

A man with his eyes closed, wearing a bright red jacket and a large yellow sunflower with a dark center on his head. He is standing with his hands slightly out to the sides. The background is dark and blurry.

The
Rick
Lupert
Fun
Club!

poetry by Rick Lupert

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Ain't Got No Press

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“An Israeli Breakfast” and “Arad” were all written in Israel and are from the forthcoming print collection *A Camel With No Name*.

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“Werewolf” originally appeared in the *Literary Angels: the Second Year of Poeticdiversity* (December, 2005).

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to all potential members

A Cliche Gone Bad

When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie
it's already too late

A Good Laugh

Wouldn't it be funny if monsters
attended the poetry readings of
famous poets, and not knowing how
to behave in these circumstances
started killing everyone?

Look there's the Werewolf
gnawing off Billy Collins' ear
while Maya Angelou reads.
Watch out Maya,
Dracula wants your blood.

The Entire History of the San Fernando Valley

It is already tomorrow and we are eastbound on Sherman Way
It is possible that we just missed gun shots at Topanga Canyon

Or maybe it was fire crackers in front of the Big Lots
I just returned from Syracuse and boy is my family tired

of my questions about who they are, and where they came from
I wish the Erie Canal had been extended to Sepulveda

I would ship my words to Albany. The future is in mules
We are still eastbound. Some day we will hit Van Nuys Boulevard

which died before I was born, 1968 according to the certificate
but, of course, I mean 1982. Send your flowers to the former

location of the Bob's Big Boy. There will be a meditation at Sherman Way
We are sprouting orange groves out of our steering wheels

Seasons in L.A.

It is Autumn in L.A. and soon the leaves will come off the trees
Throughout the Southland, a total of six leaves will fall off as many trees
and those lucky enough to spot one will reminisce wistfully

about their time spent in the east as a child. Those not from the east
will curse the harshness of L.A.'s winters and continue on their long drives
down Sepulveda for destinations as far away as Culver City

I wonder how the onset of Fall will affect the hummingbirds
every day, now that we've installed the feeder, a fleet of the rascals
like feathered helicopters, hovers near the flower shaped receptacles

sipping the sweet nectar I break my fingers every day to afford.
Do they leave town when the thermometer hits the arctic like
sub sixty-five degrees that sends my wool cap on a b-line

straight from the closet to the washing machine for it's annual refreshing.
Or do they stick it out, hover together for warmth, disguise themselves
as falling leaves, and pray to the bird-gods the nectar doesn't freeze

It is seriously not summer in Los Angeles. Those of us with a preference
for cold weather clothes are warming up our credit cards. Fire season
has come and gone. It's time to put out the flood decorations.

I am one of the lucky ones.
A leaf has fallen off my tree.
I watch it drift to the ground like American Beauty

Confidence

for Robert Arroyo Jr.

Robert told me
when he met his wife
he knew.

It wasn't long
before her name was
tattooed on his chest.

I told him
when I met Addie
I cut off my toes

and mailed them
to her parents.
I was that sure.

He laughed heartily,
like a man with the passion
of his children.

Midgets in an Elevator

Can you hit number six for me?

No.

Mis-use of Power

Once
I put one shoe
in the middle of the room

Then
demanded everyone else
place one shoe in the middle of the room

(you see
I was the boss
of the room)

Soon
everyone was either
wearing one shoe or

Staring
at me
defiantly

I
Lasted Sixteen years
on this memory

Someday
I will buy
a vest

Thinking About Eagle Rock

The store doesn't have my soap anymore
so in protest I've been washing myself with woodchips

and things I scoop out of my cats' ears.
There are those who say my poetry

has lost it's humanity. To them I say
Hey baby, have a lollipop.

With a name like Slaughter
It's got to be good jam

I have many fond memories of Eagle Rock
Like the time I drove through Eagle Rock to get to Pasadena

And the other time I drove through Eagle Rock
to get home from Pasadena

And earlier today when we are at the restaurant
Remember?

How to Drive to Eagle Rock

for Addie

At seven thirty in the morning
every morning, when I am
asleep like an eagle rock

you come to wake me
to say goodbye, to say
you love me. Every morning

your smile at seven thirty
is more awake than
I will ever be

I drift back to sleep
your love covering me
like freshly washed sheets

The Rick Lupert Fun Club

for Brendan

When I told you they might start
the Rick Lupert Fun Club, you said

you'd join in a heartbeat and pay
ten thousand dollars a week.

With that kind of money, you're
the only member I'll ever need

I'll guarantee a fun activity
every single day

An Israeli Breakfast

An Israeli Breakfast is the stuff that dreams are made of, especially if you dream of cheese. They don't worry so much about the disease of culture in the Holy Land, so consequently the dairy products taste better unlike in America where they don't taste at all. Eating cheese in America is like putting on a condom and then flipping through a JC Penney Catalog. Eating cheese in Israel is like riding a cow into the sea and surfing it all the way to Bodrum, Turkey, where once a young woman from Sherman Oaks, California exited an airplane after her first extra-North American Journey, to be greeted by a bald man and his famous father. I'd tell you more details of their adventures but they're not mine. One thing though, in June of that year I flew high over this trio in a blue and white airplane, on my way to eat more of this cheese and look at ancient buildings, on my way to Israel, this unholy city, Tel Aviv, where even the cheese stays up late, and even in this dining room by the sea, people wash their hands more because the Rabbis told them to, than to get them clean.

