

Richard Fein – Two Poems

Semicolon

I love her she loves me not.

A run on sentence, a stream consciousness
with no period, comma, semicolon,
anywhere between I and not,
a confusing conjunction or lack thereof.

I love her. She loves me not.

That's all there is to it, period.
Two clauses more than just independent,
with two capitalized subjects
each dwelling in their own complete thought.
But alas her thought excludes mine.

*I love her, **and** she loves me not.*

A definitive compounding of simplicity
into yet another account of unrequited love.

I love her, she loves me not.

A wishy-washy comma splicing.
With *I* almost desperately clinging,
and *she* hesitant about parting.
Such a wavering split violates old rhetorical rules.

*I love her, **but** she loves me not.*

Yet maybe, just maybe, **but** means she does,
and if so then
with *she* in her dependent clause
and *I* resplendent as a capital type,
my love will surely conquer her indifference.
But would I really want such a diminutive lover
even if I got her to say, "Yes, oh yes, take me"

I love her; she loves me not.

That compromise semicolon,
that middling scion of period and comma
makes the cleaving between *I* and *she*
stronger than a comma but weaker than a period
and so leaves the slightest nuance of hope,
for the contranym cleave also means joining.
Upper case *I* and lower case *she*,
each of us the subject of our own independent clause,
separate and yet still in one sentence,
in that one complete thought,
I in hers and *she* in mine.

Search Engine Hit

The front button popped, my pants fell down,
and I tripped over them yet didn't get hurt.
But you did, in a vaudeville way.
You laughed so hard your side ached.
Between belly laughs you vowed,
"Till the day I die. Till the day I die."
That was decades ago,
before the world wide web entangled us all.
Today search engines must be on overdrive
with all those users typing in names of long lost friends.
But why should they bother. Why should I.
But we do.
Neither the world wide web nor the web of our minds
tolerates loose ends.
Closure.
Finally you appeared after years of namesakes followed by "no match found."
It is you, this time actually you,
for the bio in the obituary matches my reminiscence.
Reunion, but only in some imperfect virtual reality.
The truth now old buddy, did you really remember,
was I really your last laugh?
Did I make you smile as you long ago vowed you would?
I hope I did,
though up to now I've always winced at that memory.
But now it's a scream thinking about
your going out with a roaring laugh
and a side-splitting ache.

Richard Fein was a finalist in The 2004 New York Center for Book Arts Chapbook Competition. A chapbook of his poems was published by Parallel Press, University of Wisconsin, Madison. He has been published in many web and print journals such as: *Reed*, *Southern Review*, *Roanoke Review*, *Skyline Magazine*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Mississippi Review*, *Paris/atlantic*, *Canadian Dimension* and many others