

Stumbling Grace

by Dan Cafaro

I'm not sure if my heart is breaking
Or attacking
Like an aged lovesick romantic with a faulty beat,
I sense a valve needs replacing
But only after the main artery has been sutured and made whole
By a seasoned and skilled Midwest surgeon in a lambskin trench
coat -
Who's weathered more storms than I care to admit - Nor she cares
to remember.

I'm not sure if our fights are petty
Or forever.
Like misguided missiles
Launched by allied nations
We feud over coveted territory.
Like unconscionable instruments of war,
We cause immeasurable pain -
Then pat the pillows and dim the lights -
With no resolution or gain in sight.

I'm not sure if this map is useless
Or irreplaceable.
Like petulant teens
Wandering with great intention
Through the wooded indifference of nature's instructive and
destructive path,
We snicker, and then sulk -
Pouring another forbidden nightcap to forget troubles -
Depressed at the thought of losing our way.

I'm not sure if this poem is perfect
Or pathetic.
Deplorable
Or recoverable.

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Doomed
Or destined.
Recyclable
Or irrefutable.
A sham, a shamble
Or rather memorable (and possibly frameable with a lifetime
guarantee).

I'm not sure if this road is paved
Or potholed.
Like a traffic signal whose fuse has stopped connecting,
Making red lights green lights yellow lights no lights,
Causing all sorts of havoc and unplanned detours
For two drivers unaccustomed to making spot decisions
Without being told what to do, when to act - how to feel -
I write with the stumbling grace of art's redemption
And the hope of your forgiveness.

