

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Gerri Lucas: Two Poems

Gerri Lucas · Wednesday, February 5th, 2020

Bone

He complimented me
on my back, my shoulders,
told me, *you have the frame of a bird—*

all delicate & fragile.

After making love, he fingertip-traced
from neck to collarbone, dipped into hollows

between flesh & bone,
said he wanted to be Picasso, make me
his masterpiece. Blushing,

I smiled & giggled.
I knew little about Picasso, except his figures
were distorted, parts painted in odd places—

disfigured & broken.
His gentle touches became gouges,
compliments snapped to corrections, *Eat*

only fruits & vegetables.
Wrap up in cellophane, sweat your structure out.
He said I'd be beautiful, once he carved me down—

all bone & no meat.
I allowed him to dream his delusion of me,
let him probe the tiny spaces

between rib & vertebrae.
He left bruises with every *I love you*,
commanded me

to disrobe & stand
before him. Told me to expel the air from my lungs,
make my skeleton emerge. He pressed

his thumbs & fingers
 hard into my hips' flesh, pushed forth
 my pelvis. When I complained,
 he shouted,

*Beauty & pain
 are the same, dear!
 When I am done,
 you will hurt, beautifully.*

*

How to Build a Poet

fillet away all ligaments—
 silvery and tough— debone flesh
 for tenderness and ease of chew.
 Unbutton each rib individually,
 have church with every organ,

commune of body and blood.
 Tithe in muscle mass and skeleton,
 chop away cartilage until blind,
 pull nails from beds, enjoy the bloody
 separation. Scrape cells from mouth, smear

them on slides, view their beginning in strands.
 Use them to spark the remembrance of structure,
 study the connective tissue, bathe it in sun. Rearrange
 its boney pews, raise them like chapel beams, rebuild,
 despite gravity, and regrow solid, from the rafters up.

(Author photo by Levi Williams)

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