

The City In Convergence

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A collection of Prose and Erasure poems

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Freelance | Meander

You await your chariot on this bright sunny day. You're an egg frying on the non-stick asphalt. Sincere apologies if it does not wait for you. Many others join in this repetitious ride down to something hopefully new. A wheelchaired man will discuss his whereabouts with his estranged family with the head of the chariot. No pulling on the reigns. The middle. A man sauteed in cheap fragrance. The back. The calls never delayed until arrival. Unthinkable. Music must be shared. Ungrateful ears? Unfathomable. Exquisite taste. What do you do on your endless journey? What is to be done? Nothing. Or perhaps something. Anything really. Whatever you please. You are free of responsibility. So seemingly. Stare out the window as you cross the bridge and pull on the reigns. You depart as you have before, as many others have before you. Where will you go? As if you don't know. The same as before. Is it worth it to ask for more?

Lanternity

Lantern flies are just little guys. Still, I can't help but be perpetually surprised when one flies. Or two, or three. They're nothing special to me, but I'd rather not partake in their bounty. They're no nuisance to me. Well, I try not to have anything be. Unless they threaten me, why let them have any bearing on me? There's enough on my mind and quite little time to find out that this poem really doesn't rhyme. The Greater Good! I'm sure someone else will come along to make the good greater. Why does that land on me? Wait, God, why do they keep landing on me?

Urgently Hiring

Who will take on this responsibility? It's an important position. Someone must fill the air with sounds of grief. Yells of struggle. Cries of agony and Yelps of worry. For the future is blurry and someone must shout! Someone must beg and bother, coax and holler, flaunt and taunt and plead for the attention of a closed door. Don't worry, we need not disclose much more. Will you take this position? It matters not the disposition. Anyone can become one. A Mother, a Father, a Brother, a Sister. A Friend or Neighbor. What else could possibly be done? A city does not run without a mayor. We don't need a prayer. We are urgently hiring. Nothing you can do will be as inspiring.

The Underpass

His eyes are fixed affront. One hand grips the wheel while the other caresses her thigh. The raindrops pound the windshield in a steady drone. They head away from home and into the city through the underpass. The evening lights are bright and spotty perched atop the tall bricks. The light disperses through the heavy clouds. Her right palm glides up his arm as she rests her left elbow on the console. She no longer need consoled. They are one soul. Ahead, the red glow of cars suggests slowing down. They say “There’s always a choice. Take it slow. Enjoy this moment. Don’t rush to get somewhere unknown. The road is not clear, you don’t know what’s near. How will you pass?” The bright lights in the rearview tell a different story.

“There’s always a choice. Don’t slow down. Speed up. Look behind you. We’re pushing you forward. Think of it all. It could be yours. Don’t worry, just get there and fast. Don’t waste time.”

“Let me take the wheel,” She says.

As Good As They Say?

New changes [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the [REDACTED] Dining [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] President [REDACTED] said [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reduce [REDACTED]

and enhance [REDACTED]. Well, this week I learned that he was [REDACTED]

wrong – [REDACTED]

Although, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] chips are chips. [REDACTED] he [REDACTED] came with sour cream, melted cheese, shredded cheese, green peppers and something else, but I only tried

[REDACTED] the cheese [REDACTED]; both on the side.

[REDACTED] “the good kinda chips.” [REDACTED] thick and crispy,

Together we ate the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the nacho cheese [REDACTED] definitely the same cheese used

in the Point [REDACTED] to make the mac and cheese. It was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the future, you will [REDACTED] find me in the [REDACTED]

in-between [REDACTED]

*1

Caller is Downtown

Downtown [REDACTED] Renaissance [REDACTED]. Caller is an employee who [REDACTED] walked by [REDACTED] a couple is [REDACTED] loud [REDACTED]. Caller doesn't want to interrupt [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] Caller [REDACTED] is selling puppies [REDACTED]. Caller is concerned [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] Caller said that a lady is drinking beers [REDACTED]. Caller does not like this.

[REDACTED] Caller reported finding [REDACTED] an urn full of ashes [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] Outside the Renewal Center. [REDACTED] something exploded and now flames are shooting out of the sewer.

[REDACTED] Pizza Parma. An employee reported [REDACTED] and fled on foot [REDACTED].

Downtown [REDACTED] [REDACTED] entrapment [REDACTED].

Caller [REDACTED] is drinking on the corner and swearing up a storm.

