

POETRY

NEW YEAR'S DAY

If he could mow the snow he would.
Thomas Lux

Mr. Mazza mowed his lawn,
That's all I knew about him.
It was a manual, repeating rickety-rik.
I don't know what he did for a living.
He could have been retired.
He was in the group of men we called old.
Maybe he mowed so much to mock us.
Most of our street was lawnless.
It was two porches hanging over a stoop.
We didn't bother pulling the weeds from the cracks.

He had a daughter and a wife who was nice
Because on New Year's day she would give back
All the balls that had fallen in their yard:
Tennis, baseball, whiffle, pinkie and pimple balls
When she died, and he was packed for Arizona
to live with the daughter,
I bought a love seat from him
with a bed beneath. It weighed a ton.
He was serious as we bartered but I think he was sad
because he smiled at me like we had shared a secret for years.

David R. Surette

Girl's Catholic

a gypsy girl
black hair to her knees,
barefoot on a square of rug
both hands
wrapped around a microphone,
her mouth a hair away.

Don't you want somebody to love?

I see her across the dance floor with her friends.
I move sideways, crab-like,
around the outskirts of the hall.

Don't you need somebody to love?

lost confidence half way around,
end up in the boys' room,
toilets overflowing,
one of my brother's friends
slipping and falling into the puddle,
resume my side ways trip to the target female.

Can't you find somebody to love?

pushed aside by my brother's wet friend

who asks a girl to dance
so I watch
waiting to see how long before
she notices he's soaking wet.
It doesn't take long
she screams over the blasting music
and stomps away, and he just looks at her
"What?"

Love!

by the time I return to my mission,
I see my target is again across the dance floor.
I have to circle back
sideways of course.

Tears of joy are running up and down your breast

the nuns
turn on the hall lights,
and the band packs up
still buzzing in my ears.

Arm goin' home, Arm goin' home to see ma babee!

the lights blink on,
revealing statues of the Virgin Mary
who had stood in the shadows
with two backed beasts.
while I had roamed the hall
in search of somebody to turn in circles
somebody to love.

David R. Surette

Boys Without Girls

It was Twohig's car,
a Chevy Caprice once owned by our high school principal.
Stopping at green, going on red.
One Adam Twelve, One Adam Twelve

We ate in it
so it stank of special sauce and sour shakes.
We drank in it
so it smelled of the dregs in the rolling cans under the seat.

In the console lived a monster named Dragmar.
We would open it up and ask for advice.
From the rearview mirror hung Pop 'n Fresh,
the good angel to the bad.

Riding shotgun I sat cracking the vinyl in time to *Radar Love*.
In the back crowded Jim and Tom, sometimes Steve who
knew all the words to *Taxi*:
She was going to be an actress and I...

Girls in the car.
Dave introduces them to Dragmar,
gives Pop 'n Fresh to some weeping Sophomore.
I could have killed him for that.

Writing Biography

David R. Surette is the author of a new book recently published by Koenisha Publications of Michigan. It's called *YOUNG GENTLEMEN'S SCHOOL* and it collects all his published poetry plus ten brand new poems.

David is the author of three poetry chapbooks *Malden, Muckers and Grinders*, and *Good Shift* and has been published in literary journals such as *Peregrine*, *The South Boston Literary Gazette*, and *Midnight Mind*.

He has been the featured poet at schools and libraries and in poetry venues such as The Boston Poetry Slam, Stone Soup Poets and Borders Boston.

His poem "Forever and Ever" was nominated for a Cambridge Poetry Award in 2002 and another poem "Acadie" has been translated into French for publication in Canada by Henri-Dominique Parette the translator of Anne of Green Gables.

Many of Surette's poems are rooted in his working class upbringing in Malden, Ma in the 1960's and 70's. He writes of family, neighborhood friends, Catholicism, public high school, love, rock and roll, and hockey. He also writes of the discovery of his Acadian roots. His later poems detail his new life in South Easton, Ma. with his own family and his life with horses, sheep and sheep dogs. Surette has taught in Waltham and East Bridgewater and often writes of the teaching life.

Critically acclaimed poet Thomas Lux says this of Surette's poems: "I like his poems a great deal. They work on the reader's or listener's pulse, the only true test as far as I'm (and also Mr. Keats) concerned."

Legendary Boston poet Jack McCarthy says of Surette's work. "Out of all that feels so familiar and often so funny, he draws your eye with seeming effortless to the surprising and the poignant. He tells the stories we have been overlooking in our lives."

Surette is also co-host of Poetribe which meets in East Bridgewater at the public library every other Saturday and presents a workshop, open mic, featured poet and a poetry slam. Recent featured poets include Fred Marchant, Adrian Blevins, and Franz Wright, the 2004 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry

YOUNG GENTLEMEN'S SCHOOL is available online at Amazon.com. Samples of his poems, a list of upcoming readings, a biography and a photo are available on his website <http://www.davidsurette.com/>.

You may use the photo, biographical information, and quote the poems available on the website: <http://www.davidsurette.com/>

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