

Humor
(in and out of circulation)

COPIES TO GO

ROSALIND AND ORLANDO: ACT VI AT ROWLAND HOUSE

- Ros. To think-- you called me "he" in Arden's grove!
My dear Orlando, did you never once
Perceive beneath the clumsy umber smeared
Upon my face these porcelain female pores?
The lack of lurking beard to match my pose
Of worldliness? A dullard could have guessed
My prisoned hair, detected silken hands
And throat. Yet you, already lover, failed
To feel vibrations from the very same
You claimed had conquered you. How could this be?
Did not my lilt and pitch betray the self
That first had left you speechless, limp? My tone
Resolves no manly chord, no matter how
I tilt the scale-- yet plucked no knowing string;
No sympathetic tine was struck in you!
- Orl. Sweet bloom, my mind remained upon that spot
Where first I dropped my jaw and gazed. My all
Became a thrall to space you warmed, to grass
Your small foot blessed: A man sans faculties
Is not observant or responsible.
- Ros. And yet, should not the countenance which made
Him thus be shock enough to whisk him whole
To any country street or foreign hill
By dint of eyes and smiling mouth when met?
Imprinted as you were, it should have hit
Like lightning, made you gasp my name despite
Disguise. Did you not see the likeness, luv?
- Orl. Fair swan, I thought you brother to my pearl
At first. But then your clever talk
Beguiled me, tricked me with that cruel play.
- Ros. Why, any man should know what doublets hide
Is realized in hose. My curve of calf
Was granted to no boy! I was a fool
To think your credibility would mend
With marriage. Now I see the perverse Will
That joined us, captive in a biased pen,
My righteous girlhood wasted on a lout.
Farewell, Orlando, passion can't survive
Stupidity. I've slipped the ancient hold.
This hasn't been as I would like it, dear.

--Glenna Holloway

COURTSHIP

Male mammals aren't colorful, he said.
We can't fan out gorgeous tail feathers
or flash a brilliant blue dorsal fin.
We can't even blow shiny balloons from
our jowls and amplify a rhythmic song.

Well-- even if you did all that,
I'd choose you anyway, she said.

--Glenna Holloway

LIFE IN THE CHOIR LOFT

Mr. Cowper waited for the quotidian mouse run across the pipe organ's sharps and flats. Maybe staying on the black keys was a rodent game, or maybe the creature sensed vermin were more unwelcome on white. The sooty little offense always scooted between Cowper's practice period and the chime music broadcast, a noon tradition. People likened the organist's winged arpeggios to angels blessing the town.

Cowper was sure the mouse was female, personifying grayish women skittering across his path, too bright-eyed, pointy-nosed, whiskery. Like the resident soloist Letty Long, always wanting to rehearse, bringing him too-sweet cake, leaning her perfume over him.

Cowper once caught the mouse by the tail in a trap. The cheese was gone. The mouse must have flicked a triumphant parting gesture, then snap! Cowper was pleased with the crimp in its arrogance. When he felt its warm squirm, its scrabbling claws, he dropped it like a live coal. He saw it zip under the organ pedals, followed eye-level to poke with his umbrella, caused a bass eruption that jammed city hall's switchboard with queries about the unholy racket coming from the church cupola. He needed a sedative before his own ganglionic halls rang again with cherubic chords.

Forthwith, Mr. Cowper pledged himself to rid his small space of pests, doubtless plural by then. Thirty-nine years he'd played there, the mouse for two months. Bolder every day, avoiding devices guaranteed to dispatch, frolicking around janitorial efforts and congregational input. Cowper would exercise his own expertise. He filled Monday morning with Bach and righteous resolve.

The swell diapason rattled the rose windows, the flute tremolo segued a dirge, then silence. Mr. Cowper poised one classical hand. He didn't see Letty Long on the stairs as the trespasser appeared at 11:58, defying toxic treats, defiling the keys. Miss Mouse. Cowper fired his Mace.

LOVE IS WHERE YOU FIND IT

Admitted to Intensive Care
My only solace is the fare
On TV reruns every night;
I watch MASH till they douse my light.

I've lost my heart to Corporal Klinger,
I'm hooked on his corporeal zinger.
Pretending that he's really here,
I feel his nuzzling warmly near.

I turn my nose up with a snort:
That literary last resort,
The star of Master Gogol's plot,
Goes pale beside what Klinger's got.

His schnozz is bent into an arch
That doesn't need a speck of starch:
Proud declaration in a place
No rhinoplasty should deface.

Unhurried

Some think such blatancy affronts
Good taste. Not so. It boldly shunts
Olfaction's joys to apogees
Delectable, ~~his tongue agrees~~
my head's glow
That every ~~flavor~~ is enhanced
With home-grown talent far advanced.
Oh, Klinger, manly to the max
Majestically endowed, relax

With me on dreamed-of shores
And let me hear your wondrous snores
Played on an instrument so rare
A monument's erected there.

