

# **New Poem by Darren C. Demaree: “Emily as There is a Prison”**

New Poem by Darren C. Demaree: “Emily as There is a Prison”

---

# **Three Poems from Suzanne Rancourt**



EXPLODE / *image by Amalie Flynn*

### **The Shoes That Bore Us**

It is a dream of kind slippers that coddle bunions appeased  
by hands mittened as the same kind slippers  
holding warmth as forgiveness for all the combat boots  
sogged by brackish muck of wars  
when not hoisted in the occasional stilettos of never regrets  
a conundrum of cognitive dissonance stabs the dreams  
of where ever we had been, we escape to now over racked rails  
rocked goat paths and deer runs you think it's a man's world  
until  
it is not

a sidearm presses to a right hip as cupped palms to iliac  
crests  
walking boundaries and borders skirting domains of  
possibilities  
that astrological forecasts stagger out on slow printed pages  
like stammering promises spoken by the dead selling real  
estate,  
"Check Mate"  
no choice is a lie when the inevitable is an illusion, no  
freeze to suffice  
that fighting, although futile,  
is still taking a stand

### **Unhinged Again**

a stone leaves the hand that flung it-air escapes  
constricted vocal cords – a vomiting wild – enraged urgency  
and angst

kinetic makes contact – leaves bruises the color of bludgeoned  
fists pounding flesh is quiet. I can't remember if I was  
screaming

my face and shielding hands turned overripe plum purple  
sweet with sticky juice that dribbles down chins

attracts sugar bees you swat in autumn sun  
that smells of maple leaves red with change

this hammer drives the firing pin into a child's memory, my  
memory, of cap guns  
explode a thousand times greater than a simple pop & puff

a chunk of lead propelled, is unhinged  
from the mansplaining – the antagonistic prod of condescending  
joust

I was stuck in a ring of double fisted doubts: leave don't

leave

I didn't know that I was a prisoner of white picket conditions  
like my mother. Was she also a prisoner? A side bar of  
recollection  
a nursery rhyme my mother sang to me:

"Peter, Peter, pumpkin-eater, had a wife and couldn't keep  
her  
He put her in a pumpkin shell, and there he kept her very  
well."

I know my Mother knew when I was being beaten  
there – my face laying with one ear pressed to cold linoleum  
the other, an upward funnel catching my Mother's vengeful  
whisper  
"get up...get up...fight"

to be marginalized – a side note or comment, placed in the  
periphery, only seen  
when the reader desires or deems worthy of notice

only one of us walked from that house that day  
to be silenced – a voice, a room, a home, a door closed upon  
it

a mind made up, barred entrance, not worth the time to view,  
hear, acknowledge

I'm writing this and telling you words are a privilege

voice is a human right thrown as stones – they fall from the  
wind

## **Crying Over Continents**

windfarms

white wake of ferries

channel crossing

a nonstop jack hammer knee

Morse code through time zones

pounding out instructions, the next destination

I'm not letting go like I used to. I feel heavier

in my gathering of nuances, intimacies –

You watch someone for hours, days

you learn what time they take their dog for a shit

turn on the garage light – the one just right of the workbench  
and always with their left hand

You learn to recognize the screams of a woman

in an upstairs back bedroom being struck

or the subtle moans of make up sex easing across the back yard  
from windows never locked and left half open

Or maybe,

it's the man in the downstairs apartment under yours

that you watch shaving his son's head before forcing

the kid to wear a chain and crucifix bigger than the kid's  
malnourished chest with ribs that break at 0200 hrs

when Dad comes home drunk, no sex, and vile. The mother

died mysteriously, they say, in a different town, a different  
country

Intimacy is being there as a ghost

being fed the compromise of "I'll never do it again"

Intimacy is being there at the end

and being held in the mantle of a dying eye