



E. P. Fisher

Bohemian Manifesto

Deep in my heart is an old familiar Bohemia
Whose best poets died in a ditch;
No distinction is made there between love & art,
The rhapsody of words or a curving silhouette
...

An enchanted melancholy fills the air;
It is intimate as the memory of a frosty dawn,
A Prague moon, a cathedral full of guttered
candles,
And the faded domain of an outmoded muse .
..

In my inmost soul is a small café é, a prison cell &
a protest rally,
A metaphysical discourse on fortune cookies,
Nights of invention, a rambling passage from
Rimbaud,
And a manuscript written without a single cliché
...

At the back of my mind is a chilly Village walk-
up,
A studio apartment with statues of nudes in
dappled light,
A garret in Paris with a shared bathroom down
the hall,
An ivory tower & exotic rooftop loft full of
pigeons.

I keep the key to my dreams locked up in a hand-
carved box
Disguised to look like a book of illuminations~
A dialogue with a ruined angel in the rain
And the studied calligraphy of a spider-web
scrawled in its margins.

Down in my bones is a lonely utopia, a pagan
solstice,
Traces of moonshine, seaweed, coral & a score
by Debussy.
What do I care for your gizmos & routines?
My lifeblood runs the gamut from freelance
to frontier . . .

Expatriate of a shoestring serendipity,
My threadbare vagabond shadow
Takes a cakewalk through your ideologies
& taboos,
Hitchhiking to the outskirts of a bottom-dog
anarchy.

My scapegoat rap-sheet is your banned,
underground classic,
The hey-day of my sentences, your shock-
treatment lobotomy;
My flea-market typewriter hammering out
subterranean riffs
Haunting as the song of the humpback whale.

Over my shoulder, in an empty rearview mirror,
Are detours to a lost highway littered with
miles
of errant exile—
I dabble in the down-and-out, boycotting your
protocols,
Without regret, above reproach!

Instead of a bullet, a bit of rope, or a razorblade
by
the sink,
I recycle your neon asylum through my
skeleton
hijinks;
my barefoot tantrum is your hobby, your truth-

serum;
your crisis of self-doubt, my trademark
impromptu kazoo!

I sit at a table by the window, waiting,
despondent,
Admiring a mundane still-life, an African mask,
Intent on a glass of absinthe, a whimsical gypsy
enigma,
And longing for an existential view of the sea .

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E. P. Fisher has published work in *Poetry Motel*, *The Lyric*, *Hazmat*, *Moebius*, and elsewhere. His work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and he is a winner of the New York Poetry Forum and NFSPS competitions.