I'm drinking an Israeli manufactured English tea. Earl Grey. Wissotzky brand...perhaps a more appropriate name here would be David's Shadow. Yes, this would be a name that would suit the local poets whose pens teach ancient history through the lens of Israeli rifles. David's Shadow would be a good name for that tea, but nothing is subtle here. The coffee has black quicksand in it. People scream in elevators, and the tea is infused with so much flavor it would be aptly named King David's Black Night of Stone and Fire Tea...sweetened by the moon and a fork, full of honey. One is exceptionally alive when eating, drinking, breathing or thinking in Israel.

Those Who Sow in Tears Will Reap in Lizards

When our lizard died
you wore black for three days.

In mourning I asked.
Yes you said.

I miss the burial by thirty seconds
while looking for a stone to cover the grave.

It's in the shape of a frog
and because of this you are grateful.

In our living room the empty cage seems
not so empty

the crickets still singing his song.
We go to the pet store to see other lizards

They are cute like midget dinosaurs
but you, later in the kitchen, weeping

to the chirping of an empty habitat
hold me and say *I can't replace my lizard.*

I know how you feel.
I look at everything that moves in our house

An essential contrast to stillness
I couldn't do without it.

The Absolute Yes of the Weekend

I love Friday's because
it means I can put on new underwear

and by new, I mean clean
To me clean underwear is like a new day

which begins with a Friday of possibilities
and ends in Hollywood

where giant fruit is my spokesperson
and I am the king of the world

I Am Receiving You From Venice

for Brendan

I see you have discovered electronic mail in Venice
I knew it wouldn't take long, after all, it was the Venetians
who invented the internet, except back then it was called water

No one cared about information in those days, it was all about
moving from doorway to doorway in their pointy canoes,
which, back then, they called gondolas

Have you found St. Mark's Square yet? How could you not?
Venice would evaporate without it. If you squint there you're likely
to see an Italian amidst the sea of Yankees and future ex-patriots.

These days you can check the computers for digital pictures
of everywhere there is to go. Back then only birds knew the secrets
of rooftops, and they weren't talking.

Today in the square, just one slice of bread will get the pigeons
explaining architecture to you. Be sure to listen. They are the city's
only natives, and they know more than they're letting on.

I imagine you'll walk across the Bridge of Sighs
When you do, be sure to sigh. If you don't a thousand dead
prisoners would consider it an insult. *You who took*

*the sea for granted, somehow beat the rap with a striped shirted
lawyer. You'll be out in twenty minutes rolling homemade ravioli
down your throat. You wouldn't want the dead to think that, would you?*

Ah Venice, as you wander through the paths they wouldn't dare call roads
as you see the still life of midnight canals, think of me with your electricity
your precise line lengths, your powerful typing fingers.

Midgets in Line
at a Roller Coaster
Who Have just
Reached The Sign
Which Says You
Must Be as Tall As
This Line To Ride

Dammit

Chia Delarosa

I never get along with papers
that's why all my friends are people

My jokes are so dry
you don't need to own a towel

Once my hair ate a quiche
I'm so thin, the wind sent me its chapbook

Once I drank a bucket of carpet samples
and my friend ate a jeep

Once I asked Steve Guttenberg
to autograph my Bible

I predict someone in this room
will blink or breathe

Ladies and gentleman,
the world of tomorrow!

Hi Frankenstein

I told one poet
to say hello to another poet we both know
and also to say hello to her husband Frankenstein
I figured she would know what I was talking about
and if she didn't it would add a beautiful moment
of strangeness to the world

How Close Was Mars?

Mars was so close you could see it next
to the moon like they were conjoined.

So close I had to duck when walking up the stairs.
Mars was so close sixty-six thousand years of

history dropped in my late summer bucket like
Los Angeles rain. Mars knocked on my door

last night. Said, in a hurried fashion
“Get the hell out of my way.” Mars

You’re so close, the property values are changing.
You want a glass of water Mars? It’s a trick

Question. The scientists made me ask it.
Mars, a seed fell off your surface and landed in

our atmosphere. A strange tree sprouted and
grew as tall as a dozen fire hydrants. Mars,

you were so close the new gravity uprooted
that tree and it fell back to you. We’re building

a chunnel to you Mars. Will you visit? Would
you like some potato chips? Don’t answer!

The knowledge would give us an unfair advantage.
Mars, I remember when you were a smidgen,

a twinkle, a bissel. A pinpoint of red, just left
of the moon. Just a pinch of you in the sky

giving confidence to the Hungarians. We clutch
our telescopes under our beds Mars

hoping you’ll think we’re not home. We’re out
eating goulash, we’re not worth coming so close.

