

Grace Marie Grafton

Medicines to revive

Shocking red hair, drugs on the kitchen counter
account for the life-study nude she paints
in contrast to the corpse on the floor. No
one's world is stable, most don't like being
reminded of it but she lets anything
in the door. Yarn ball dropped, bristling
near the cowboy boots her storyteller
sports. Not really a sporting sort,
the eyes hint of Johnny Cash or Abe
Lincoln "with malice toward none,"
but here again at the scene of the crime.
It will be the connecting thread.
I pull up a chair to sit and listen
to the way she tears the human story.

No tiredness, no reason

for Roy de Forest

Make the necklace from iambic pentameter
Use the same dog in different costumes
Lumpia spied as crescents in the washout
Wishes bake crumbs in renewable hearts
Every dinner hour the imp peeks out
Lucky lips keep mum secret lives
Match the hat to the tilt he said
Wound-tight mercy favors flimflam
Blend intention with how porkchops brown
He dipped into argument war mongers pass
Better bring in the imagist farmers
Some tight redhead convinced lamp posts to sign
Finish up accounting with lollipop tongues
Limber fashion mannequins' haute
Ready for the gifts

I'd drive downtown but traffic's monolithic
Leave nothing out to roam the backseat
Father builds towers of found ceramic
Wingnuts, skeletal bits of wrecked cars, wires
Hoarders of closetsful return to the crime
I lasso mistakes I wish I could heave-ho
Nothing to wrap knees around, trade in my knight
Memories' bad-dance pigs break in back doors
Maybe a wounded surgeon could be my therapist
Father paints flies on his rented room walls
His flitting angel alters the way she flits
Habit in, habit out, repeats make palpable
Words carry me to wilderness redoubts
Redwoods do not wait for my arrival