

Mike Amado -- Last 3 Poems

Editor's note: Mike Amado sent these poems to the *Muddy River Poetry Review* in October 2008. Originally *Assembled with Love* was the poem selected to appear in the magazine. However, in tribute to Mike and his work, presented here are all three poems he submitted. There is also a eulogy for Mike by Doug Holder elsewhere in the magazine.

Assembled with Love
(Inspired by Build A Bear Workshop)

Breathing life into a plush toy
like resurrecting mummies
or crafting a cuddly ushabti.
I build this teddy bear to be
soft as a pillow, strong as an ox.
Looking sports-savvy
in his Red Sox shirt and hat.
His right hand plays
"Take Me Out to the Ball Game"
because I made it that way.

Oh, teddy bear, icon of childhood brotherhood,
may there be, embodied in you a million hugs.

Fill him with cotton so he will come alive.
Knead his silken heart so the beat will be revived.

So he'll know how to love, rub him on your heart.
Rub him to your forehead so he'll always be smart.

Dust him on your toes so he'll follow wherever you go.
Whisper in his ears so he'll hear the secrets you know.

It's Amazing How Life Can Fit In A Wal-Mart Bag ...

New pillows, marshmallow-soft,
old pillows, flat with age,
stack of Sunday papers.

All the books I cited in my thesis,
pages striped with atomic shades of recollecting.
(I enjoyed deconstruction.)

An early 90's mobile phone, a keyboard
missing the middle octave, cassette tapes
from my early teens; songs of bleached sound:

Jody Watley singing 'bout friends who'll let you down,
the Kane Gang singing 'bout being glory-bound in
Motortown and Dio immortalizing rainbows in the dark.

They developed on my brain as if it were film.
Will I live without them? If I literally remember those songs
am I not giving up? *What Makes Us Tick?*

I'd love to cram in a bag all the spam that fattens
my Inbox, making my 4-year-old computer run slow
like a kid, addicted to on-line gaming,
waddling to the door to pay the pizza guy . . .

I'd pack up all the Liberian princesses
and every "*a replica watch is a perfect gift*"
until the bag is as heavy as a life full of lies.
Every woman would be excited with the size you deserve.

My computer is 10 minutes faster than the Greenwich mean,
my watch is 8 minutes fast, my VCR winks 12 A.M.'s and
right this second, there are walls in out-of-the-way places
being hung with new clocks, replacing the rusted ones,
thrown in bags.

New Beginnings

The one who finds sunlight
carving a shaft through the pulsing smoke
will be the optimist.

The one who finds a sprout
inching up from the scorched ground
will be the farmer.

The one who gathers herbs
and shreds of fabric
will be the physician.

The one who digs through
the rubble and finds clear water
will be the provider.

The one who finds the books
that escaped the incineration

will be the teacher.

The one who sees the stars
scattered in the unfamiliar sky
will be the astronomer.

The one who will find words to say
in this coal-black silence
will be the negotiator.

The one who will listen
to the whip-lash winds for a bird song
will be the poet.

The one who'll keep us together;
maintain us from doing the same thing
we've done before will be the mother.

And the one who finds a rifle under
the dead things and pays it no mind
will be the child.