Three Poems: On The Artist’s Mother, Sleeping; Reverberations; 4 Found Haiku

Jenna Le
jenna.le@gmail.com

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On The Artist’s Mother, Sleeping (1911) by Egon Schiele

If I were to paint my own dear mother,  
I wouldn’t use such lush fruit-aisle colors.

Her flesh is more relaxed about the jaws.  
Her hair for many years has been more sparse.

She never folds pale hands, Madonna-like,  
on thighs resembling sticks of dynamite.

Her pillow is no rippled square of nori:  
instead, her bedding is pastel, unstoried.

What’s more, her sleep is never quite so sound  
a watercolorist could safely pounce

on her asparagus extent, imbuing  
what he sees with plum and melon hues.

Like Whale’s eye at the porthole, Mother’s eye  
is always, always watching: red-rimmed, spry.
Reverberations

Snow coats the sloped roof. No ravage, no rampage, no rage: in place of yesterday’s WINTER STORM WARNING, this is simply morning. No blizzard, unless you mean the snowstorm of whispers on an ultrasound machine’s pixeled, pixie-filled screen. Someone mounded this snow on the tiles the way a doctor in an aqua smock heaps goo from a bottle on a girl’s belly: to see inside. The fog’s rocker-bottom feet walk heavy on our skulls. There’s someone trying to see inside us, to tell us we’re healthier than we know.

4 Found Haiku, Based on Anti-Asian-Immigrant Pamphlets From 1902-1922

Anti-Immigrant Mass Meeting! (Rev. Little & Col. Petit will speak.)

Anti-Immigrant Mass Meeting! (The Boys’ Choir will provide the music.)

They came to care for lawns (the pests!). They want to build a church (the heathens!).

Anti-Immigrant Mass Meeting! (Everybody Invited. Seats Free.)
About the Author

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