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Resect. Paet

Fiction - Poetry

11/2/74

Dale Clatchee

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Douglas Complex

Mohave Unit 1-B-24

Douglas AZ. 95608

11/2/74

Desert Poet

Brief tales of the desert  
- and other things!

Dale Clatscher

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11/22/63

He never heard  
the sound,  
the shimmering  
bloody hiss of air  
that snapped back  
his head  
startled him,  
made him dizzy  
in quick circles  
of doubt  
and anguish.

Suddenly,  
for the second time in life  
he clung  
fiercely, desperately  
through hands  
reached ~~trailing~~  
across vinyl straps  
with quick urgency.

As fiery eyes slashed  
through his brain  
hemorrhaging  
deep wells  
of silence and dread.

Cletcher

VISIONS of heaving boats  
ON weathered seas  
anxiously plundering  
dreams and fortunes  
startled him;

screaming men  
struggling  
pleading  
and cursing annihilation,  
fighting vainly  
to free themselves  
from desolate fate.

Quick motion flashes  
revealed  
his peril  
and hurled him forward,  
desperate to escape  
the darkness  
- order its shape -  
and reliable promises  
of life.

But the light  
- never glancing -  
receded

Clatcher

too quickly

109  
turned aside

and held him tightly,

- mockingly -

in its grasp.

Defiantly he cried,

'What of all

left undone!

Has grace, beauty and life

finally counted

for nothing?'

'Nothing'

answered the waters

'Men live, die, and perish

Only myth, only legend endure'

Desert Poet

Staring hard  
at old age  
grainy, yellowed  
a photograph surfaces  
long forgotten,  
ignored, discarded  
weathered and scratched,  
A face looks out  
with  
youthful disdain;  
A MAN  
barely sensing  
the ACC  
of his sepia life.

Slowly  
the  
color  
fades,  
leaving him  
puzzled  
dispirited

yet oddly  
resolute,  
determined to salvage  
something untempered  
from the years;  
~~something~~ perhaps,  
a semaphore  
A token of wonder,  
shards  
of stillness.

He'll go  
toward the desert  
the search  
out where life is lived  
close to the bone,  
raw,  
unfiltered,  
essential

Trek to the edge  
of a sere,  
barren landscape  
and shivered remains  
of long departed  
August moon.

Clutch

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NOMADS who sought redemption  
IN SAND

stone

and shale;

revelation UNSCATHED

by time

strained  
filtered through

OR ART

white, hot, lost.

Desolate, wild, untarnished,  
bare cliffs here yield

SCANT TRACE

OF FRACTURED SKULLS

and rough husks,

gradually shearing off

acquisitive bark.

He offers mute sacrifice

before spindly blooms

of flaming light,

as defrocked men

in tattered skins

trace spectral animals

through fractured caverns,

grinding rock by rock

along trackless wastes.

Clatcher



But can so frail a weapon as wit  
mediate

such harshness?

Saints and martyrs

where  
~~but~~ fiery passions  
flourish here,

die quick deaths

amid

CAINE AND CACTUS.

LACONIC, SPARE MEN

prevail

short of desire

and dreams,

tracing madness

through wreaths

and splintered aisles,

casting stones

at frail shadows

and loose tongues.

So they wander, he among them,

searching less for deliverance

than simple obscurity,

tranquil, savage men

too long alone

come to bear

silent witness.

Cletcher

'Black Rhino Auction'

'Old, solitary black rhino auctioned  
(Track & Kill) in Texas for \$350,000

Time Magazine, Dec. 2013

Notice!

/ AUCTION

One old Bull head

(my head!)

big and

wily

serene

(maybe a little disgruntled)

Now

FACE AND

dearable

having outlasted

MANY SEASONS

and cajoled

countless enemies

along my way.

In my youth

A raging bull

full of bluster

and contempt

such,

undisciplined,

catcher

hungry,

prone to fighting  
but gradually,

gradually,

sapacious

+ yielding

Willful

- of course -

yet seasoned

and tempered

as scars

and seasons

accumulated.

