

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Charlie Brice: Two Poems

Charlie Brice · Thursday, October 7th, 2021

### Dyslexia

Suzi's long straight hair,  
the color of heather,  
draped over soft  
seductive shoulders,  
her 14-year-old body  
snug in the shift tightly  
wrapped around her;

she introduced me to  
Dylan's folksy drone.  
We listened to Bob's wild  
laughter during his 115th dream,  
imagined him in the basement  
needing eleven dollar bills  
when he only had ten.

Suzi was cool, fab, gear!  
My brain almost bled  
while I obsessed on what  
I'd write to her on the back  
of my tiny photo from our  
sophomore yearbook.

How to capture, in a  
pithy phrase, not only  
my erotic yearnings,  
but the respect I had  
for her intellect, the  
silent dignity of her...

I couldn't finish. My  
adolescent vocabulary  
failed. My pounding heart  
pummeled my resolve.

Overwhelmed by impulse  
I quickly scribbled, *Suzi,*  
*you are such a sweat girl,*  
and handed my photo to her.

I watched her flaxen hair  
jerk and quiver, listened  
to her snap her tongue  
against her teeth, the *tsk*  
of death. *I'm such a sweat*  
*girl?* She said incredulously.

I watched her walk away,  
down the locker laden  
hallway of our high school  
and wondered why,  
in God's name, I could  
never learn to spell.

\*

## Writer's Block

So new for me. Usually  
I suffer from logorrhea,  
not its nasty little cousin.

What a strange discipline  
writing poetry is. You  
create a good one

and then poof! You may  
never write another. You  
can't blame the weather

for your dry spell or  
the pandemic for your  
empty quiver—only

your skimpy imagination,  
your failure to order  
life's scree, find your

soul in a nearby riffle,  
or appreciate the composition  
of a neighbor's coursed ashlar.

Inside there's a stickle  
about word choice,  
punctuation, or whether

anyone would find your  
work a tiny bit interesting.  
All of which adds to your

hebetude until, desperate,  
you consult the back flap  
of your notebook where

you've listed words like  
scree, ruffle, ashlar,  
stickle and hebetude,

words you can throw into  
a poem—literary lifejackets  
that rescue stranded bards,

keeps them afloat, prevents  
their drowning in self-  
criticism and doubt.

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**Purchase *The Broad Grin of Eternity* by Charlie Brice**

*Photo credit: Judy*

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