

"Words' Worth" Poetry Readings

Poets at the Culture, Arts, and Parks Committee of the Seattle City Council.

Debutante Seasono by Skye Kathleen Moody

She sat snipping Debutantes
Rex and Comus
Whites-only photographs
Vital statistics
from the Times-Picayune
Gingerly placing one atop another
Two neat piles
Rex and Comus
Comus and Rex
Comus Comus Comus

Is this girl Rex or Comus?
she asks Arabelle
former Deb from Junior Plague
misanthropic sister in sorority and secret krewes
Arabelle replies Oh Biddy I don't remember
They alternate you know from year to year I think she's Rex
Anyway Jed looked at the paper this morning and said
they're all either black or pigs

Biddy the snipper clips around the blacks
They aren't real Debs anyway she muses
And if you read their bios you'll see that ninety-five percent are fatherless

Uh-huh that's right
One parent in almost every case
Now this one
Biddy ruminates over a vanilla blonde
Do you suppose they named her Felicity after the street
or is it a family name?

Arabelle strains forward across her own magnificent knees
to study Felicity
Her coffee cup clinks
Bone cup to bone saucer
Arabelle's trademark sound
No one in New Orleans sets a cup
quite like Arabelle
Oh that Felicity Arabelle curls her delicate upper lip
I think there's some rather special story attached to her naming
No details jump right out just now

Biddy the clipper purses her thinning ex-Deb lips
Snips and snips and snips and snips
At last all the white Debs lay
one upon another
In neat Comus and Rex stacks
Where white debs belong

The black Debs a string of paper doll scraps
cling to each other as they tumble head over heels
from Biddy's deft dangling fingers
into the recycle
Biddy studies her diamonds
I miss the days when married couples lacked familiarity she murmurs
All this intimacy spoils an individual's identity

Clink Bone on bone signals tacit agreement
Arabelle sighs
I find it all rather tiresome But never mind
I think it's time for a new ball gown Yes that's it
I need a new ball gown.

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