

She is

by Elizabeth Stansberry

Blue, butterfly, crush,
with unmovable arms,
she tries to fly above
She is always stuck on
the ground.

She wants to be invisible.
She is too powerful,
too vulnerable,
too beautiful to remain invisible.

She clenches her jaw
and stares at the world
with both eyes open.
A blue gaze,
that could tear your heart apart.

In mere minutes
she has scars
a wired jaw,
a neck pieced together
with nuts and bolts.

She has wisdom,
and black memories.
She doesn't have a mother,
she doesn't have a father.

She has a blanket and courage
to keep her warm at night.
She never had a chance.
Her days have all been numbered
and her life has been built on
random miracles and a thin veil of hope.

But she's a real woman
she doesn't need much
to survive and she can push
her worldly desires aside.

She is a crooked angel
with the sweet mischievous smile.
She has a heart that shines
like a pink diamond.
Her mind is an ancient antique.

She is brilliant and magical
and completely fucked up and broken.
She is the one with dirty hair
and a sad face
The one you never look at
when you cross the street to get your coffee.

She is the rising phoenix
eyes and eyebrows etched in ash
She is underestimated, tossed around,
beaten down, worn out and fed up.

She will stumble, trip and fall,
then walk on with her head held high.
She is composed
of beauty and light
and proves this daily.

She is a real woman,
She doesn't need much to survive:
a blue notebook,
a flowered backpack,
a genuine smile,

She may not have a home
but she has a name
She has a purpose
She has dreams
and you ought to get to know her
because she is the best thing
that will ever happen to you.

Rhythms

by Nathan Roper

There is a rhythm to the streets
A constant beat weather cold or heat
The "crack" of a man being hit in the face
The slapping sound of a bitch getting put back in place
One can almost hear the low groan after a mugging
The distinct sound of an AK round
going through a Kevlar vest
Probably a well-deserved plugging
Is that the heartbeat of a thriving city?
Or is it the death rattle of a place in decay – no pity
Ah the sizzle of a crack pipe
The whining of a sick hype
So many different types
Ah – ohh swish like a locomotive coming to life
So does the city at 5 a.m.
By noon it's a noisy jungle
Where we play for keeps
Where not faraway a looser weeps
And for what you ask
A few spilled granules of dust
A quick moment's midnight lust
This is the oil that greases man
Intentions, some I can't mention
Least not today



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"Fallen Off the Edge" is a chronicle of one man's experiences after returning from the Vietnam War. Told through the eyes of Street Roots columnist Art Garcia, this book celebrates the major victories born from a series of questionable choices. Art's jocular storytelling takes the reader along with him in and out of the California prison system over the course of 10 years until he found the strength and courage to pull himself up from the fall.
The book is available online at www.blurb.com under searchword Art Garcia.

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