

*Poem for Kevin...*

When we first met  
was at VIU  
back 18 years ago  
or so -

- Time is adjustable  
when meeting a  
writer,  
fisherman,  
teacher  
&  
a multi-verse  
(all in one)  
&  
even then  
we found places  
to explore  
because poets  
are  
explorers-  
&  
all his poems  
reflect that presence.

Such writers  
find all places  
equal  
&  
so I'd arrive  
from Salt Spring  
or Vancouver  
to teach & ramble  
in Nanaimo  
&  
understood  
(without a word)

that  
I'd look  
&  
see Kevin  
waiting in his car  
to drive me & yarn the  
way to work,  
&  
afterwards find after-words to explore  
in coffee shops  
while  
life-talking  
our way around Nanaimo –  
you know what it's like  
there  
where rambling poets  
are welcome  
in  
pubs  
&  
in British confection stores  
as well.  
I always returned home  
knowing I'd have, thanks to Kev,  
a gift for  
Caren  
&  
she'd know, at once,  
that  
Kev & I had found the time for  
yet another yarn.

She knew, when I gave  
her a box of Yorkshire Tea  
that  
Kev had driven me to the endless Ferryboat home.

When Caren Moon  
&  
I

started  
up our first press  
it enfolded  
Kev's  
&  
his in-print buddy,  
Michael Kanaly's  
exploring books.

We did so from  
our borrowed  
tent on  
Paul McGowan's  
land  
the kindness  
of  
BC  
&  
O the joy of letting Kevin's words  
take us to Australia,  
&  
Greece/BC/the world,  
everywhere ...  
jumping time back & forth  
thru time & space  
O  
all was more multi-verse  
travel, winding time & space  
as we leapt them  
as we ran & jumped over word-barriers  
in the seemingly endless  
relay race called life.

U name it/U dream it  
O  
we'll all , one of those days, any day,  
dissolve thru time & space  
thanks to Kevin's words  
&  
when I die

&  
Uncle Jim  
appears  
asking,  
“Where you want to go Billy?”  
I’ll give him my  
infinite list  
&  
when  
he finds  
Nanaimo  
we’ll drive to  
just the right  
Coffee-Space.

Enroute, Uncle Jim’s car  
will fill  
with our extended-family,  
dad & mom & members  
of the  
St. John’s poker players...  
we’ll all rush from the car  
to find Kevin  
at the already  
crowded *lesser-el-paradiso* coffee place  
a poet’s view  
of continuing time and space,  
as,  
sliding over  
super-string-  
playgrounds

we drink strong coffee  
&  
arrive at a microphone  
in  
the center of this old & new Java-joint.

I have a simple  
request,

when seeing my old friend,  
“Kevin would  
you read  
us another  
Of yr eternal words  
&  
by the way,  
before you read yr poem  
know  
this...  
we made this necessary leap  
ourselves/with the help  
of family & friends  
to see you & hear  
what you’re writing now.

Now & Now & Now  
Will echo in an eternal cave,  
As we gather in  
that eternal cafe,  
of *everywhere* we once wandered.

When his new-grown poem begins,  
we’ll also know, me & friends  
& family  
gathered...  
...Why, this is where we come to share  
each other’s poems.  
to say goodbye & hello again  
in  
our everyday paradise,  
where our kind of normal  
is possible again & again.

No bombs, no blasts.  
No grown-ups weeping - faces pushed in mud.  
Instead, a smell of coffee...  
the Voices of everyone in the room  
now will become  
our kitchen party of a poem...

...

let's all have a toast  
for our  
eternal-poet  
Kevin Roberts.

(11-23-23)

His books are available at:

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