

Loneliness Motel

By Michael Keshigian

His little hole in the Boston skyline,
one window lined with soot
facing Fenway Park.
In the room overhead,
there was a clarinet
that stalked Stravinsky's Three Pieces
every evening.
During the day it was mostly quiet,
the crowd on the sidewalks
resembled the spiders in the room,
preying with thick overcoats
to catch the unsuspecting
in a web woven with smog
dimly illuminated with the little light
that penetrated the building alleys,
so dark, he could only shave
with a lamp in his face.
Every morning at 7:30 A.M.,
students clamored on the staircase,
rushing en route to classes
at the universities
and colleges around the corner,
the clarinet player would flush the toilet
then turn on the shower.
Once in a while, a bird
chirped or tweeted, like a bell chime,
so close to his door,
for a moment, he believed
he had a visitor.

A House of Cards

By Michael Keshigian

He misses those evenings
with the lights turned down low,
returning home late
from a part-time job,
his mother at the kitchen table,
tight lipped, holding her breath
until he entered,
her thin fingers interlocked,
thumbs rhythmically twirling,
finally asking questions
that provoked his perspective
as she made him a sandwich.
The rest of the family slept
as he chatted, she listened,
feigning a degree of comprehension
to give him a sense of security
until the grandfather's clock
struck midnight,
making them realize
the day's impending fatigue
after the twelve count ended.
She understood he was not typical,
choosing music over movies,
philosophy over financial,
creativity over commerce,
commitment over coercion,
and like few others,
he will not find comfort
within the current standards.
But until she entered
the silent world of her own mind,
she had him convinced
he was never alone.

What to Do With Intangibles

By Michael Keshigian

Early morning, a little snow
teases the outstretched branches
with the help of the wind.
It is cold, but inside the stove's warmth
cradles the recliner in the lamplight
where he reads poems.
His fingers, thick and calloused,
flip pages enthusiastically
as he notices the shape of his nails,
much like his father's,
no moons rising.
And like his father had done,
it's time to contemplate departure.
One day, the stove unlit, will dispense
the damp aroma of creosote,
the book will lie closed
upon the arm of the recliner.
One day, a relative will enter
and acknowledge
that the house is empty,
no warmth, no breath, no poetry,
an indentation upon the seat
next to the book.
The change will go unnoticed
by the snow, wind, ice, and
those few crows meandering
for morsels upon the buried landscape.
He returns to reading,
the words delight him.
What would become of these joys,
he wonders.
Someone should take them.

Mountain King

By Michael Keshigian

He pictures the high hills,
cool mist rising from
the valleys between,
vagrant ice patches that linger.
It is his, in his mind's eye,
that hall of the mountain king
where nature opens before him
beyond the tips of great white pines
that shelter his secret.
The eagles pay homage
when he walks by,
the great cats purr from a roar.
He stares into the scented air
that moments before
cleansed his skin
with a cool, wet breath.
Master of this dominion,
his hair is on fire
peeking, like the sun,
between the vaulted crevices,
his body pulsates
to the rhythm of wind
that forces the clouds
to shear upon the pointed tips,
releasing the rain
like sheets of wavering grain
that greet him
and nourish the wildflowers
into rainbow colors
that attract the yellow bees
and hummingbirds with piercing beaks,
scattering the moths
that saturate the sky like confetti.

Present Comfort

By Michael Keshigian

He stands in the open doorway,
a brisk breeze caresses his face.
There is a shadow cast
from a dried maple branch
of straight lines
dyed black upon the lawn
that resembles a stick man,
an apparition that points up
toward the sunny sky
that obliterates blue
as if to designate its source.
He imagines himself the outline
penciled atop the green,
where the grass is cool and moist
as it brushes his skin,
where vagrant ants
and earthworms tickle his underside
when they course beneath.
The landscape is quiet otherwise.
He is content.
Vagrant clouds, like the years,
move rapidly over him,
close enough to the sun
to threaten and momentarily
dissolve his imprint.
There is nothing he might do
to stem the inevitable,
but to distract himself
with the magic about,
for the future is black,
the present, light,
which will yield no notice
when it dissolves him.

Writing Raw

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Michael Keshigian bio: Michael Keshigian's tenth poetry collection, *Beyond* was released in May, 2015 by Black Poppy. Other published books and chapbooks: *Dark Edges*, *Eagle's Perch*, *Wildflowers*, *Jazz Face*, *Warm Summer Memories*, *Silent Poems*, *Seeking Solace*, *Dwindling Knight*, *Translucent View*. Published in numerous national and international journals, he is a 5- time Pushcart Prize and 2-time Best Of The Net nominee. His poetry cycle, *Lunar Images*, set for Clarinet, Piano, Narrator, was premiered at Del Mar College in Texas. Subsequent performances occurred in Boston (Berklee College) and Moletto, Italy. *Winter Moon*, a poem set for Soprano and Piano, premiered in the Fall of 2013 in Boston. (www.michaelkeshigian.com)