



WHITE

OLD. WHITE. STRAIGHT.

By

Bob Carlton

WHY I LIKE IT: Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes...

*In Bob Carlton's handful of poems, the first three speak to how underrated brevity can be. In the interest of combating ageism, am I wrong not resisting reciting the third in its entirety: "Old. White. Straight. / No tattoos. / No piercings. / A modern rebel." In the last two, he breaks into his stride: 'The Fugitive Magician,' "He waits / in his / defeated / patience, / for the final, painful / coin to materialize / into the last / arthritic grasp." And, "**Down on points...**" "sometimes we take / the standing eight / lift our half / shut eyes in prayer / for the final bell / to ring" As he bobs and weaves, machismo aside, Carlton is a must read. (Spacing is poet's own.)*

Five Stars

“some fights...”

some fights
like a broken heart
cannot be fixed

some fighters
like true love or class
cannot be bought

Sex is the Cruellest Fiction

a tale filled with duels
whose reasons i cannot fathom
fought by heroes
whose names i can't pronounce

Old. White. Straight.

No tattoos.

No piercings.

A modern rebel.

The Fugitive Magician

Languid, bored,
the fugitive magician

going blind,

uneasily breathes
the smoke of indifference

to capture.

Repose in a darkness
pregnant with

betrayal

no longer
in him
excites the fear

of his diffident
years,

no longer
is he lost

between youth
and the
frigidity of
these last days.

He waits
in his

defeated

patience,

for the final, painful

coin to materialize

into the last

arthritic grasp.

Down on points..."

down on points
barely upright
he still has
they say
'a puncher's chance'

don't we all?
no, we don't
all

sometimes we take
the standing eight
lift our half
shut eyes in prayer
for the final bell
to ring

to send us
with our losses
still on our feet
back to a peaceful corner

THE POET SPEAKS: *Language functioning at peak capacity brings clarity, delight, information; renewal, relevance, revelation. Heart/Mind/Body engagement with the Word/World. Not that all poems do all things at all times, but that they fulfill the promise of the speech employed. Sometimes a limerick, sometimes an Iliad.*

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