

Poems by Philip Byron Oakes

Futile Savings

Growing close to the fertility deferring gratification of being, but the once upon a shelf for having served till purpose lost its way. Off course to adoption of the simile by the subject, left pondered but rarely touched. The coattails of alter egos in spaces reserved, for dodging the brunt of what it means in languages lost to the music of living in a box. Fighting for the same air of civility predicated as mutually stale, for lack of better breaths to take more thoroughly settled into having worn the robes, melding with skin in feeling the power through the weight of worlds to be sported as plumage. Veneers of patience thinning with age of consent, to the weathered play of light upon a loss of credence. A consensus of two feet standing up for what gets lost in stepping out of turn. The devotees as they circle the remains of what once was the center. The immediacy prized for life lived wondering if the weight is worth the price untold.

Counted Amongst

Abandoned rigor mortified
in furtherance fostered.
Collective role play
merging in failure of guises to
separate power, from
pull of counterweight
profaning balance to a more
pointed equation. A new way of
tempting numbers to conform
with a need to blur
the distinctions, grasping
consequential breadth of
narrow paths to persevere
as if nothing was all nowhere
had to offer. The regimen in
ruins culled over against a
grain of fresh starts. Kicking
the cycle back into the inner
circle from which the go round
begins, as if unencumbered by
the centrifugal lean in beating
inertia to the punch line drawn
straight to the heart
unadorned.

A Long Ways Off

Rarefied air of distant consequence grounded,
in the mellifluous pettifoggery of details poking
aneurysms in blood oaths. Codified as earthen
in the memory translating the forest as a songfest
of hard knocks, a tribal rhythm to believe
tantamount to the pulse the cadaver craves, in the
campfire caveats of a flickering glow. A respiratory
failure to act as if it mattered in the sense meant
to linger, as a clause in the reach for words to
explain the need to exhale. Confound the odds
and ends of time to catch a predicate, on the
cusp of being able to sort the many from
the fugue when it counts.

Biding

Fruits of deference held as collateral
for comeuppance, in arising to solar
expectations of morning. Dressing
wounds in tatters as the breach grows
wary of subsuming the show. Cueing
the earth to revolve around a fragile
axis, holding wobble out as dance. A
luster lulled through motions of a
twinkle in the eye of the beholder.
Shooting stars for trespassing. Acutely
vulnerable to the pry of eyes, clearing
cul de sacs of impediments. The dull
end of the street easing into the grid
of common knowledge by whispers
commandeered.

Debatable

Polemic massage furrowing tensions
in shoulders, bearing fruit in the flex
of prerogatives not to breathe a word.
Homesteading glimpses of perfect
corners turned stagnant, for a current
of thought to run circles around. A trivial
cognizance catching wind sleeping in the
stillness, drawing upon a memory of the
quiet coming true to form. Tunnels argued
into granite grown mum, with the hollow's
last retort to having lost the belly for the
echo. A respite with elbows thrown to
guard the flanks, from answers on the
wind to why the wherefores mingle
in the breezy insistence. Asemic
wanderings setting out to say
it all.

Making Belief

Lending credence importance as to whether or not fictions are safe, to embrace as reasons for being inert. Putty for weather making news a casualty of drowning in the facts, leaving the corpse to the eye of the beholder. Crediting the immensities for the crumbs bestowed, upon a memory of the manna having lost its way to ground. Never to supplant the coarser breads to feed a faith in hunger's short recall, of having eaten words of others coming true. Testing the limits of a taste for having settled into stories culled from smells of the menu, written in hints of herb bleeding through the confusion, giving tomorrow its cue to burst with a flavor contingent upon approachable horizons.

Susceptible

Sampler biopsies giving sickness status
in language lending victims a wherewithal,
with why on the lips. Roseate glow of the
contextual giving credence to the pain. A
moniker to wear to social settings, as
substitute for a sweater flown in surrender
to changes in the weather taken home.
Pooling aches into a pattern pushing the
puzzle to the brink of solution, in lukewarm
water ebbing to reveal the throb's route to
recognition. Having survived the medicinal
thrust of the argument sectioning the void
for a name, to bear the brunt breeding
elephants in the svelte redoubt of
frailty's tenure as the cause.

Shadow Applicants

To disappear untainted by having been
what if it weren't it would be, all day
long. Forgotten before ever gone a way
of witching hours, housing years for
spillage in the mist. A lone instance
ratified to stand outside of time to think,
of nowhere to be found when twilight
strikes. Casting a haze upon waters
running rich with the fluidity denied the
all too visible. Travel plans to make like
woodwork, hide in the momentum
holding space to be what's made of
it. Minus those who have no place
from which to escape as if
unseen.