Werewolf

Those other twenty-nine days
when the moon taunts you
sometimes just a sliver

those twenty-nine days
when you're not on all fours
with flesh in your mouth

when you're not a monster
Do you make friends with the people
see their movies

Talk with them in public like
you think you're people
How about a human girlfriend

Does she wonder
what happens to you that one night
Are you two in sync

Everytime there's a full moon
it's her time of the month
doesn't even come over

Never notices the missing clothes
the dirt on your fingers
the guilt in your eyes

Do you eat salads at restaurants
baby greens with a pleasant gorgonzola
For godsakes, how do you pay for it all?

Employment? You?
What if your boss needs you to work that one night?
There's no-one else

What do you do?
He's got a file on you
reads the news

One day, when the moon is big
he'll put it all together
point his human finger at you

Can you already taste this?
Just before the fear takes him
before you open your mouth

he'll get on his knees
beg you
make him live forever

Evening Flow

for Addie and Eddie Vedder

I come into the room where it is dark
I put my tongue on your eyebrow

You tell me you've finished the book
You tell me we can see the movie now

I say That's Good and go into the bathroom
I am in the bathroom with the cat who is waiting for me

You have a wet eyebrow
You have a wet eyebrow in the dark

I do my business
I am sitting near the cat who endears himself to the
doorstop

You notice when I open the door
You have bean bags on your eyes

I put my tongue on your other eyebrow
I am aware of the beanbags

You say they help you relax
You and the beanbags and the wet eyebrows

We will see the movie
We, the rhythm of the evening

Jewel of Sherman Oaks

for Addie

You are the healthy mushroom of my late Friday afternoon
The kitty kitty kitty sleeping on my stomach
the loofa loofa sponge in the shower

You make it so I can go to Disneyland every day
cook me pasta filled with green protein

You and your comrade take my poetry
and my guitar picks. You glue them together
like art made rom crumpled buildings

Your hair and legs
your shakes and noises

You may never take out the garbage
but you shouldn't be co-mingling
with the garbage anyway

You lizard lover
shaker maker
bed spooner

occasional cabinet closer
the heat of my apartment
the Jewel of Sherman Oaks

12345 (three)

I

I am driving north on the 101
Cahuenga pass at three am

host to a fog characteristic of somewhere else
or a Hollywood movie.

Closer inspection reveals
it's Caltrans digging up the roads

when I was a boy my mother never let me dig up the roads
these men do it for a living

Do what you love
or die

II

There are seventeen ways to make tea
I only know three of them

I'd tell you but
everyone has to make their own tea

III

You may wonder which
brand of electric toothbrush

is best for you. In the mean time
three of your teeth have left

for the midwest.
there's a shortage there

not of teeth, but
every little bit helps

IV

I have five paintings on
my living room walls

three of them
are by you

V

Now hear this
You have no control over electricity

The laws of physics apply to you
You'll get three years for breaking

even one of them
don't do it.



About The Author

Rick Lupert has been involved in the Los Angeles poetry community since 1990. He served for two years as a co-director of the Valley Contemporary Poets, a twenty-five year old non-profit organization which produces readings and publications out of the San Fernando Valley. His poetry has appeared in numerous magazines and literary journals, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *Chiron Review*, *Stirring*, *PoeticDiversity.org*, *Zuzu's Petals*, *Caffeine Magazine*, *Blue Satellite* and others. He is the author of 10 books: *Paris: It's The Cheese*, *I Am My Own Orange County*, *Mowing Fargo*, *I'm a Jew. Are You?*, *Stolen Mummies*, *I'd Like to Bake Your Goods*, (*Ain't Got No Press*), *Lizard King of the Laundromat*, *Brendan Constantine is My Kind of Town* (Inevitable Press), *Feeding Holy Cats* and *Up Liberty's Skirt* (Cassowary Press). He serves on the Artist and Community Advisory Council of Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center in Venice, California. (Though he's not sure how that happened or what it means.) He has hosted the long running Cobalt Café reading series in Canoga Park since 1994 and is regularly featured at venues throughout Southern California.

The author's first e-book is *To Hell With Rick Lupert* (Ain't Got No Press, May, 2006)

Rick created and maintains the Poetry Super Highway, a major internet resource for poets. (<http://PoetrySuperHighway.com/>)

Currently Rick works as a music teacher at Temple Ahavat Shalom in Northridge and is the graphics and media specialist for the New Jewish Community Center at Milken and a freelance graphic and web designer for anyone who would like to help pay his mortgage.

Rick's Other Books



I'd Like to Bake Your Goods

Ain't Got No Press
January, 2006

STOLEN MUMMIES

Ain't Got No Press
February, 2003

*BRENDAN CONSTANTINE IS
MY KIND OF TOWN*
Inevitable Press
September, 2001

up liberty's skirt

Cassowary Press
March, 2001

FEEDING HOLY CATS

Cassowary Press
May, 2000

I'm a Jew, Are You?

Cassowary Press
May, 2000

MOWING FARGO

Sacred Beverage Press
December, 1998

Lizard King of the Laundromat

The Inevitable Press
February, 1998

I Am My Own Orange County

Ain't Got No Press
May, 1997

Paris: It's The Cheese

Ain't Got No Press
May, 1996

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