From the first

the hard instinct

proved elusive,

as I grew

older

and chose

to wander

unheeded,

untethered,

relying on other instincts

and guile

as proof against

fat's vagaries

Clutch

and

the wild life.

One by one  
as my tribe

drifted

fell

or scattered,

I maintained

a solitary path,

and shunned advances

as well as entreaties

content

to forage

wherever hunger led.

Finally,

apart and alone

gait nimble

but slower,

eyes unclouded

but dimming,

mind vigilant

though often distracted,

yet still care free,

I stumbled

into a blind

clutch

quick flash!

~~but~~ - ~~maimed~~ ~~my~~ dignity! -

I escaped

- with shouldering  
shuffling  
speed -

but now clearly

understood:

- marked -

'A Horned Trophy'

so late in life.

No children

NO mate

and few friends

to mark

my passage,  
if passage it be;

A life lived

on its own terms,

resolved into

a death / on others.

Yet

my memory yields

few regrets

and time's passage

only visions

of feasts and romps.

Cletcher

PASSION AND PERPLEXITY

So ON I tread

UNTIL finally - ~~fatally~~ -  
seduction looms:

A MAN

stalks AND waits

offering

- AT A stroke -

absolution,

remission,

but from what?

Sins yes,

I'd led

A selfish

loutish life,

ONE free

of guilt

AND remorse.

But after all

my mates renounced

those feelings

years ago.

Why

NO black chink

has ever abandoned

his manhood

his headstrong bluster

Clatcher

even in the muddy depths  
 of the great river,  
 and on the  
 open plain  
 the fearsome  
 lion  
 and frightful  
 hyenna  
 quailed  
 before  
 my bulk and horn.

Now a mere man  
 come at last  
 to challenge me?  
 the hubris,  
 the audacity  
 teases - tantalizes,  
 makes me  
 quiver and jump.  
 with excitement  
 and anticipation:  
 A last frolic looms  
 in the mist.

Tauntily  
 I run,  
 eager to test  
 my resolve

Clatcher

my mettle

Against

one last

'Great White Hunter,'

a 'prize winner'

come forth to challenge

my still resplendent

will and cunning;

A chance

A gift

to relive

A youthful time

when bold men

really stalked

- though seldom dared -

my ilk.

Down a slope

I bound

exuberant

free

excited,

determined to wage

one last battle for...

for what?

For freedom, of course

for wildness

for pride

Cletcher



for animal strength

For Life

Clatcher

"I blush to tell you what I  
 said to her,  
 how bland I was, the promises  
 I made

All like a lover's, yet the girl  
 ran from me...

if herbs can turn the trick  
 of making her less cold... try them  
 on her.

Don't worry about my heat:  
 I'd like to see her turn to  
 melting fires,  
 To burn as I do now."

Ovid, Book VIII  
 Metamorphosis

Cletcher

'Circe'

A puzzle

A quandry,

A beguiling riddle

teases whenever

I think of you,

sullenly

tenderly

beseechingly (I'm sorry to say),

longing to share

everyday concerns;

the texture

of your life.

Trivial gestures now, easily made <sup>quickly</sup> forgotten:

do you spotify

to others' tweets?

Perhaps not -

always so different,

so spiritual and contained;

In you I glimpsed

myriad strands

of purity,

sandity,

hope and strength

Clutches

marvelous gifts  
 in one so young.  
 selfish of me  
 - of course -  
 to dwell on  
 unattainable bliss.

But I  
 reserve the right  
 to recall  
 you aglow,  
 seated in lotus  
 transfixed, otherworldly  
 a vision of mindfulness  
 and love;  
 A beautiful  
 warrior princess.

Ah, but surely  
 such fantasies  
 reveal far dimensions  
 of sadness and regret:  
 in my mind's eye  
 I saw  
 and judged  
 too many things  
 in haste

Clutching  
 and vanity.

I fancied that

I witnessed  
your true aspect  
when

- with your gifts -  
you casually received  
many (I'm sure).

