

Age

By C.S. Fuqua

Gray hair, wrinkles, and miles walked
separate me from them,
but drive is what keeps us close,
theirs full-blast and seeking,
mine tempered by walls hit,
yet still seeking answers
to the same questions
they're now asking
and will still be asking
when they've walked
as far as I have.
Take a moment.
Sit with me.
Let's share
a drink,
and talk.
Like friends.

Transplant

By C.S. Fuqua

Far more developed
than I'd expected,
they'd formed
an underground network
that took hours to pull.
Even now,
shoots pop up
here and there,
random reminders of
how we transplanted
the original cuttings,
unsuspecting
that roots
would never
completely
give way.

One of a Kind

By C.S. Fuqua

Like no other—
No.
What new
can be said
of anything,
of nothing?
Singularity, similarity,
illusions of the blind.
Spare incantations.

Just be.
For god's sake,
just be.

Feed

By C.S. Fuqua

Total continuity.
TVs in every dental office,
every store, clinic, bank,
every restaurant.
Automatons blue-tooth-networked.
Podcasts perpetrating opinions earlier missed.
I remember the last time I went fishing.
Some guy's portable radio blasted
a pundit's political hatred,
and even the fish wouldn't bite.
Internet, television,
radio, mobile phone, computer --
connect, connect, connect,
independent thought disengaged,
a component of the common mindset,
swinging to whatever tune
drones the idiocy of the moment.
Oh, do teach me the song
because I've forgotten the melody
to my own.

One by One

By C.S. Fuqua

Tick-tock, they're going,
as all who went before.
My father used to lament those
from his childhood,
and now I understand.
But my grandfather never mourned
outwardly for those of his generation.
He would talk about the living
and let them go when they died.
He napped each day after lunch,
and, if you called it a siesta,
he'd make sure you knew he was napping
long before siestas became popular.
His wife had a separate bedroom,
reading dime-store novels late into the night
ending with whatever bible verse
she felt completed her day.
She was a decade younger than her husband,
and, when she died, he left her room
as it was the day she departed.
Twenty years, it remained undisturbed
until his youngest son and the son's wife
moved in and gutted the room
to remodel the entire house.
Shortly before he died,
my grandfather stood in the new hallway
where his wife's small room had once been,
looking around slowly as though
trying to recall something just out of reach.
I have since stood in that same hall,
but I can't determine what he was looking for,
but I sense it. Yes, I sense it,
just as he did.

No, Really?

By C.S. Fuqua

So why the surprise, I ask myself,
when fiction's accepted as reality?
Tell me what I want to hear,
what feeds my own warped existence,
and I will defend you
even when you've been revealed.
Tell me the problem
is not because of what I've done
or neglected to do.
Tell me that you
serve me, the people,
even as your corporate sponsor
vomits in my living room.
As long as you make me fear
what I do not understand
and mock what I should fear,
I will follow you,
I will follow you,
I will follow you
into oblivion
because slow suicide
is far more comfortable than
exercising truth.

C.S. Fuqua bio: C.S. Fuqua's books include *White Trash & Southern ~ Collected Poems ~ Vol. I*, *Hush, Puppy!* *A Southern Fried Tale* (children's picture book), *Rise Up* (short fiction collection), *The Native American Flute: Myth, History, Craft, Trust Walk* (short fiction collection), *The Swing: Poems of Fatherhood, Divorced Dads, and Notes to My Becca*, among others. His work has appeared in publications such as *Main Street Rag*, *Pudding*, *Dark Regions*, *Iodine*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Cemetery Dance*, *Bogg*, *Year's Best Horror Stories XIX, XX and XXI*, *Amelia*, *Slipstream*, *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, *The Writer*, and *Honolulu Magazine*.