



Dream Animals: Pamperasaurus Horizontalus

by Fredrick Zydek

My grandfather believed that most things to which we conform were initiated by nonconformists, that each of us entertains angels, and that when winter piles up on the back porch old men may assume pamper rights. He expected excessive indulgences, leisurely coddles, and to be humored even when so deep in complaint his face turned red.

No one knew the nature of his formal education, but he was once overheard in a conversation held with a Roman Catholic priest that he would not be treated as if uncredentialed also meant uninformed. He believed that the Feudal System isn't so much dead as practiced from a greater distance than before.

He wasn't so much spoiled as catered to. The planets themselves seemed to line up in his behalf. I once saw the old milkcow curtsy just because he called her name. It is to these lofty heights these creatures aspire. They need to be waited on, served, doted over, and lavished with the kind of attention that helps them forget how ordinary it is to be alive - how sublimely ordinary.

It Starts in a Boat

by David Nixon

I am in a boat. It rides low in the water.
People are running alongside as I paddle.
The paddles are small. All wear white oddly,
some kind of robes flowing. How can I see them?
It is clearly night and they are running along the shore
as I paddle harder and in the movement of the water,
dark as it is, I can see the finely beveled wood

cutting into the water and the mob pursuing,
moving like water along the shore, yet its line,
the line of the shore, I cannot see—that is lost.
They shout in a language I do not know and
somehow I understand and I can answer.
At the top of my burning heaving lungs

I shout, as ropes begin to slop into the water
about the lower, lower riding craft and I slap
at the wide-looped hemp with my suddenly
inadequate oar: Friends, no. Please, no.
I did not murder Cicero.

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