But I

old fool  
remain your subject,  
and alas  
that I alone  
saw  
your true beauty.

## Storyteller

He came, as I always knew he would,  
 out of the desert  
 singing - not as you might think -  
 in parables or chymes  
 or learned discourses  
 but in even handed  
 blank verse songs.

In the old manner  
 he seemed ... touched,  
 deformed even,  
 imbued with a magic  
 that compelled  
 and made wary  
 even before others  
 heard his voice.

Perhaps some god  
 ordained it so  
 to fire his spirit  
 and set him apart  
 seeing - in this prodigal -  
 one who might speak of old ways  
 and temper our burdens  
 with his words.

Clutch

23

Suddenly there he stood  
in idle grandeur  
marked as if he knew, somehow,  
that we longed  
to share his trials  
and quell his fears.

Murmuring softly, earnestly  
building his pitch,  
settling our company  
as he would a spirited horse  
overfed, undernourished,  
melodic, insistent, careworn,  
thrusting back months, years,  
centuries even,  
in his voice I imagine  
the blind wayward seer of antiquity  
sketching battles and voyages  
allures and homecomings  
for capt believers, fishermen and warriors,  
showing - in greedy vanishing images -  
happier times  
and faultless heroes.

Now this minstrel savors  
our own tales  
pulsing joyfully,  
gathering us as of old  
a tribe, a band

Clutch

AN ARCH, A temple,  
 A hearth fire,  
 BASKING in the embered glow  
 of long forgotten memories.

We dream with him,  
 rub our tarnished idols  
 against our breast  
 and scream into the night;  
 patience he vows as he winds his tale,  
 dark mischief in his eyes,  
 someday my sons and yours  
 will sing our times  
 in dark and somber tones;  
 tales to warn and ways to scorn  
 if they be wiser men than we.

He bowed his head  
 and turned to go  
 savage tale complete,  
 still we wondered  
 if he'd leave  
 a parting rhyme - or two.

Ah yes he sighed with dim occult,  
 a teller's lot is fine.

Tales we weave out of the past  
 celebrate great and small,  
 but gifts of prophecy rightly shun



As charged with peril and offense,  
 But look now what Heroditus rightly told,  
 history's ample boon:  
 condemned to relive past old sins  
 are those who ignore its truths.

Is our greatness  
 now all in rhyme  
 or can we still mount the prize?  
 Be set by ill's dare we move  
 farther along this line?

I offer only a final hope  
 for gentle times ahead,  
 for men who weigh before they act  
 and seek the greater good.

For time enough to count our costs  
 before the glass runs dry,  
 to solve earth's wounds and make us whole  
 and make us good again.

He swung his arms and stepped aside  
 finally on his way,  
 content at last with what he'd spoke  
 and done and shared and dreamed.  
 Simple words and scattered rhymes  
 hold us long in thrall,  
 but now he modestly turned away

wishing us only  
a fair good day.

Clatkes

## Synapse

BORN AN OUTLIER  
A NOMAD,  
I ABHOR CONVENTION  
BUT CRAVE PERSPECTIVE,  
GAZING WITH CONFOUNDED EYES  
AT A WORLD SUDDENLY (MAGICALLY)  
REALIBRATED, RELOADED

VOYEURS AND STRIVERS  
PLUNGE ALONG DIGITAL WAVELENGTHS  
INTO HYPER-CATTINATED  
ENDLESSLY TRANSFORMING REALMS  
OF WONDER AND ARTIFICE  
AS I SIT BREATHLESSLY, IMPATIENTLY  
SEEKING FOOTHOLDS  
IN THIS MAGMA MIASMA  
OF SHIFTING SILICON,  
HESITATING AS AN AGE SHATTERS  
INTO KALEIDOSCOPIIC PIECES  
OF PROMISED DELIVERANCE.

FROM CAST OFF OBSESSIONS  
OF EARLIER TIMES,  
AN EMERGING TECH TOPIA  
APPROPRIATES FRACTAL EQUATIONS OF  
DECEPTION, FLIPPANCY  
SELF ABSORPTION AND GREED

Clatcher

ON A FAR FLUNG AXIS  
of obscure Astroglyphics.

