

Aaron Poochigian

Two Poems

Reunion Show

Remember rage the way we used to love it
and what mad masks we wore when we began.
Think of the shrieking eagle on our van,
the decal, with its wings aflame
and our prophetic name,
The Downward Spiral,
the viral
expansion of it,
the perks and packed arenas
before the groupies got between us,
the label dropped us, and the fad wound down.

Boys, since this bar is in a nowhere town
let's pound out, with our amps cranked up to ten,
sincerer tribute to the angry art
than we could handle at our start.
The blasphemy we hurled
against the world
back then
was out of season.
Now we have damned good reason
to smash things up like ruined men,
and all my lyrics will be from the heart.

Medusa

I was out on the stoop that day
watching the swallows, braiding
my hair, not really waiting
for marriage or love or trouble
when I was swept away
to the sanctum of a temple
and ruined. Horrid enough,
but then he just took off
and left me there to pay
everything for the crime
of sex in sacred space.

Flush with conviction, the marble
goddess stepped from her base
and wrecked me a second time
and handed me a mirror:
an orgy of snakes for hair,
a neolithic glare,
the horror, O the horror—
justice isn't fair.

What could I do, though? Mother,
sisters—everyone
I turned to turned to stone.
Monster like any other,
I shambled off alone.
No kisses, no goodbyes,
though on the last frontier
I spat three times and hurled
a curse at the garrison
that stands for civil order
and the whole known world.

Life is a dream out here
on the wild side of the border:
the sun is loath to rise,
and prides of sphinxes roam
freely among the crags,

sit chuckling round a cauldron.
I dug a humble home
and learned to love my children,
my little wisps, the asps.

And years glide by, and ages,
under the light of torches
and we are content to tend
our gallery of the gorgeous
torsos who came to call,
arms with a fist or a weapon
and heads ranged on the wall
gaping with eyes wide-open
at justice in the end.