

Neil Arditi

Status Update

for Mohini

Why should we advertise
our affinities,
or require
that other people like
the things we like
to do? Friends
post pictures of themselves
in Hawaii
at Christmas.
They send their love.
Their babies
are not as cute as ours
but we like them anyway.
We like so many things!
When summer trumpets itself
in magnificent blue
and purple irises,
you will like
the pictures I take of them
and I will like yours.
Is it bad manners
to wash clean linen in public?
To tidy up the story of our lives
for digital display,
day after day after day?
No doubt.
Now smile
while I snap
this image
for my timeline.
Never mind the comments.
I want to be alone with you.

At Carlton's Place

for Jud

Which is owned by Chance,
one of four sons,
from two marriages
(who is selling it, alas,
to a professor couple at NYU),
you can wash the city off
in a cold spring pond,
or float
on retired tire tubes
down a river
no wider than a road.
Carleton calls it
a Zen meditation,
and flaunts the many
advantages of the location
and of socialism.
But take your pick:
it all must go.
The wooden propeller of an airplane,
an apothecary's counter,
carriage-jacks,
a massive collection
of iron irons and antique
ironing boards,
three great scythes,
a fine array
of *Coca-Cola* clocks
from diner heaven.
The perfect sliver
of a coffee table
with cabriole legs
and a nice patina,
hung upside down
on finishing nails,
looks like
an unstrung lyre.
(I place it in my trunk.)
So much for BARNs ARE NOBLE.

Neil Arditi

Carleton, at seventy-eight,
is scaling down.
He has “an opportunity”
with a lady friend:
a nurse he met in Rehab
 (“a total mess”).
With his refined eye for real estate,
he’s picked her out
a perfect house in town,
where they can pool their strengths:
her money, his fearlessness.
Hypocrisy and Propaganda,
his beloved Labradors,
are gone, alas.
Of course, he’s sad to leave,
but it was only a matter of time.
“How often can you purchase charm?”
Location, location, location.
The professors stayed for three hours
and were sold.
Good thing we got here first.

Winter Song

Go walking in the chill and brittle wind,
Pour darkness from the pupils of your eyes,
And gather in the scarcity of light
No meaning. When the stars ignite the sky
And, sliver-thin, the moon rides overhead,
Go walking in the playground of the dead
Season. For there is nothing like a night
Of total paucity to resurrect
A self as old as time that has no end.
Go walking through the leafless trees and send
Your breath, ghost-white, to dust their barrenness.
Now Autumn's past. With nothing left to say,
Go walking where the winter winds caress
And careless air will wash your name away.