in the shadow of God's blessing" / "Had a vision of an apple tempting me to wander / away from path of honor to one of least resistance." And don't miss his lyrical lexicon of surreal 'Cereal Killers...' with Raisin's d'être, et al, etcetera...(Spacing is poet's own. It's HOTS in action!) HS*

Splashing in the Muck with Charles

Splashing in the Muck with Charles (Bukowski)

I am a poetic nightmare
to anyone who dares to read,
or listen with a cold washcloth
flopped upon their brow

some think me vain
to share these posted words,
most think me self-indulged
for thinking anybody really cares

some regret the lack of polish,
the lack of rhyme, or meter,
or complicated metaphors
that no one including me understands

some wish for more darkness
shedding light on the shallow
human condition, others want
there to be a sprinkle of death

some want humor that tickles the nose,
or a breath of restless spring, perhaps
a rumbling storm of flashing angst,
lovers scorned, made up political rancor

but all you'll get from me
is an invitation to author
your own hell, or perhaps describe
heaven, if you dare

Wandering Poem

I chased a poem across the field
butterfly net in hand
it floated away on an updraft,
but never saw it land.

Its words eluded me, no trace of rhythm,
or any hint of rhyme
day almost over, light fading to dusk,
was running out of time.

Heard a bird calling, "look beyond the rock
a poem is hidden there,"
frisky grey squirrel led me to fit it
in company of a hare

Voila, a special verse lay half hidden
beside an old oak tree
its fine imagery glowingly crafted
and written just for me

Took friendly poem home with me
my spirits now uplifted
lay smiling in my feather bed
about poem I'd been gifted

Suzanne Knows the Meaning (with thanks to Leonard Cohen)

Civilized we drink our tea, eat our oranges,
talking softly of the poor and dying
hatching plans to feed them, hold their hands in comfort
until the new dawn arises on a plaintive pastel morning
when all considered worthy in the shadow of God's blessing

Had a vision of an apple tempting me to wander

away from path of honor to one of least resistance,
ignored the shallow calling, supped on dates and pears
saving brie for hungry children looking through garden chinks
hoping for a handout, gave them all my blankets
emptied out my larder, will dine on crumbs
at midnight, feeling fullness of compassion

Somewhere there's an answer to the suffering
of millions, lies beyond the sunset, rising to attention
so all will know the pleasure of tea,
the joy of oranges, dribbling down one's chin

Cereal Killers - Snap, Crackle, Pop

They called him Cheerios
a cereal killer
took down his victims
by pouring sugar in their veins

In Michigan, who can forget
the lady killer Rice Krispies
who
snapped
crackled
popped
his victims

The infamous Bran
his accomplice Raisin
had a d-etre
to settle with society

We fail to mention a few others
Coco Puffs
Crazy Cow
Shredded Wheat

who graced the news
with their carnage

Hail cereal killers
in all shapes and sizes
many with surprises
none more famous
than Captain Crunch
still on the loose
coming to a town
near you

THE POET SPEAKS... *Being a university professor sucked adjectives and color out of my life. Academic writing is bland, often uninteresting, and mostly mind-numbing. When I retired, I had to find ways to hear, see, and express things in a different way if I was truly going to engage with the world around me. On a trip to Tanzania, I was overwhelmed with wildlife and the landscapes and had to find a way to express my emotions and thoughts...poetry, which I knew*

little about...seemed a possible avenue, and so the journey began. Almost three years later I find myself writing about a variety of subjects, with no one particular style or focus. At the beginning I wrote about nature-related themes, but now any given day can find me writing something humorous (at least to me), being prompted by something in the news, or trying a different poetry form just for the experience or practice. I used the time afforded by the pandemic lockdown to dive deep into this journey and feel at least I am swimming in the right direction.

AUTHOR BIO: Peter Witt reluctantly lives in Texas...is a recovering retired university professor, who now writes family history (Edith's War: Writings of a Red Cross Worker and Lifelong Champion of Social Justice), photographs birds (preferably live), and writes poetry on a variety of topical issues, nature-related, and random topics. Peter lives in a retirement community with his wife and Keeshond, and a variety of interesting people.