

2 Poems By Chris Giovacchini

Something about an “Aqua Velva” man

Ice blue splash, firmed and toned Dad’s face on occasional Sunday mornings,

Rare, agenda-less mornings, happy face mornings,

Sleeping in, was until six thirty, rather than up in the dark, spoon tinkling in a coffee cup

Alongside a piece of pie, some misty cold Grizzly Island duck blind, or wholesale

Produce Market, the destination, where morning dawned on dark stubble and camouflage gear,

Or men with four am shadows haggling over boxes of strawberries, mushrooms, and bananas,

Sleeping in, meant no pre-dawn drive to farmlands, where pheasants ran, dogs worked, and

Unshaven shotgun carrying men, walked parallel, beating across autumn cornfields,

The sixty grit sandpaper, emory cloth shadow, was not an in vogue, contrived fashion

Statement, but the face of a working man, a sporting man, up early,

Appearance sacrificed for overlapping demands, rugged recreation, sandwiches

Made the night before, thermos full of strong coffee, gear ready by the door,

Young sheik stubbled men haven’t an idea, when windy storm blows, the ducks fly,

Or at the end of the ditch pheasants raise, startling, in blurred whirring bursts,

Or that by necessity you start before dawn and return after dark,

Aqua Velva reminds of cozy daybreaks, catching Dad right after he
Shaved, feeling that smooth cheeked embrace, on easy mornings,
When he'd had the time to shave, and splash on that Aqua Velva,
There was just something about him.

Gray Haired Man in a Tie-dyed Shirt

Lady Luck tattoo, a pierced ear, white pony tail,
He limps when he walks, but he doesn't realize,
Wizened from death brushes and having not said, "no" enough,
His hands tell of turning wood, shovels and mattocks, composted earth,
Stone and cement, back to the land, and back to basics, he kept chickens and bees,

He remembers the Laughing Lady, and going down the enormous hardwood slide
On sacks of burlap at Playland, war protest and civil rights rallies in the Park,
The Black Panthers feeding hot oatmeal to sleepy kids, on their way to Oakland
schools,

He might remember the Avalon ballroom, The Family Dog, when the Carousel
Ballroom

Became Fillmore West, and when the three kings came there for Christmas,
Freddie, Albert, and B.B, and when a little known band, "Santana" opened for
Quicksilver and the Doors, he might have seen Hendrix and Joplin there before they
died,

He probably remembers; the Hite Report, the Joy of Sex, the pill, and a few abortions,

When it was cool to open doors and when it wasn't,

When women cooked, and sometimes would invite you for lunch or dinner,

He might recollect when pollution reform started, the coming of clean water and air legislation,

The advent of food co-ops, and when "recycling" was collecting glass, newspaper, tin cans,

And aluminum in separate garbage cans in the basement and you'd drop it off at big truck

Parked in front of a High School on Sundays,

Gray haired man in a tie-dyed shirt will give you a nod as you pass, estranged by people

Listening to their I Pods, and texting their texts, still enjoying changing patterns of clouds in the sky,

He may think but not say, "Have a nice day!"