

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Beate Sigriddaughter: Three Prose Poems

Beate Sigriddaughter · Thursday, February 24th, 2022

Soul

Her soul lives like a glossy wolf, vigilant in its thick forest. It knows secrets. It is gentle but it has no mercy. Sometimes it shows her the brilliant yellow on a goldfinch breast, at other times the candid photos of corruption and the slow extinction of species after species in the name of profit and convenience. It makes her wish to be a Russian dancer with a complicated name gliding with exquisite skill on breathtaking ice, or a Croatian cellist, responsible only for perfection, not how much it costs, or how the atmosphere is doing. Once, sparring with an angel over the validity of personal convictions, the angel asked, *Are you willing to die?* And she wanted to quip, *And do I have a choice?* But, talking to an angel, she felt she should curb such levity. Early on she had believed that souls were soft things with compassion. Hers tells her now that once you are a dinosaur, there is no point in yearning to be hummingbird or sprite. She doesn't know if she should take that as a challenge or a consolation. Somewhere she recently read advice about defying aging. She doesn't want to defy anything anymore except on occasion the man she otherwise loves.

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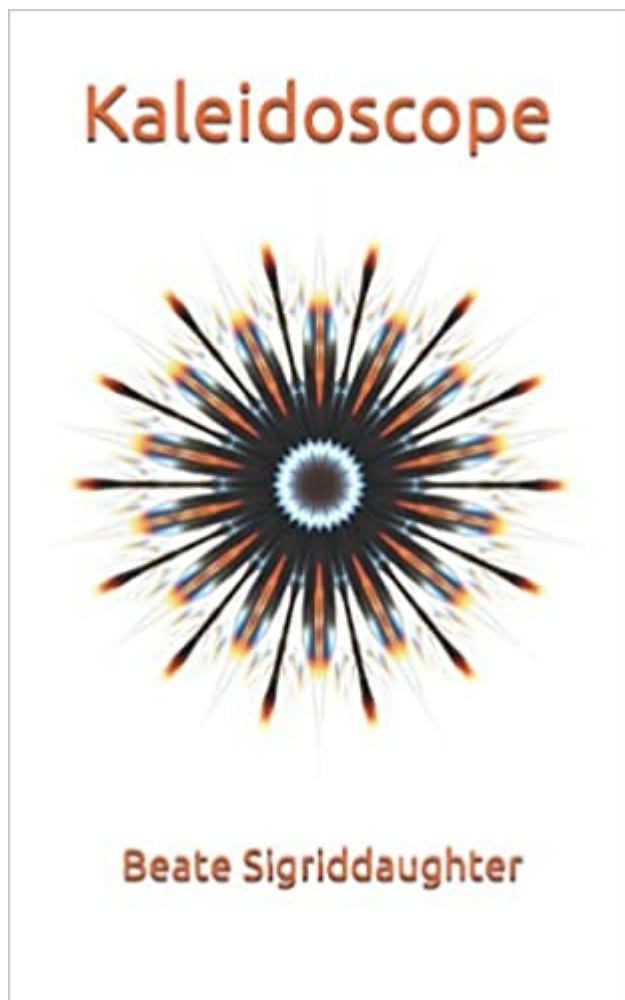
Exuberance

Summer was never closer than this, not even that year of narrowing it down to a choice between the fleeting taste of coconut, freshly sliced, or thirty long strands of indigo glass beads that would last longer, offered by beguiling vendors on the bridge in Venice, and finally choosing both, one for now, one for forever. Sometimes, like then, she simply nails it, handstands and somersaults, a circus dancer sparkling on her elephant's back, sweetened by applause and blowing kisses after making tigers roar. That, or dreams of canyons veiled in fairy mist, then breaking clear to a canyon wren's scales echoed against the narrow walls. She can't save enthusiasm for some rainy day, or politely apply for permission. The challenge is to live the way she wants to live without excuses. Simple, but not easy when she has been trained to be more sober, more restrained, more bridled. Sometimes she flees into the fork of a juniper for solitude. If no one else wants to play out loud, she can get by on her own. She is willing to befriend the darkness, knowing how the sky is full of stars. She is brave, greedy, in love. Once she dreamt of standing by a door with her true love, appealing to the world: *Could you leave us alone for half an hour?* Just then summer spread into morning and she woke. The sparkles remained.

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Secret Love

She thought she'd never get caught. She should have known. Everybody pays homage to conflict. Even the poets now participate. They swagger. They provoke. They shout in your face. How orthodox everybody has become. Secretly she cavorts with clichés, the sweetness of what millions before her have loved, fairy wings, gossamer gowns. Reality with its cruel vise of intellectual respectability surrenders to azure fairy lakes in hidden forests where she washes her wings, plays her flute until all is sacred again, the lakes, the heart, the misty, unapologetic tenderness for rough tree trunks, lanky girls, long-haired trapeze artists, lizards dashing under rocks, dark tunnels, canyons, wide skies, hummingbirds sharing feeders side by side. Even difficult people. She wonders how much time she has left to live her furtive devotion to lizards and junipers and maybe on a six lizard summer day to a young man with smooth blond hair who makes her forget everything else for a moment. Despite all the injunctions against clichés and sentimental things, she glides through this forest, alone, so as not to embarrass anyone, enchanted now and again by the hoot of an owl.



To purchase the book KALEIDOSCOPE by Beate Sigriddaughter

To visit Beate Sigriddaughter's website

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