



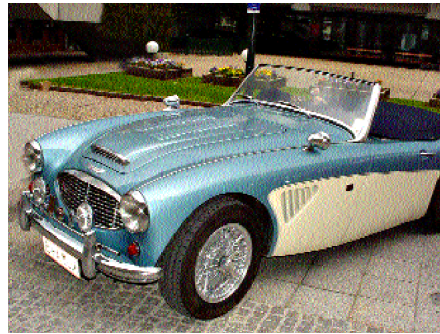
Sage With Umbrella
& Other Poems

by **Doug Tanoury**

2004 chapbook
Scars Publications

Sage With Umbrella Watches The Collapse Of The Modern Age

I remember
It was a perfect summer day
The kind that only seems to occur
In early September,
With a sky so azure
It seemed to glow with some
Inner luminescence
And the vivid color finish
They spray on new cars in Detroit,
The ice blue sports cars and
Peacock blue sedans.



A day so temperate that
The air feels perfect against the skin.
It is more an absence of temperature,
As if both hot and cold have somehow slipped
Below the point of perception and the air
Itself has become imperceptible.

Ah, such a day
Of blue placid beauty.
And then the rains began.
In ways fitting for our age,
In abstract and surreal images,
In some post modernistic vision,
With glass and concrete towers
Intertwined with airplanes,



Add to that the obligatory apocalyptic
Flames and smoke and you have a work that
Dali would paint, a Warhol or a Max.
And the rain began.

It rained paper and desks,
Chairs and tables,
All the mundane debris
Of daily life.
And it rained people,
Arm flailing,
Legs kicking,
It rained fire,
It rained rock,
It rained dust.

And I find myself in a Peter Max
Oil on canvass, entitled:
“Sage With Umbrella
Watches The Collapse
Of The Modern Age”

The Physics of Tea

Sitting in the living room
Drinking tea with her and
Talking about special relativity
And the fact that the most distant
Galaxies are racing away from us
At 80% of the speed of light and
As she considers this

Pulling a wayward strand of hair
From her face, she begins to twirl it,
Worrying it between her fingers, and
I am touched by the girlishness
Of this gesture, as she says very seriously:
“Gravity is a fear of being alone”
I laugh

Setting my tea down on the table
Hearing the percussion click
Of a china cup meeting the saucer and
As she smiles the freckles on her cheeks
Gravitate together in Newtonian fashion
And I know now that
What holds everything together
Is simply deep attraction.

Winter Solstice

The snow
Falls feather light
In large down flakes tonight
And I feel
That the only warmth
I will find
Is if I kiss her neck
Somewhere between her earlobe
And where it meets her bare shoulder.

In the tender
Right angle of her perfect posture
I will place my face
And breathe deeply for a moment
The warm fruit and
Flower fragrance
Of her
And find some inane reason
To celebrate these long night.

Overture

When I think of him, I hear Offenbach's
Overture To Orpheus In The Underworld.
Don't ask me why, I simply don't know.
Thoughts are more often a mystery to me and
At other times merely troubling impositions.
The violin with a voice so clear and plaintive,
That sinks to notes so sad,
The melody slow and mellifluous, but
More likely it is a lone clarinet that
Calls him to mind, or
Maybe it is the rising to crescendo,
The grand sweeping movements
That culminates in the riotous
Racing heartbeat tempo of a can-can.
An overture of such irresistible drive
That can no more be controlled
Than one's own thoughts.
I think of him
With the same deep despondency and great glee
That endears this music to me,
The mad fluid and dizzy spinning blend of contradictions
That is as puzzling
As the people we love.

My grandfather
Worked nights in a steel mill in Detroit,
And as a young child, it was always my goal
To stay up just long enough to see him
When he came home.
Most of the time I failed and fell asleep waiting,
But sometimes I was successful
And was waiting for him wide eyed and awake
At the front door as he entered.

