

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Kirk R. Miles: "The Holiday Inn in the Suburbs" & Three Other Poems

Kirk R. Miles · Wednesday, December 4th, 2013

*We are honored to feature the poetry of Canadian poet and playwright, Kirk R. Miles. These poems are premiering in this edition of Cultural Weekly.*

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### Identity Theft

This new persona is not much better  
than the old one. I shave in places  
I never used to and none of my shoes fit.  
I stole this self from the character bank.  
Just handed a note to the teller demanding  
a new life. She almost gave me her own  
including a brand new husband, bigger house  
and a cabin in the woods. I think the sex  
might have been more interesting, but  
it required inheriting her scars, which were  
deeper than expected.

I settled on this one because it seemed  
painless enough (although in the end  
no one is immune). I have a new-found  
ability to fix things and a craving for  
sauerkraut, which I never liked before.  
I am enthralled with the new balance  
on my Visa bill, but now the word "poetry"  
causes me anxiety, and not once have I  
looked longingly into the shadows  
made by clouds and found meaning.

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### The Holiday Inn in the Suburbs

Everything is shoddy grandeur:  
fake plants and fake paneling.  
The carpet—pristine yet tattered.

We are lined behind a family  
that carries scented pillows,  
and a teenage daughter, plugged  
to earphones, and never looks up  
from her cell. If zombies were  
to come pulling their rotten bodies  
from the grave through the lobby,  
no one would notice. Nothing  
could jar this sterile lethargy.  
Our room could be in a hospital ward.  
The wading pool in the water park  
has a viridescent scum floating  
on the surface. Everything smells  
like a McDonalds' restaurant. Night  
vacuums the light out of the room,  
leaving a rainbow flicker from  
the television dancing on the wall.  
We planned to have sex once the baby was asleep  
but you are snoring next to me and she is coughing  
in her dreams. A hotel zombie is chewing on my leg  
and I am disconsolate because I cannot feel him  
eating my flesh and I so much want to feel  
something. Anything really.

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## Love is a Road Side Car Bomb

Everything happens in slow motion,  
like a train wreck or a car accident.  
Did I mention when flowers die  
they come back as your eyes?  
Lives have doors. Apertures open  
and meaning spills out like a bag of  
marbles, or nothing, and you enter  
into a clean void with the glint of  
hardware at the side of the road.  
I positioned my alcoholism at your  
feet and you stepped over it like a  
slight inconvenience, brushed it  
away like lint. How could this  
adoration grow out of a crack  
in the cement?  
The initial blast– grinding  
your hips against the blue sink in the  
janitor closet while rocks from  
the explosion are hot to the touch.  
Since then: bicycling through swamps.  
Neither could speak certain words:  
Husband. Wife. After the detonation

the smell of burning rubber and  
dust settled on us for years while  
we slept. How many families are  
made from a kiss? We carry the  
ordeal with us like a prosthetic heart–  
post traumatic sex syndrome.

A decade of cool mountain air and  
at the breakfast of our relationship  
we throw a piece of wood on the ashes  
of a burned out fire and smoldering  
like a smoke signal, it reignites as child.  
Another Improvised Explosive Device  
one of us will have to disarm.

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## Thinking in Waves

Window-seat planes on the runway:  
There I stood human in a parkade.  
Twilight lingers: I am contemplating  
Moon is in a new phase not rotating.  
Doors have rooms in the all-night café.  
Airport lounge and you stated your case:  
Ten more years in this cultural waste?  
You wore a blue dress all that season–  
Hard to caress when you need a reason.  
The way your cheek bone cradled the phone.  
Hi-def is broken, and so is the DVD.  
Need a quote on a “reno,” rain leaking through.  
You wore your heart like a fashion statement–  
Every new man was Daddy’s replacement.  
The way your knee bends with a moon curve.  
*Top image: Petals of Paula via Flickr Creative Commons*

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