Oh, Max, A.K.A. Jamie Farr,
You've put my health back on a par
With what it was 10 years ago;
The medics marvel at my glow.

fantasies
Now doc tells me my head's not well.
It's plain a patient shouldn't tell
Such private fantasies to him
Who makes you feel you've slipped a shim.

Today my voice croaks odd inflections.
"These nosocomial infections,"
The nurse ~~replies~~, "are in the air.
You're being sent home to repair."

explain
nosocomial-- illnesses originating
in a hospital
40 lines

**GLENN HOLLOWAY
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HEALTH CENTER

Their nameplates brassily assert their place among this group of high-priced specialists. The medics' coalition set in this, the healing arts' most ultra-modern mall, is vital to the research of your purse.

It seems I can't control this nervy tic.
In humble fairness to their higher call,
I grant their knowledge, costly to acquire,
deserves high compensation. They insist.
Yet most of their experience was gained
from those who paid them, each new body brought
to be examined, pondered and explained.

The mall across the street has signs that read:
"Full satisfaction or your money back."
"All Parts are Guaranteed" and "Tune-up Special."
"Free Sample" "Discount Labor" "Super Sale."
They handle plumbing, leaky basements, gas
or sluggish engines. "Quick Replacements," too.

Perhaps our odds are better over there.

GLENNA HOLLOWAY
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INCLEMENT

Thank heaven the election's done,
Some folks lost, and some folks won.
Politico's messed up the weather,
Ruffled every bird and feather,
Altered every summer tune.
They began snow jobs in June.

--Glenna Holloway

POOR POET

Up to my hips
In rejection slips;
My space is getting crowded.

My assonance trips
On workshop tips;
My theme is overclouded.

I've come to grips
With banal quips,
Grown sharper, no denying.

I've fellowships
And microchips,
But editors aren't buying.

DISCONTENT DECANTED

Reserved and somewhat shy, still I refuse
to be intimidated when I dine
in fancy places where the waiters use
a French lip curl each time I order wine.

They sigh, they sniff, as if I'd ordered brine.
They start suggesting Zinfandel-- Chablis--
No thanks, I interrupt, just bring my Rhine.
No Chardonnay or Burgundy for me.

The sommelier will lightly pat his key
and name selections from a rarer vine
he feels would complement my bleeding Brie.
No thanks, I firmly say, my choice is fine.

He talks varietals from quaint chateaus
as if describing paintings by Monet,
insists taste buds will bloom and thrill my nose
if I'll experience the Beaujolais.

Rich cousin to "How 'bout some fries with that?"
his sales technique annoys me to the core,
along with his affected highbrow hat.
I'd leave but for the lobster thermidor.

His cellar full of words holds only one
gone-flat-with-aging rhyme for every line.
Oh, would that I could make a wicked pun
upon his failing pitch as I decline.

My simple untrained palate makes a plea:
Indulge me, bring my order with a smile
and save your expertise. I'm not, you see,
elitist, neither French, nor oenophile.

Remove the extra goblets by my plate.
I don't desire a change with every course.
The subject isn't open for debate,
my meal is not a sipper's tour de force.

Please take away your leather-proffered list;
Don't tout the Pinot Noir, just bring my meat.
I love your well-sauced food and here's the gist:
I'd rather savor flavors I can eat.

GLENNA HOLLOWAY
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WINE, OH!

Reserved and somewhat shy, still I refuse
To be intimidated when I dine
In fancy bistros where the waiters use
A French lip curl each time I order wine.

They sigh, they sniff, as if I'd ordered brine.
They start suggesting Zinfandel-- Chablis--
No thanks, I interrupt, just bring my Rhine.
No Chardonnay or Burgundy for me.

The sommelier will lightly pat his key
And name selections from a rarer vine
He feels would complement my bleeding Brie.
No thanks, I firmly say, my choice is fine.

He talks varietals from quaint chateaus
As if describing paintings by Monet,
Insists taste buds will bloom and thrill my nose
If I'll experience the Beaujolais.

What must I do to satisfy my wish?
Would cultivated frowning or a whine
Get me a frosty goblet with my fish
Without discourse I feel is asinine?

My simple untrained palate makes a plea:
Indulge me, bring my order with a smile
And save your expertise. I'm not, you see,
Elitist, neither French, nor oenophile.

His cellar full of words holds only one
gone-flat-with-aging rhyme for every line.
Oh, would that I could make a wicked pun
Upon his failing pitch as I decline.

Rich cousin to "How 'bout some fries with that?"
Such sales technique annoys me to the core,
Especially from beneath a higher hat.
I'd leave but for the lobster thermidor.

Please take away your leather-proffered list;
Don't tout the Pinot Noir, just bring my meat.
I love your wine-sauced gems and here's the gist:
I'd rather savor flavors I can eat.

--Glenna Holloway