*2

Must We Prepare

River water does not wash away our sins. It muddies the paths and the parks. It obstructs the roads and the sidewalks. It fills the basements and erodes our patience. This wasn't asked for. This wasn't prepared for. River water does not wash away our mistakes. It brings sticks and debris. It brings fish from the sea. It brings heartbreak and tyranny. How many times must it rise again. How many times will we play pretend. River water will wash away our future.

Ft. Pitt Fall

It fits in nicely with the picture. It all does. Together. The reds and the yellows and the golds. The browns and maroons and greys. The lights and the shadows.

The sun was early to rise. Eager to share it's golden smile with the colors so vast and numerous. The blue skies birthed from the twilight framed the church atop the mountain. The red and the brown brick faded into the golden amber of the trees below. The metal reflects the sun's amiable warmth. A metallic fall. October's beauty blended in throughout the city. The days grow shorter and the warmth flees south, but don't fret. This is the one last gift of the seasons. The beauty is found in loss. If it were to remain, would we feel the same?

Additional Views

It may be hard to envision now [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. [REDACTED] the excitement [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 841 feet up [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. You may be wondering: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] where you stand in [REDACTED] the
street below [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] View 814. [REDACTED] a glass floor. We'll
have glass walls surrounding it, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] look straight down 841 feet [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I think I might need more convincing [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] get on the outside of
the building, walk on the edge, walk on an I-beam [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] This isn't the first time [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. You may remember [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] the Ohio River. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] he [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] turned [REDACTED] looking at the Steel Building, and realizing it wasn't [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] new [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], the funding [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was no coincidence. [REDACTED] To be able to share this project with people, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] get to the roof and [REDACTED] say, 'Hey, there's my house over there,' or, 'There's my neighborhood.' [REDACTED]. And

again, if you're wondering [REDACTED], you'll have to look forward [REDACTED]. For those additional thrills, like the View 841 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

Ferris Wheel On a Bridge

[REDACTED] We're closing in fast on [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED], but this year, [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] is the biggest ever. Oktoberfests [REDACTED] to bring people to their
 feet in celebration. [REDACTED] Pittsburgh [REDACTED], you might want to [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Pittsburgh [REDACTED] made
 the surprise [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] a Ferris wheel on the Roberto Clemente Bridge, [REDACTED] pretty darn
 certain is a first [REDACTED]. Yup, a carnival on a bridge. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] big gathering in Market Square, [REDACTED] giant beer [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] hopefully [REDACTED] We're
 going to [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] get everyone's attention [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] every day at noon. If you'd like more [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Ferris wheel [REDACTED], [REDACTED] visit
 Oktoberfest [REDACTED].

Source material for erasure poems:

1. Harris, Cassandra. "Burgh Bites: Point Perk – RIP Black Diamond." *Point Park Globe*, 11 September 2024,
<https://ppuglobe.com/2024/09/burgh-bites-point-perk-rip-black-diamond/>.
Accessed 28 September 2024.
2. *Downtown exclusives:*
Downtown. 107 Sixth Street - Renaissance Pittsburgh Hotel. Caller is an employee who said that they walked by a men's room and believes that uh a couple is trying to loudly repopulate the restroom. Caller doesn't want to interrupt but would like them escorted out.
Downtown. Katz Plaza. Caller says someone is selling puppies out of a cage in the park. Caller is concerned that there is no water bowl.
Downtown. Penn Ave at 7th Street. Caller said that a lady is drinking beers out of a large purse. Caller does not like this.
Downtown. Market Street. Caller reported finding an unattended box outside containing an urn full of ashes.
Downtown. Second Ave - Outside the Renewal Center. Multiple callers say something exploded and now flames are shooting out of the sewer.
Downtown. 963 Liberty Ave - Pizza Parma. An employee reported that an individual entered the restaurant, took all the to-go orders, and fled on foot down Liberty Ave.
Downtown. 322 Boulevard of the Allies - Boulevard Apartments @ Point Park University. FD just finished an elevator entrapment rescue.
Downtown. Smithfield Street. Caller says that a man is drinking on the corner and swearing up a storm.
3. Rodriguez, Yazmin. "Top of the Triangle: New attraction planned for Downtown Pittsburgh." *WTAE*, 25 September 2024,
<https://www.wtae.com/article/pittsburgh-top-of-the-triangle-downtown-us-steel-tower/62270316>. Accessed 28 September 2024.
4. Pinter, Barry. "Oktoberfest Pittsburgh will bring a Ferris wheel to the Roberto Clemente Bridge." *CBS News*, 6 September 2024,
<https://www.cbsnews.com/pittsburgh/news/oktoberfest-pittsburgh-ferris-wheel-bridge/>. Accessed 28 September 2024.