

Drunk On The Striped Table

Rickie Lee Jones

In my featherless, sagging, saffron wings,
I dance

My Phoenician, waterlogged, orchestrated and forty foot wings
Wave in the air
I am drunk laying against the striped table
Pushing these banners into the airless beach
Waving these flags as i murmur the recipes of prayers to the vendors
And the pharisees in bikinis pumping iron against the sun

The recipes of semitic vendors, egyptian vendors
Shaking their backs against the sun
Laughing with the sounds of sheets of metal
Splashing the naked pharisees
With wild bikinis and the soft fragrance
Of dreams
And morning

I walk on the beach looking for a place to sleep
My arms are hidden beneath my sailing skin
I am broke and fucked up and i fall in the sand
And sleeping in the warm cradle of a billion rocks

I dreamed of cher
She came to us in babylon
And she was rattling fluently
Her true language
And she was dressed in high syrian rags
Her face had white powder on it and there were
Little brown moons beneath her eyes
And i saw into her
An arabic women parading around naked
Powerful, irreverent but still after all
Doing it the old egyptian way
With sparkling clothes and force

Now i awake in the afternoon
The arcade is filled with children
Families are walking by staring at me
Pre-pubescent faces are coming a little too close
I don't even remember if i have on any underwear

I get up and walk away
I never even knew this stuff was here
The twirling music, the games, the money
This commune living sucks
These black panthers suck
These harmonica players
Should all go back to the north
Canada, new jersey, where ever they do that
Blowing

II.

I abandon the old way when i first got to san diego. I fucked anybody i wanted to. I was, however, gang raped by a blues band in an old school bus. That was pretty

Horrible. There were only three of them. I can't remember if i got the third
on e off me. I think i did. I was so ashamed.

Perhaps people think if you don't scream you're not being raped. Perhaps the
y think if you say to yourself, just let him do it and he won't hurt you. Or
even more

Provocative, just let him do it and maybe he'll like you. And of course you'
ve been saying no, no, don't . Or pushing but not pushing too much. Because
you're just a little

Girl really, and you're afraid, and you're so tired, and you just want somep
lace to sleep.

That's what it's like when you run away from home.

Lots of people will rape you. And you'll let them. Just to have a place to s
leep.

The thing was, after they fucked me, and all this juice all over my thighs,
they didn't even let me sleep there.

You think this only happens to me? You're crazy. You think this only happens
to girls who are rough? You're wrong. You think this only happens in storie
s?

Look behind you.

Still i liked the idea of being assertive. I liked the idea of free love in
san diego. i liked the idea of saying i want you instead of waiting around s
o some guy can get his rocks

Off thinking you didn't really want him that he won something from you that
you didn't want to give him. This strategy, this tradition, is a kind of rap
e.

This idea that men are suppose to win you, that you are suppose to be aloof,
is a small but significant dramatization of rape. I do not like it. not one
bit. that sam i am that

Sam i am. i do not like that sam i am.

Now i could no more say get down here and eat this sweet me than i could
Swallow a bull fighter

Or write names on the walls in blood

Or wear the victims horns on my head

Or row a boat across the atlantic ocean again

And though sometimes i am sitting at the desk, or

At a table eating dinner

And there is some one, some slave, or some anything

Underneath

Eating mine alone

And no one knows

Or eating every ones

And everyone is coming

I could never bring anything to reality now

Reality is cracked by the blows of terrible

Men and nights with pointed teeth

Snapping poison at the air

I breath

And all good things now

Take place inside my many layered

Silence

My eyes

My lips

Are sealed

Where did you go

When things went bad, anyway?

I sat beside you in that bathroom all night.

You were crying
You were talking to me like a baby
You were gone, man, gone
You just kept getting in the bath
And getting out and letting the water run out
And then getting in again
And all that food i made
It was all over the walls in the kitchen
And there was a heat wave
And the waves were very, very high
And the dogs were turning into carrots
And the valentines were melting beneath
Burrito and neon
Where shattered places pave the road
The winding road through echo park
That echoes still
Your naked body
The bed you brought
Those stupid lamps
Your body echoes
The last shadows
Of me against you
You loved me.
You loved me madly

Where did you go? i knew you like that scene of girls chasing you down the street. that's why you always liked to have a very hip car, because it was important that they chase you in the right car, and i was not about to chase you.

I knew that story of that italian girl in philadelphia chasing you down the night street you were in a taxi cab, that's a nice image. then the japanese girl. but then my feet were starting toward you and you were turning the corner onto sunset and you left me there in a second day cold turkey. and all i can think of is philadelphia cheese steak sandwich philadelphia cheesesteak sandwich.

Philadelphia cheese steak and every time i think cheese steak i see all this wet cheese and steak.
Here comes the parade! Look! Here it comes!
I let you go.
I let you go. You like to rip girls. I had to let you go.