But amidst this new galaxy of wonders  
did the abjections of other generations  
yield so little

CARE AND MEASURE,  
or did our conceits AND VANITIES  
CANCEL INFLUENCE  
AND RENDER ADVICE  
SUPERFLUOUS?

Where long trial and fearful excess  
commend modesty,  
FLAGRANT CHANCE NOW  
PLANTS AND GREENS;

Where CONCERN for scarce resources,  
blind theology  
AND MEAN VANITY reign;  
Where ARROGANCE AND ENTITLEMENT,  
jealous apathy  
MASKS CAUTIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

Now data sets offer sycophants  
UNLIMITED VISIONS  
of discovery AND WEALTH  
proximate CAUSE  
and VENTURE CAPITAL.

Cletcher

Now synapses of light speed  
register quanta of loss  
astride vast networks  
of interlocking wireless symposia.

But do such

glorious intrigues  
offer more than

blind devotion

to chance,

or will data pools

consolidate bandwidths

of sheer imagery /

aggressive commerce?

Light impulses surge  
with brash youthfulness

and craven ingenuity  
tortuously balanced on filigrees  
of abundance and loss,

while newly engineered vectors  
privilege

primacy, place and  
multiple transitions

for digitati,

Nostalgia, envy  
and careless humanity

for cognoscenti,

Cletcher

And endless borders

For the

endlessly dispossessed.

Bravely, remorselessly

the future offers

images of redemption and release

as marketer/servants

besiege empty corridors

hyper-atrophied

waste lands

stroking fears of relentlessly

mutating productivity

and fruitful obsolescence.

## Sacred Isle

I tend myths these days,  
 collapsing accretions overbordered  
 by empty promises  
 and spectral dreams,  
 searching for unerring grace,  
 unwavering faith  
 amid febrile signposts  
 of age and decay.

Barely hidden sandy recesses  
 cranial matter /

shadow glimpses  
 of attenuated life:

handscramble straited youth

lacking

dramatic focus

and even brief

encounters with mystery

Embedded subtraits just below  
 posit

conflicted early manhood

while diffused light

slowly resolves

into careless wanderings /

simulacra of achievement

but few reasons

abundant promise

misstepped

so frequently.

Even deeper excavations

finally open

tantalizing, evocative memories/

teasing revelations

of glistening bodies

and magical tides;

rites and allurements in the sun

that excited senses

and condemned ambition

to untimely, blessed demise.

No prejudice binds

these idyls once unearthed

of fantasies abound:

'Gatsby on the sacred isle'

in minor key of course.

Quickened lenses

illumine those hours,

refracted rays of paradise/

seamless gleams

that brushed aside doubts/

wasted years/careless tears;

Catcher



Unhinged by jealous Aegeries  
 the sire's say enticed, -  
 'honed webs of almond lustra  
 awash in seaborne breezes' -  
 (and tainted, overripe promise)

'Sacrificial dreams' she moaned  
 a light Pacific swells;  
 Iphigenia tressed  
 in Mediterranean vines  
 casting spells  
 to free Aegans  
 after Chaplin and his ilk  
 relinquished dreams  
 of marble obelisks  
 and sathon waves.

Burdened now  
 by impious NOUVEAU riches,  
 PADARO VAGRANTS ON SACRED claims  
 of Spanish blood  
 and landed vision,  
 the sacred isle  
 flings silvered webs  
 in light, rhythmic folds  
 across border lines  
 of sanctity and greed.

Clatcher

So we gathered  
 fearfully, abundantly  
 seduced by light  
 spoiled by dreams  
 of omnipotence and treasure  
 until finally, desperately,  
 abandoned like others  
 Obsessed by the MOON  
 Callie and me.

No fears, no doubts  
 color that time,  
 no regrets call out  
 no recriminations balance  
 on account

LUNAR breezes  
 called us  
 in youth and innocence  
 and we danced  
 - for a season -  
 among the stars.

Clatchu