

GLENNA HOLLOWAY
913 E. Bailey Road
Naperville, IL 60565

I DIDN'T MEAN IT WHEN I WROTE:

"It's bothersome enough
To burden paper with this stuff.
No sinner is set free
By packaged words tied up in poetry
That precious few will see.
So why pursue mechanical designs
In convoluted sequences and form
Like disconcerting kudzu vines
That smother readers, render themes infirm?"
My cheek began to sting as if a blow
Had struck, a smart rebuke from Erato.

— Speaker as preacher

a necessary outcome?

Alone, I glanced around;
No explanation could be found.
My face was burning red--
"Appropriate for twice a fool," I said,
"Whose verses rule his head.
Attempting to reach people who won't hear
Expands the role of universal twit."
My self-excoriating jeer
Was interrupted by another hit,
A new reproach, no slap, more of a jolt:
The muse released a forking lightning bolt.

Wayne

Madame, you've made your point.
I wish you'd simply just annoint
Your poor affiliates
With fragrant potpourri that stimulates
But never aggravates
These tender spots in need of soothing oils.
Come ease this poet's growing pains and turn
Prosaic mantras into foils → songs
For profound love all people can discern.
Erotic or agape, I'd express
The finest feelings humans can possess.

Ah, Erato, I'm not
Satirical, I've truly got
A worthy pitch to play → on which
Upon mankind's appendages of clay.
Don't let didactics cloy
And fall among the weeds and feral oats
Of loiterers on shores of shifty sands.
Let rhymes enhance my pithy quotes
And rhythms reason with their wayward hands.
— Regale my pen but spare them my mistakes,
And please make sure the higher meaning sticks.

loose phrasing - needs tightening

Revive

Form: John Donne's "The Triple Foole"

After John Donne's "The Triple Foole"

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No sinner is set free
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That precious few will see.
Attempting to reach people who won't hear
Suggests the role of universal twit.
My self-excoriating jeer
Was interrupted--something like a hit!
My cheek began to sting as if a blow *
Had struck, a smart rebuke from Erato.

*Sorry, I found
this poem hard to
take in broad -
probably a reflection
in my ability rather
than the poem.*
Jan

Alone, I glanced around;
No explanation could be found.
My face was burning red--
Appropriate for twice a fool, I said,
Whose verses rule his head.
I might as well accept my impotence
And write a comic strip for ten-year-olds.
This pose, this height of arrogance,
Is ludicrous. The sorry truth unfolds.
Reproached anew, no slap, more of a jolt--
The muse released a forking lightning bolt!

II

Madame, you've made your point.
I wish you'd simply just anoint
Your poor affiliates
With fragrant potpourri that stimulates
But never aggravates
These tender spots in need of soothing oils.
Come ease this poet's growing pains and turn
Prosaic mantras into foils
* For profound love all people can discern.
Erotic or agape, I'd express
The finest feelings humans can possess.

*Something
more positive
like a
song*

Ah, Erato, I'm not
Satirical, I've truly got
A worthy pitch to play
Upon mankind's appendages of clay.
I'd waken all distraught
Savants half-buried under feral oats,
All loiterers on bars of shifty sands.
Let rhymes enhance my pithy notes
And rhythms reason with their wayward bands.
Revive my pen but spare them my mistakes,
And please make sure the higher meaning takes.

*I don't like
appendages
(just my
idiosyncrasy)*
(?)

** relationship?*

if you are Erato
isn't this
Erato's response?

After John Donne's "The Triple Foole"

I DIDN'T MEAN IT WHEN I WROTE: —?

I

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Robert

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(...)
II

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The finest feelings humans can possess.

*songs or hymns
or chants
or incantations*

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I'd waken all distraught
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And rhythms reason with their wayward bands.
Revive my pen but spare them my mistakes,
And please make sure the higher meaning takes.

)

writer?
(or Erato?)
are you Erato?

donne?
or
(is this you?)

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Pat

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Form: John Donne's "The Triple Foole"

good ideas

great
- mic

I like song
Nice piece
Good to see
you!!!

Patricia

cool ending!

ADDIE AT EIGHTY

It's hard, she said, always being so damn grateful for rides downtown or snow removal, mattress turned around or Sam repairing something. She was low-- upset because a neighbor called her "ma'am."

Some nights, she said, she'd think about
white lightning,
the kind the sheriff used to make
and stash away for years to take
the creeping achy edge off winter's
whitening.

The stuff was clear, she said, a slow
pure heightening
of sense, contentment-- warm and gold--
the way it surely should be growing old...

~~The one thing age should never be is--~~
frightening.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

You could call it a PS from an MD.
These last notes from my research lab may be
unfinished when found. My jar of reprieves is empty.
I have entered the complex process called death.
And my dear sworn-by-Apollo colleagues
(who labeled me loner, prima donna, bastard),
despite all the times we've seen death, heard it,
and yes, caused it,
we don't know much about it, do we?

