

New Poetry from Alita Pirkopf: “Roadkill,” “Sounds of the Past,” “Spring,” and “Unhealthy”



BLOOD IN BUCKETS / *image by Amalie Flynn*

ROADKILL

I bring you blood in buckets,
a heart that I hear, a palsied hand.
It has been eight, ten
years, my issue.
The same as twenty years ago
when your father felt
about me as you do now.
I felt the world shrink
but I thought something,
not necessarily the world,
would end. I had not thought
the world lay flat, as Renaissance

cartographers mapped it.
But now, like an automobile tire
not only flapping, flattening,
parts of it, or me, lie on the shoulder
of my road with dead things and dirt.

SOUNDS OF THE PAST

She thought she had found
soft music and warm dialect,
a sunny sort of near-Italian soul,

But surfaces surprise.
She found out. She found
that underneath pounded
a martial drumbeat
vibrating still

from Vienna's center,
his childhood years
under the Third Reich,
a father fighting
occupying Yugoslavia
with others
missing
the village polkas,
his son.

A burst of marches,
explosions, still resounding.
All of us hearing
pounding steps and hearts.

SPRING

Shreds remain—
unraveled weavings
of brown grasses and mud—
in branches a bird eyed

for her family tree.

The rest, the nest,
that we had watched
through last week's window,
fell.

The dog found
blue broken eggs
in the grass.

Families, all of us
consider seriously.
Upsetting winds
come to nests.
It is spring
and windows
open views
and dooryards fill
with the ambiguity
of lilacs.

UNHEALTHY

I loved my doctors
until one
played sick games,
touching and taunting,
and knowing of rules
I didn't know.
Telling jokes
I didn't understand.
Dismissing me
for my naivete—
stupidity.

The years passed,
and he operated
on me appropriately,

savingly. Later he
mentioned dining
together or going out
for coffee, but didn't ask,
and got angry for reasons
I didn't know, saying
I hadn't said I'd go.