It is always his boots that I remember most
And only incidentally his black metal lunch pail.
It seems I was always on the floor at his feet
On which he wore big black work boots
Their toes gray smudged with soot and ash
A swirling mixture of light and dark
That somehow now seems to me to be like
Moonlight shining across the clouds
On a November night.

Melancholy Ode

I have come to see
That love has seasons
All it own,
Of great growth and warmth
And deep dormancy and coolness
Quite apart and independent
Of what I want or will.

And I think seasons have meaning
Only in their changing,
The sweetness of summer
Awakens on January mornings,
As I now see us
Not based on what we are,
But on what we once were.

So let these lines of melancholy verse
Mark this changing season,
The bare trees and gray grasses,
The iced-over silence
That falls between us
When we meet
And all the words unspoken

For us in this season
Of restraint and holding back,
Of dormant longings,
Long pauses
And periods of quiet resentment
Between us that will no doubt grow
Like springs flowers

Into abundant regrets
In some future season.

Ash Leaves



Overnight,
The ash leaves have changed
To ochre.
Occasionally, one will drop to the lawn
I'll watch
Its feathered fall that is more a floating,
A delicate
Drifting in zigzags to the ground,
Spinning and twisting
In sailing motions like a fishing spoon
Swimming
In clear Spring waters.

This is
The season of change and letting go,
Of quiet
Release and things shed in gentle winds.
There is
Alchemy in Autumn mornings
That turn
Base things golden and paints in
Brilliant and
Burning pigments upon each branch
The stored up prised
And spectrumed light of August Sunsets.



Prelude To A Tempest

I walked down on the pier today,
The one that stretches out far into the lake.
The wind grew stronger the farther I went.
The sailboats weathering the squall
In the shelter of their wells,
All wobbling and rocking slightly,
Ropes slapping against their metal masts
With a rhythm and percussion
Made from the music of a primitive dance.

The surface so fully textured,
Wind swept and rolling,
All of it alive with motion
In a wild rippling and rising,
Bursting and breaking,
That is water raised to a full boil,
With the whistling swoosh,
That is this prelude to a tempest,
I stood at the very edge of the pier,
And faced the approaching storm.

The water is a mixture
Of grays and greens
Blended with a painter's knife
On an artist's palette,
And pasted thick in sweeping strokes
Onto what has become the lake today,
And alone on the pier,
Wanting only to see and hear,
Taste and smell,
And fully feel the wild sensation
Of being taken deep within
A passing storm.

Autumn Rain

The rain began today
Before the sunrise.
It came down hard
With the swoosh
That sounds like traffic
Speeding along the interstate.

It must have been the dark
And the grayscale of the morning sky,
That made me think of her
With regret and a certain sadness,
Bittersweet like the days in late September
That signals the slow transition of season.

More than our words,
It is the long pauses,
The extended silence
That has moved in to occupy the distance
And to fill the empty space
Between us
That foreshadows the future
For me.

The rain fell hard
With the loud and constant hiss
And crackle of radio static,
That is no more than the soft percussion
Of droplets in the street
That will soon fade
In gradual steps,
From downpour,
To drizzle,
To mist and
Full silence.

About Doug Tanoury

Doug Tanoury is primarily a poet of the Internet with the majority of his work never leaving electronic form. His verse can be read at electronic magazines and journals across the world. Collections of poetry by Doug Tanoury can be found at Funky Dog Publishing (<http://www.funkydogpublishing.com>) and Athens Avenue (<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/dtanoury1/Athens/index.htm>)

This and other ebook collections of poetry by Doug Tanoury can be read and downloaded at: <http://home.comcast.net/~dtanoury1/Tanoury.html>

Doug grew up in Detroit, Michigan and still lives in the area.

Doug Tanoury credits his 7th grade poetry anthology from Sister Debra's English class, *Reflections On A Gift Of Watermelon Pickle And Other Modern Verse*, (Stephen Dunning, Edward Lueders and Hugh Smith, (c) 1966 by Scott Foresman & Company) as exerting the greatest influence on his work. He still keeps a copy of it at his writing desk.

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