

Glen Sorestad

Erasing History

Is this not where the farm of our youth stood?
Nothing here but canola field, right to the road.

Where are the fences, the gateway to the farm,
the garden, the rhubarb patch, the caragana hedges?

What happened to the barn Grandfather built of logs?
The sheds, the small wood frame house, the aspens

that sheltered us from bitter northwest winds?
Where have they gone? How can a ten-foot deep

farm dug-out disappear, as if it never existed,
as if it watered no cows, raised no ducks or geese?

A single farm, a thousand stories, grown fainter

and fainter until stories and tellers are lost.

A blooming field of canola, a dazzle of yellow
beneath cyan sky, wind to tally gains or losses.

Overnight Snow

To be human is to be curious.

We want to know.

We step from the house,
a morning after overnight snow
and the first animal tracks
bring us up short.

Who does not want to read
messages left in snow
that has created this white world,
a vast page upon which
little dramas have left their traces?

Something primal, atavistic,
clings and lingers within,
a desire to understand,
to seek answers, whether we are
part of the urban majority,
or the few who still live
close to nature. Who or what
made these tracks?

Rabbit? Coyote? Red fox?

We want to know.

If we have lived in the countryside,

even a small portion of our lives,

we still recognize

most of the animal tracks we see.

We see a fresh message that says,

Jack rabbit, going fast.

Must have been spooked.

Look at those strides!

Reading the spoor satisfies

an inherited need,

our ancestors peering intently

over our shoulders at these

early morning snow graphics.

Out on the Pier

The ominous park sign makes us watch the shoreline
water

for knobby eyes breaking the surface from the reedy lake,

a lurking shape in the murk below the dock's walkway.

The day is blustery, raw. Surely no self-respecting gator

will be hanging around – even if this is Florida. Winter
is still winter. We are intent on human figures hunched

at the end of the small pier alongside the boat ramp.

Manatee State Park appears otherwise deserted.

A man and his wife are fishing. Are they catching anything
more than the brow-beating gusts, driving them deeper

into their winter hoodies? We bend into the icy breeze,
drawn to the lure of human conversation and warmth.

The World We Live In

A woman goes out to a bar
for a few drinks with friends.
She has a very fine time,
but she never makes it home.
She has become data –
a missing person file.

A teary high school freshie
asks the principal for help
opening his new locker.
The principal stops what he
is doing, goes to unlock
the freshie's locker.

A man kneels on the ground,
hands bound behind him,
moments before a terrorist
sword decapitates him
in the name of some ism.

A fire truck arrives at

an elderly woman's home;
a fireman climbs the ladder
to rescue a frightened kitten
from its lofty tree perch,
returns it to its owner.

Glen Sorestad has been writing and publishing his poetry for a half-century now. His poetry has appeared in literary magazines, journals and reviews in many countries and his poems have now been translated and published in eight languages. He lives in the city of Saskatoon on the western plains of Canada. He is a member of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest non-military honor.

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