

Kansas Mythos

Bored eyes glance
The declaration of tumultuous histories
Piqued interests breed charm of pride
The life inside a cavum of cardboard boxes
The gather-'round-sit-down tales
That are duty of elder Kansans to polish-to-shine
These dusty ghosts my child heart investigate
In the haunted house of worn photos and sepia-page news clippings
Stories of our collective childhood
Tell us how our people are survivors.

Stories of silly settlers having faith in the land,
That it be conquered and prosperous
By the sheer cunning of deserving hands
But Job knows the challenges of God's commands.
The forces of nature will always prevail,
Their footsteps of foundation lie in the rubble of ecreation.

Stories of John Brown's fool's gold holy grail
Calculates the blood drops needed
To flood the Kaw in Beecher Bible debris
Forever be known as the land of liberation
The home grown fear needed
To birth a nation in war.

Stories of rag faced children starved
But filled too full,
Lungs bare bowls of precious Kansas earth
When the clutch of their mother's rugged arms weren't good enough.
There wakes a numbing roar beyond understanding,
This air of the sky with the sun blot out.

Stories of the burial at Burnett's Mound lies a chief and a curse.
There are rules of the sacred,
Of protection lest it be disturbed
When dismissed then shall they learn
Accustomed destruction invited by manifest construction
See prairie gods of chaos with a modern flare.

Stories to defy the impossible, Midwestern mules
Survivors root in the graveyard path of the American Dream
Bread basket atop of nuclear missile silos and buffalo fossils.
We, the special breed, the elders teach
Connect in the battles of these boxes
And listen as the prairies preach our fables

~ Tara Bartley

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