

ROACH and other poems

By Bruce McCrae

Poetry editor Hezekiah writes: "Enter the cockroach. / Noblest savage. Determined scavenger. / A greasy knot in Death's cravat." How can you not love this? "to make waste of all that has come before. / His reign is at hand." I do believe it makes Donne's 'The Flea' seem quite pubescent and pedestrian. Now, 'Shrovetide' is not quite a confession--'Oh Rock Me [Rabelais]' If xenomania is a love for all things foreign, you gotta love McCrae. "A windpipe like an oyster knife." And "Eyebrows like a dripping pan / Undertakings like the ballast of a galleon." If Lewis Carroll had been a psychiatrist he might have declared this poet delightfully unsound: "Who fished the air and drank by imagination." And 'Time Traveller' "The one who falls asleep tomorrow / and wakes up yesterday." "pinching a nostril at the stink of centuries." McCrae's works are mosaics of mischief...(Spacing and font size are poet's own.) HS

Roach

Enter the cockroach.
Noblest savage. Determined scavenger.
A greasy knot in Death's cravat.
Survivor. Blackheart.
The devil's plaything.

Storms and wars and deprivation –
the cockroach laughs its little cockroach laugh.
He comes to you, like a sorry excuse.
He waits for you to fail. He scurries home,
dining on stolen crumbs in his oily egress.

Spy in the house of night.
Whisperer of secrets. Godless tormentor.
Eater of radiation.
He tells you, in your beatific slumber,
vital instructions, his final demand –
to make waste of all that has come before.
His reign is at hand.

Shrovetide

Rabelais' Xenomanes describing Shrovetide,
of Sneaking Island, enemy of the Chitterings:

A windpipe like an oyster knife.

An arse-gut like a monk's leathern bottle.

A memory like a scarf.

Tendons like a hawking glove.

Eyebrows like a dripping pan.

Undertakings like the ballast of a galleon.

et cetera et cetera...

And on for another page or two, saying
when he winked it was buttered buns.

When he scratched himself, new proclamations.

When he spoke it was last year's snow.

Who said all apes esteem their young handsomest.

Who fished the air and drank by imagination.

Time Traveller

The one who falls asleep tomorrow
and wakes up yesterday.
Who's made a fortune betting horses
and shaved a minute off the record.
Always alive to the moment.

One book opens another, he declares,
having seen the beginning, having seen the end.
Prince and pauper I have been, he claims,
pinching a nostril at the stink of centuries.
The past is not the past you're told it is.
The past is present in the future.

And what of the future? someone dares to ask.
He shrugs his shoulders and looks away.
What happens happens.

The Poet Speaks: *I rarely speak about the creative process etc. Only when askeddo I even mull it over. My writing reflects what I read, but having written over 15,000 poems I can't recall much of each individual poem. 'Shrovetide' here was written while reading Rabelais, that much is certain. Reading 'Time Traveller', it seems to be perusing the point that regardless of when or where we are, we ARE. 'Roach' is simply subject matter.As for influences, again, what I read, and that is usually nonfiction.Not being a fan of most contemporary poetry I prefer to read poets from the 50s, 60s and 70s, American and Eastern European poets, Nor would I say poetry is 'important' to me. I enjoy writing poems (and songs). That's the long and short of it. Then I send them out in the hope someone might like to read or hear them. And there we are.*

AUTHOR'S BIO: Bruce McRae, a Canadian musician currently residing on Salt Spring Island BC, is a multiple Pushcart nominee with over 1,600 poems published internationally in magazines such as Poetry, Rattle and the North American Review. His books are 'The So-Called Sonnets' (Silenced Press); 'An Unbecoming Fit Of Frenzy'; (Cawing Crow Press); 'Like As If' (Pski's Porch); 'Hearsay' (The Poet's Haven).