

Don't You Feel Like Crying?

by John Olson

Yesterday I rode a horse out into the cactus. The wings of dragonflies shined in the light, veined and transparent. I was surrounded by an ocean of silence. The air felt thick as a curtain. A curtain oozing dreams. The sand turned crimson. The sky was dressed in a wedding gown. The hooves of my horse clicked like consonants on the stone of the butte. We filled the air with the heat of our breath. My mind filled with reflection. Thought became a bird filled with real life. A vision of enduring vitality. Sand sage. Indigo bush. Apache plume. A pair of old boots painted by Vincent Van Gogh. I squeezed an orange and watched the juice ooze out. I was amazed by its light. A cloud passed overheard. A cougar pounced on a shadow. A tarantula crawled out from a rock. A coyote ran off into the brush. And I saw the bones of an old friend, a sternum caressed by the water in a creek, a skull filled with sand and flecks of gold. And the skull spoke to me and said we must endure the cold and the rain. And I could feel the weight of its voice. And I fell through a hole in my personality. I awoke to find steam rising from my body. Tree branches clacking in the wind.

I went home and flopped on the bed and gazed at the ceiling. My life tasted funny, the way it always does, but this time it felt bigger, and deeper, and wider, and I got up and got a glass of water, and drank it as the universe crashed through the window, and I stood, rooted to the spot, haunted by elusive perceptions, adjectives, my feelings exploding into art, scratching myself, feeling myself, a storm of fingers on the neck of a guitar.

I sat in my favorite armchair and dreamed. I listened to the insects exclaim their needs. Greet the moon. The stars. Infinity. Memories

stirred in the Louvre of my brain. The strain to see things clearly.
The construction of music. Meanings harnessed to words.

The whine of bullets. The howling of bombs.

Ever play the blues on an old 45 late at night on the desert?

That's where I discovered Aristotle.

And the problem of universals.

When the record was over, and the stars were silent, and I could see just about everything, the whole shebang, Milky Way and the lightning. And the phantom of a man with half his head lost was made out raking leaves in the yard of a building in Hatch. And a space man materialized floating along on Arroyo Angostura. And an extraterrestrial vacationer from outer space was distinguished relaxing on a couch in a trailer in Truth Or Consequences.

The ghost of a youthful lady sporting a blood-covered prom dress was distinguished at Caballo Arroyos Site Number Five Dam looking at the scenery.

The spirit didn't mind that there was someone other present.

The moon was a dark red blob of Alamagordo rock.

And Solomon Burke sang don't you feel like cra cra cra crying.