Based on my forte for human horology, my time
will stop near midnight. ^{Because} ~~Till then~~, I write
my thoughts as a poem:
No more late hours to haul my heaviness
up the ladder to inhale library dust,
mine the only fingerprints claiming those heights
since my old professor's. ~~No more mornings to stare~~
~~through the lighted shaft probing mindless obscenities~~ ^{cut?}
~~feasting on healthy tissue. Nor afternoons to breed~~ ^{No more days}
and stalk the seething child-killers confined in glass.
~~Having defeated one once, I'm driven to destroy others.~~
But my demon, destructive as any virus, has come again
with the fuel bill. Unpaid, ~~he's shutting my shop.~~

No time left to isolate the mutant entity I suspect
lay each day beneath my eye imitating innocence.
My life's goal-- to unlock doors, expose it
to world attack-- to throw Messianic lightning down
the corridors of science. I would deal with Satan
to do it. ~~But the dream must be delivered by others.~~

I move away from magnification and atomic rhythms
to culture my notebook in starlight. What do I know
of poetry? Yet the minutes allow for nothing else.
~~Now is distilled sediment, vitro-essence of failure~~
~~sealing my cloudy siphons with unanswers.~~
My sulphuric tongue is already silenced. And no life
will be better for an eleventh hour poem.

So much waste. Great strides to standstills. Unless--
that one! My wire-drawn student who yesterday
~~challenged the godsmith. And turning to dispute me~~
in the flush of discovery, incised and laid open
a moment by my point, gave me a glimpse
of the bright burning edge of a demon I know.

To that damned and holy host-- that lonely pupil--
I leave all I have. The harsh shine of my keys
--and my only poem.

*It works. Just
a bit dense!
Sacrificing!
Donna P*

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we don't know much about it, do we?

Because

~~Based on my forte for human horology,~~ my time
will stop near midnight. ~~Till then,~~ I write
my thoughts as a poem:

No more late hours to haul my heaviness
up the ladder, ~~to inhale~~ library dust
mine the only fingerprints ~~claiming~~ ^{on} those heights
since my ^{own} old professor's. No more mornings to stare
through the lighted shaft probing mindless obscenities
feasting on healthy tissue. Nor afternoons to breed
and stalk the seething child-killers confined in glass.
Having defeated one, ~~once,~~ I'm driven to destroy others.
But my demon, destructive as any virus, has come again
with the fuel bill. Unpaid, he's shutting my shop.

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*confusing
descriptors*

*Why wire-drawn
who's the godsmith?*

*This idea:
writing a last minute
poem;*

*- perhaps fewer
adjectives
- unique the idea
of being forced to
revert to poetry
be a "reflex" in
a similar place
in each stanza?*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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unfinished when found. My jar of reprieves is empty.
I have entered the complex process called death.
And my dear sworn-by-Apollo colleagues
(who labeled me loner, prima donna, bastard),
despite all the times we've seen death, heard it,
and yes, caused it,
we don't know much about it, do we?

hides instead of
communicating

Based on my forte for human horology, my time
will stop near midnight. Till then, I write
my thoughts as a poem:
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through the lighted shaft probing mindless obscenities
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and stalk the seething child-killers confined in glass.
Having defeated one once, I'm driven to destroy others.
But my demon, destructive as any virus, has come again
with the fuel bill. Unpaid, he's shutting my shop.

could
be
condensed?

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lay each day beneath my eye imitating innocence.
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to world attack-- to throw Messianic lightning down
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Sleep
Seems
out of
place
↓
"glutting
me
down"
?

atomic rhythms
seem so much
hotter than
magnification

! Wow!

SUPRA
Wow !!

SANDSCAPE, SOUNDSCAPE

The surf is on edge today. Last night's tide
hauled in miles of coastal wrack and a wreck
from upstate's gale. Gull cries, raucous
as crows, pitch higher as patches of sun
fall between leftover clouds. Broken light
dips on plying wings, on piles
of ocean's damaged private stock,
on stacks of unknown flora from far and deep,
on buckets and backpacks of shell hunters
predictable as the temperature drop.

They've haunted this shoal for years,
picking through the afterstrew of storms:
Birds flying in from the cays
with scooping beaks to fill their crops.
Shellers with prongs and buckram bags
arriving on bikes. They flock the shore
sharing the shrill treble of discovery.

FIRST PERSON, ALWAYS PLURAL

It's getting crowded behind my eyes, up there
in the old Irish dark where we multiply
like cell division-- shirt-tail kin, strangers,
needy French non sequiturs and Romanov innuendoes
bumping each other. And all the corridors
too Scot tight for a synapse to pass an impulse.

None of the sparks stays lit long enough
to make light or take command. Too many "I's"
in the back of my head--not focused or matched up,
seldom possessed of clear sight or even hindsight.
This "I" short circuits most of them en route
to articulation, each rooted in fertile ego
firmly attached to home base, each claiming
eminent domain till I'm not sure which one I am.
It's like having Baudelaire and Yevtushenko
plead my case while a rapper with a nose ring
updates my personal Zeitgeist.

Lend me a psychic lightprobe and I'll show you
how the others hide in gray folds and fissures
like contraband waiting to slip over
unguarded borders, or waiting to be ferried across
by the grinning, gullible "I."

Sometimes the oddballs surface, all at once,
playing poker with my half century
of accumulated cool. But there's one
always looking way off over the communal rim
of my glasses or my goblet, and skysmithing
around with nobly elevated ideas
the rest of us have never imagined.
Not sporting at all, because now I can't say
I haven't got a clue.