June 2014

Framework

John R. Withee

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate

Part of the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate/vol8/iss1/3

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Lee Honors College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Laureate by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.
I don’t put coasters under tables anymore; an unsteady table turns an ordinary coffee shop into a lonely seafaring vessel rocking unpredictably on the waves; I sit in the cabin, and the voices become a distant radio, and the ceaseless bluegrass becomes the rain; the darkness of the sky becomes the darkness of the sea; I become Hemingway before he wrote, heading God knows where on adventures, but with the peace that I will write about this experience in a coffee shop somewhere in the future; somewhere in real life.

A girl I know once wrote a story about a girl whose hair changes color every time a dramatic shift happens in her life; and this same girl once told me in a note she wrote that as it turns out, she dyes the color of her hair every time something of great consequence happens in her life; dark for one change, light for another, dark being the sexiest of the two in my studied opinion; the irony of this being that the story was written before any of the real changes happened, and it was kind of, sort of like a prophecy come true.

A boy I know writes music downstairs in his basement on an expensive weighted-keys keyboard with no lights except for a yellowish standup lamp and a neon light shaped like a guitar in blue and purple and red that he got for his dad at Christmas; and his songs, the lyrics of which usually only have vague connections with reality and are divined mostly on the spot, never fail to predict with uncanny precision events that happen within a month of the song’s birth; and this fact he attributes to the general meaning and purpose that this world has, with a sprinkle of divine inspiration, but also the power to create the reality around him, which doesn’t really make sense.
The life that I live is created by myself months and years before any of it happens, because I build my life as I build a novel; long before any words are put onto a computer, I line physical sheets of paper with the secret framework, the clandestine story behind the story, knowing all along (subconsciously) exactly what will happen except for the minute surprises that jump out at me during the present, a time I like to visit every so often to see how I’m getting along in my novel and in my life; and once the gaps are filled in, the divine framework of it all disappears and you are no longer able to chop it into sections and chapters and instances but rather one big rolling story where all the pieces are somehow connected to each other, specific occurrences uninterpretable without the unabridged version that for some reason, we all forgot; everything falling into place.