

A.D. Winans

A Sea of Stars

Strangers have taken over
my body, shameless homesteaders
who stake their claim
like old time California gold miners

The men are elderly with gray beards
and drive horse and buggy carriages
the women wear dresses that hug the floor
there are no children, no dogs
just one black cat with a pointed tail

The town crier keeps me awake all night
a court jester roams at will through my dreams
a king dressed as a queen winks at me
an army of red ants crawl inside my head

A monster hides under my bed
howls to be fed
a midget woman courts my favors
offers herself in twenty-eight exotic flavors
the night collapses like
a home under the weight of a bulldozer

I'm summoned to appear before a military tribunal
my good conduct medal called into question

A rip-tide tears at my brain cells
my landlord cancels my lease
the judge gives me a stern look
declares it a mistrial

The bailiff writes down his cell number
tells me to give him a call
whispers he has a hot three-some
he thinks I might be interested in

The son of Frankenstein
shows me the way to the rooftop where
down below a faceless mob waits
with pitchforks and torches

A drummer boy from the civil war
works his way into my heart
Betsy Ross hands me a confederate flag
The night an insatiable nymph feasts on my flesh
leaves me a dead man laid out beneath a sea of stars

Woman on the Balcony

I see her two three times a week
Sits on the balcony when weather permits
here in old Italy town in old North Beach

her robe slightly parted
she thumbs through the pages of a book
takes no notice of the people down below

I watch her stand legs sturdy as pillars
that stretch to reach the sky
into the boundaries of my mind

my eyes beg to read the pages
she turns with sensual fingers
desire just one quick look
one intimate journey into the pages
into the space between the parting of her legs

a journey to forbidden places
a flight back in time
to another place another world
high on a balcony where I too ignore
the people coming and going down below

San Francisco Skyline

San Francisco skyline blanketed in fog
Wears her history like a harlot
In a tight fitting dress

Air sweet as a mango caresses her skin
Her breath fills your nostrils with longing
She's a ballerina walking a high wire
Ghosts of her past dissolve into each other
Rooms of walls dare you to enter

Fists clenched like a boxer
She plays your mind like a card shark
Doors of Nirvana open and close
Like trick mirrors in a fun house

She's like an aging jockey
Looking for one more ride
On a magnificent horse
That crosses the finish line
Barely breaking a sweat

On Being a Poet

Some poets write with speed
As if trying to stay one step
Ahead of death
Some write with the precision
Of a tailor wanting each line
To be a perfect fit

Some poets toy with poems
Use each word as a building block
Some write hoping for a literary reputation
Some with the hope of luring a lover to bed

Recently a poet editor invited me
To submit a poem
On the topic of fame

I'd ask him for money
But long ago gave away my soul for free
Being a poet
I'm already a millionaire

Bayshore Junk Yard

What's left of a classic 1956 Chevy
Lies like a war zone corpse
In a deserted battleground
Hubcaps gone seats gutted
Steering wheel pushed into dashoard
Waits on the auto crusher
To clutch her in its steel claws
To come down on her like a serial killer

Mutilated raped ravished
All life squeezed out of her once
Virgin frame

A.D. Winans is an award winning San Francisco native poet. He published *Second Coming* from 1972-1989. Award include a PEN Josephine Miles award for excellence in literature, a PEN Oakland Lifetime Achievement award, and a 2014 Kathy Acker award in poetry and publishing.

