

William C. Blome

Woonsocket

Little Woonsocket, little Woonsocket, you're still figuratively bigger
than a Pomeranian or an Indigo Bunting,
and plumbers here a century back moved out
in horse-drawn carts and carried flexible rubber plungers
underneath their hairy arms, and they sported rubber boots
that many-a-time father made to double
as waders come Rhode Island's snarking trout season.

Little Woonsocket, little Woonsocket, I screamed into town this morning
as two rippling, chunky women were doing boom-box calisthenics
at the end of the open road; they were up against the city's lesser gates,
and the only thing I had in my car to barter oral pleasure
was a one-third empty jeroboam of Carlo Rossi red,
though as shit and sweet fortune would have it,
that was more than enough to spear the dark girl's thong
for later framing and ridiculous mounting
as high as I can reach in daddy's fireplace-d den.

True and Proper Height

Visitors to my hometown like to queue around the court and watch little Bryan keep failing non-stop to make a basket, to ever rack up a point or two or three. Why, you'd have to think Bryan's goal as he dribbles back and forth all by his lonesome across the well-kept asphalt—you'd have to think the little shaver's aching, evolving, and actual agenda—is to any starry night now age just a smidgeon beyond his eight years and then, next day, jolt and shock the daily onlookers by displaying a brontosaurus-size knowledge of tools and carpentry. I myself predict that the day after such a night, Bryan will clearly communicate to someone his on-his-knees-and-begging desire to have a gasoline-powered chainsaw brought to him, so that then (and at last) he'd be able to temporarily lay his ball aside, click on the noisy and smoky machine, and smartly cut chunks out of both the basket posts, thereby dropping the nets to their true and proper height.

Praying on Francisco Pizarro

Hey, it's too late in life for me to pony up and jockey to Peru, but without actually being there and stumbling on the mountains or committing myself to assorted infidelities in the alleys and gutters of Cusco, I'll clear my throat and freely admit it: there's something not quite right about my kneeling here in the cathedral south of my hometown and offering up a prayer on Francisco Pizarro. (Yeah, something not quite right; so what the hell else is new?)

O conquistador supremo, what a moment of discovery for your horny self the day you taught the Inca women how to skip rope, the day they kept going up and down in place yet never moving on, and how at the close of many following days, they were so fucking grateful, they gave up dry obedience and began slobbering all over your silver helmet, confessing in all the ways and places where mucho gold was hidden and urging you not to dare believe their little-dicked husbands and sons when they would chant their lies in unison concerning the way they could achieve a yellow daylight by throwing all the nuggets of the realm directly at the sun. These dusky fellas had pleaded, "We hurled every goddamn chunk, señor, every pebble and grain at the sun, and so we never melted down anything—there was zip for us to craft and polish." Yet such falsehood never fooled you, did it now, Frankie, as you cleared your throat and gently continued your mission. (O such a way with women you had, even back as far as that boyhood in Trujillo.) Then you reached in between the Inckettes' tan and hairless thighs and brought out bracelet-after-bracelet of the good shit; why, it wasn't at all unlike catching eggs as soon as they got laid in the coops of the old family farm.

So let my prayer best end with your own stern and triumphant query to the Inckette honeys as you clutched what you just found: "Just where in hell did you get these shiny, crafted bangles, if, like your men folk say, there weren't no nuggets around for minin', smelting', and finishin'?" Answer me that, ladies—and you too, Lord. O kindly answer me that!" Amen.

The Sickle Maker

It's the goddamn sickle maker, the tall baboon
in a bright and cropped yellow wig, the guy
with a tattoo of fools-gold nuggets all over
his pounding arm, o the lucky stiff with wide-
eyed girls jamming and cluttering the entrance
to his shop from the time school lets out to when
they all gotta swish and sashay home to evening
dinner 'long the southern train tracks—it's
the goddamn sickle maker, the fella who lays
honest claim to helping keep the meadows trim,

the proprietor of a forge-like establishment
with a crescent sign swinging above his door
and stereotypically squeaking as it swings—
yeah, it's the goddamn sickle maker alright
who be scarfin' up fine ass near Baltimore.

Unhand Me

Unhand me, sweetheart,
open up that clasp of a grasp
and let me prowl for sexy women
slouching by the willows or weaving
in-and-out of crisscrossed vines,
or stuffing themselves in-between
the stacks of truck tires piled high
on the clinic's parking lot.
Go ahead, dispute my version of events
concerning nightly massacres
along the Patuxent, and/or the slow-burning
fires of abuse ignited all the time
in meadow grass west of Upper Marlboro.
But I won't stop my craving,
you can't force it, and all I want to do is lust
after sexy women rub-, rub-, rubbing against
spidery trees and gorging on clusters of grape,
and that includes ladies who come here
for treatments and cures. But realize:
this kind of desire takes two hands;
otherwise, it's not fulfilling for anybody.

About the Poet

William C. Blome writes poetry and short fiction. He lives wedged between Baltimore and Washington, DC, and he is a master's degree graduate of the Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminars. His work has seen the light of day in such fine little mags as *Poetry London*, *PRISM International*, *In Between Hangovers*, *Fiction Southeast*, *Roanoke Review*, and *The California Quarterly*.