

PIECES OF CENTAURS

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The poem below is a sequel to "Octopi" (WW, Feb. 2009, p. 43) and obeys a similar lexical constraint to its predecessor. There is a hint regarding the constraint hidden in each stanza. What is the constraint, and can you find the eight hints?

Pieces Of Centaurs

Before an overcast sky a graceful horse/man celebrates quietly.
A furnace radiating light combines colors with shadows,
Fitful fantasies in grays or crimsons:
Softly swaying animal bodies among trees,
Athenians collecting polyanthus,
Women sitting around firepits.
Not impressed with her own thoughts, someone somewhere swallows seafoam.
Genii disappoint, as pigeonholed people find a nightmare
Amid evasively-answered answered questions.
A nobleman says: verily, I shall punish him
In bleeding uncontrolled anger,
Feeding it like a starved crocodile.
Mountains incline to touch broken shorelines before breakfast.
Summer tries, collapsing vainly. Everyone sees it die.

Only a few words wistfully remain:
Love. Me. Everybody. Please.
I capture the restaurant as silent chefs simply flee
Across a sky of capillary hues.
A thousand puffins hurtle backward, returning to a farmhouse,
A deliberate destination within that blue valley,
The home every adventurer desires:
A southern exposure, a meadow of mossy tundra.
Predators circle in my own yard, preparing themselves.
Mosquitoes which people regarded as immaterial sting them,
Despoiling the children. Outside, through glistening mist,
We go heavenwards, desperately resisting it.
Remember, everybody: he will allow anything.
Anything's allowed, anything's sufficient.

Weariness produces little difference between acting and desisting,
So listless delirium comes, abiding within me.
A pointless white, a sad red, a pregnant purple:
Bitter rainbows extending in an oddly feeble facsimile,
Under instructions contained within some manual.
Autumn's lunar eclipse now grows weaker:
Weaker, old and frightened about week-to-week corruption.
For pleasure I tabulate my tautology.
Mathematical mechanics monitor a man who despises life.
Virtue withdraws, as everything stands shameless without it.

So perfection vegetates...cautiously, silently
People quest for it elsewhere.
People call it absurd.
Another question remains: do I?

Look there: an escutcheon, four weathered harpoons, an inkstand.
An ebony sign: ELYSIUM PAWN SHOP.
Staunchly a workman sits, resembling a god of underworldly status.
The comfortable breezes soothe all that wishfully shuffle nearby.
The proprietor bows a careworn head. A whistling is heard beyond trees.
Visitors enter, discreetly carrying a crucifix.
One buys, one undersells, evading an intimate episode.
The hoary workman silently opens a lifetime assessment, updates it,
Underlines feverishly in an ornate ledger.
I understand. Surely, I understand:
Universes, planets, fishes, life, everything. Important, yes?
The shopkeeper nods "no", sobbing softly.

Soldiers go northward and southward throughout the crippled kingdoms.
The ideologues go out to a concrete building before supper.
Nincompoops tell tales with indefinite endings.
For a while I aggravate a suburban man
Spiraling helplessly inside a selfmade hell.
The timbers of an old shed crumble within his swelling breast,
Parts of an old wound remotely buried in a churchyard
By the taurine statuettes.
Dismissed before a king, seasonal travelers go east
Hanging their Christmas ornaments on their ears.
Democracy resembles a new play opening feverishly and quickly closing.
I throw discretion under that rock.

Suffering mortals decrease in good faith
While politics putters beside the filthy mirror,
Reflection of the inherent intrinsic weakness in large platforms.
Poetry cannot explain the song before sunrise, he says,
Although Saturday I saw a hen in Grandpa's meadow.
A painter of bitterness inks my forearm.
Everyone overturns, everyone overburns,
In anxious expectant landscapes.
Wood bows oscillate taut strings with sad melodies.
I talk discreetly with the women, imagining picnics in a vineyard,
Carrying flowers with flocculent stems.
Annis eyes a straggling sunbeam floating over the glen.
The Firth of Forth inspires hearts and minds.

The taupe salamander sits, vaguely posing
Alongside one that decidedly favors his broken appendage.
The woman and her marriage separate,
A confluence of strife with bitterness outflowing resultantly.
(The excuse he would give is squirming ironically there.)
In hurried consultation a doctor takes their final payment;
A nurse that is nearby silently takes souls.
A weary child gathers souvenirs of a puzzling day:

Some sermons, an itching that has ended, charity that died.
In reverence she begins evensong, kneeling.
A sergeant undermines an army with countless ludicrous redactions.
Poison ferments within containers so beautiful.

Yet oftentimes, surprises:
Surprises a moment's reflection creates
When on a promontory I taunt everyone with hands aloft.
Surprises the student receives under a fragile umbrella
When parting cloudbanks disclose that transitory sun.
Surprises diameters circumscribe to me
When pi-based formulas accumulate more pie.
Surprises in a drawing or wrinkled photograph nobody recalled
Unwanted and hidden for a fortnight before
In pockets of grass-encrusted earth.
From desperate daily ways we divine a diverting direction,
As a noteworthy day plucked from a long life. It is simply
Audacious, tenacious, voracious, vivacious, salacious, judicious, delicious

From *WORLD OF ANAGRAMS* by Zorn Radisavljevic zoradis@eunet.rs

The longest word in the English language with all different letters is
DERMATOGLYPHICS (15 letters).

The American puzzler Ross Eckler has found MELVIN SCHWARZKOPF from Alton, Illinois. Melvin is probably the world record holder with 17 different letters in his name!

Two well known sportsmen have 14 different letters - the Croatian waterpolo ace DUBRAVKO ŠIMENC and the ex-coach of the Australian Davis Cup team JOHN FITZGERALD.

The ex-musician BRANKO GLUŠČEVIĆ from Belgrade has 15 different letters. Glušćević is one of the founders of the legendary Serbian rock-band "Siluete". Later, Glušćević played bass-guitar in bands "Lutalice", "Iskre", "Dah". He was also member of the popular group "Rokeri s Moravu" from 1977-1987.