

Chris Pusateri

Flowers in Miniature





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for Erich von Stroheim

The armistice was signed over a turn of the roulette wheel, by ministers who had language placards & a ragtime accompaniment. There is a silencer: so much the better to hear the surf by. A very long lowercase, all rise & be seated. Napkins on the lap and an early afternoon EYE OPENER>>>>this foretells a later scene in a later movie by another director – influence is never set. In the breakfast nook, a morning paper with a stern crease and a bowl of wax fruit. His actions look deliberate, but it's just the film speed. Silence in German, as the unlaut crawls along the far edge of the Kodachrome. Everyone waits, like Chekhov's blood pressure, for a stitch of borrowed time. In B&W, God is monopoly money. Two fingers held to either side of the head signify a quotation: "the piano lopes across patio tile arranged like an immense gamble." His gaze turned her to plaid of a higher thread count. Would you like to touch my Cubano? A dub behind either ear, as we remember April.

The aqueduct perpendicular to the hill

The river giving it symmetry, we are

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| saluting | | not |
| the | & | the |
| pole | | standard, |

governor. To whom we will hand our credentials, it's postage paid, darling. Underscore paid.

[And an overhand cello closes the scene]

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This we whittled from 21 reels to the three you see here.

Reads "like a corpse in a graveyard"

Brine of / breeze from/ and suicides / and waves!

Wistful singing with an instrument /

She has no rank, tho' she does have station / and a stolen carriage

Horses impatient in the traces /

The veranda / the... monocled avant-garde /

saluting plumage / and "patronage" / and

a place in the portico

Movements of his stick shadow / that of

his shamed leg

pleasantries exchanged / in so unpleasant

a place

I'll remove my glove reluctantly / shake your hand

in name only

You touch my wife's fun / synch

the commercial fatigue / the knocked-up pause /

of the human form/



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Do you like my book? Not the
one I wrote, but
the one I'm reading...? and still
the sun, background mountaining.

The sky & the skyline: I don't think
they've met.

Rude porter—dog & dumbwaiter—
so now you know. Why, what
marvelous mannerisms! Where
did you purchase them?

We bow discreetly as
I grab your ass. We drift
As lilies in the blue hubris.
Pull my finger, eat
My corn futures.

Reading the bed for sleep – what makes you think I think
that? Because interest is additive. Looks like rain, indeed.

Over and back on the rickety bridge. The rain turns the
lake's surface to a roiling boil. Looking thoughtful over a
cigarette. The limp white item as we stare transforms into a
woman's stocking the longer we look. Dies by the eyes (lies
by the fire) while the storm swept away titles and
pleasantries.

Author's Note:

Chris Pusateri is a poet from Colorado, the partner of Michelle Naka Pierce, and author of *Berserker Alphabetics* (Xpressed, 2003) and *VI Fictions* (Gong, 2006). His poems and essays on poetry have appeared widely.

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