

Tale for Three Avenues
Eric Carroll

Miles grew up in a bungalow in a small city
forgotten
by the country to which it belonged.
Miles grew up nursed by a nation bent on preventing protest
and burning flags.

The flow of feet on pedals would ring in his ears.
He would frequently flee to the teacher's tones,
tones would fill her classroom of cultural bias
with the trappings of a government's paste-bucket fist.

Early one morning he lit to the kitchen
clutching his satchel.
He had rustled the night
vowing never to turn his face.

The lights were all twinkles in the dawn of the day,

The street drains were musty, oxidized
and lay a hollow, dripping, behind-the-scenes soundtrack.

A deep orange sky glowed from the east
rubbed its sentiments on the streets
and swayed on toes that don't know where they go.
A flee embraced the dirt
accumulated around the soles of his shoes.

His fingers were calloused,
all long and worn
and spawned a seedling under dripping drainpipes
his first piece born
as cockroaches in lawn chairs watched in awe.

A tree of twelve colors,
with black and white birds
would eavesdrop on his words between the cat's nine tails.
"This way"
 "That way"
 "Which way"

Anyway would do.
As long as he could go there from here.
From there
down the mortar path of bombshells and church bells,
He found a keyhole paradise.

Where the rivers flow red,
from the twelve thousand Twizzlers along the riverbed.

“But, why is the sky orange and not blue?”
This is unusual too,
that the grass should grow dead
and when they end, shrink into the ground instead.

“What are these furry fellows breathing down my neck?”
They would stick their tails in his ears
and tickle his brain into believing they weren’t real.

The cinderblock milkman borrowed his compass
And returned it three days previous.

Miles’ left was not right. His up was not down.
He made his way,
ambivalent to his reflections in the puddles.