

Two Poems by Donna M. Davis

The Orphan from Buenos Aires

This morning at the breakfast table,
Father appears in my thoughts.
He is reading the newspaper,
ignoring the six-year-old me,
who wears frayed dungarees
and spoons bran from a bowl.
I am thankful, because his attention
might soon become a form of torture,
his ugly insecurity a vicious slap.
See how coolly he folds his newspaper
and turns toward me, proclaiming,
“I’m not your real father, you know.
Your father was a millionaire
from South America,
and your mother was a barroom broad,
who gave you up.”
His words make me cry.
He orders me to stop blubbing.
What he said was only a test
to see if I’d love him anyway.

But what if the story were true?
I imagine my South American papá,
his handsome bronze face
beneath the brim of a beige fedora
scrolled with silver lasso designs.
He drinks espresso on the porch
of a pink hacienda in Buenos Aires
surrounded by cacao plantations.
Thousands of trees mirror each other.
Furrowed red and orange pods

await the milky bean harvest.
He isn't reading a newspaper
but grinning at the child
he rescued from an orphanage.
She wears a Spanish lace frock
and spoons melted chocolate
from a crystal *tazón*.
And his teeth gleam
beneath a thick moustache.
He is confident and calm
with a smile like a saint's.
His whispered words:
mi preciosa niñita, mi vida,
are comforting and kind.

Typing the Résumé

He knows it won't be easy
to walk that street of phrases,
its deep cracks tripping him up.
The hollow jargon of *strong*,
proficient, *capable*, *detail-driven*
is sucking the soul
from his tapping fingers.
No feelings allowed here;
the word "I" omitted;
the leprous truth –
why he was let go,
or why he had to quit –
exiled to an island
far from the blinking screen.
Chasms between jobs
creep under boulevards
of faceless bureaucracy.
Messages pulse
in telegraph code,
clicking the real narrative –
diligent, *hardworking*,
conscientious team player,
well-organized, *dependable drone*.
He stares out the window
past rain-slicked sidewalks
at the drearily modern
office buildings—
their cornerstones set
by anonymous hands.

Donna M. Davis lives in central New York. She is former English teacher and current small business owner. Her poetry has appeared in *Tipton Poetry Journal*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, *The Comstock*

Review, Burningword Literary Journal, Pudding Magazine, Slipstream Review, Halcyon Days, Aberration Labyrinth, Carcinogenic Poetry, Gingerbread House, Ilya's Honey, Latitudes, Oddball Magazine, Poecology, Poetpourri, Red Fez, Red River Review, The Centrifugal Eye, Third Wednesday, and others.