

Avatar Of Chaos

by John Olson

Our gardener is the avatar of chaos. Confusion and turmoil follow him wherever he goes.

He talks to himself and sings. He belches and howls. Objects crash around him by the hour.

Opinions roll from his mouth like onions multi-layered and sour.

His words are rough like stone.

He is carnivorous for work and accident prone.

He has one good eye and is missing the other. The socket of his missing eye squints with a disturbing and unfathomable insight.

He plants perceptions in my nerves that cause me to experience peanut butter and socks. He fills me with the knowledge of knives. He busies my mind with insoluble descriptions of Iowa. He plants feelings in my heart that blossom into hammers of turbid exasperation.

I have difficulty understanding him. His words are wrestled into audible meaning like a baggage handler at a bus depot.

Like clothes tumbling in a dryer.

Like rattlesnakes knitting a bullfight.

Like motorboats navigating the vertebrae of an earthquake.

He gargles the sky as the sky gargles clouds.

He spits bowling balls of mutant petroleum.

His arms are covered with dragons.

He carries a ladder that clanks like the machinery of emigration.

He breaks my brain into a hundred pieces and then plants cypress in my coffee and chrysanthemums in my orange juice.

Cotton sticks to his skin when he sweats and yard debris branches out of him like demented coral.

Why do we hire this guy?

Because he can make anything grow.

Because he is ancient as earth.

Because his forehead is the color of olives and his one good eye is
a fragment of trembling light.

Because his haircut resembles a tide pool held upside down by a
renegade moon.

And today the grass smells sweet as lavender.

And the gardenias are big as cement trucks.

And heaven tumbles by in a wheelbarrow.

And the hyssop is big as a moose.

