

REXROTH'S DAUGHTER

Greg Brown, (from Covenant)

[Kenneth Rexroth, who died in 1982, was a great American poet. His language and style are very different from Greg's but they explore many of the same nuances of love, marriage, nature, and growing old in the world. Someday, I'd like to ask Greg if Rexroth's poem "Marthe Away (She is Away)," a love poem from Rexroth to his wife, is the inspiration for "I Slept All Night By My Lover."]

[In introduction and verses, G chord has fill note on some beats: Bb played on G string, second fret.]

G

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE WINTER, WORKIN' UP MY FAREWELL

Em

IN THE MIDDLE OF EVERYTHING, UNDER NO PARTICULAR SPELL.

G

I AM DREAMING OF THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE THE CHILDREN LEARNED THE STARS.

Em

CLOUDS ROLL IN FROM NEBRASKA, DARK CHORDS ON A BIG GUITAR.

C

G

D

MY RESTLESSNESS IS LONG GONE, I'D STAND HERE LIKE AN OLD JACKPINE

Am

Em

C

G

BUT I'M LOOKIN' FOR REXROTH'S DAUGHTER, FRIEND OF A FRIEND OF MINE.

C

G

FRIEND OF A FRIEND OF MINE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR HANDS AND MOUTH THAT DID ALL THAT TO ME
ARE SO DAILY NAKED FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE.
THAT THUNDERSTORM IN MICHIGAN I NEVER WILL FORGET
WE SHOOK RIGHT WITH THE THUNDER, WITH THE POUNDIN' RAIN GOT WET.
WHERE DID YOU TURN WHEN YOU TURNED FROM ME,
WITH YOUR ARMS ACROSS YOUR CHEST?
OH I'M LOOKIN' FOR REXROTH'S DAUGHTER,
I SAW HER IN THE GREAT NORTHWEST. GREAT NORTHWEST.

WOULD SHE HAVE SAID IT WAS THE WRONG TIME IF I HAD FOUND HER THEN?
I DON'T WANT TOO MUCH, A FIELD ACROSS THE ROAD AND A FEW GOOD FRIENDS.
SHE USED TO COME TO SEE ME BUT SHE WAS THERE AND GONE
EVEN THE VERY LONGEST LOVE DON'T LAST VERY LONG.
SHE'D STAND THERE IN MY DOORWAY, SMOOTHIN' OUT HER DRESS
AND SAY "THIS LIFE IS A THUMP RIPE MELON -
SO SWEET AND SUCH A MESS." SUCH A MESS.

OH I WANTED TO GET TO KNOW YOU BUT YOU SAID YOU WERE SHY.
I WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED YOU ANYWHERE, BUT HELLO ROLLED INTO GOODBYE.
SO I JUST STOOD THERE WATCHING AS YOU WALKED ALONG THE FENCE.
BEWARE OF THEM THAT LOOK AT YOU AS AN EXPERIENCE.
YOU'RE BACK OUT ON THE HIGHWAY WITH YOUR POEMS OF CITY HEAT,
AND I'M LOOKIN' FOR REXROTH'S DAUGHTER, HERE ON MY OLD SIDE STREET.
MY OLD SIDE STREET.

THE MURDERER WHO LIVED NEXT DOOR SEEMED LIKE SUCH A NORMAL GUY.
IF YOU TRY TO FOLLOW WHAT THEY SHOVE AT US YOU RUN OUT OF TEARS TO CRY.
I HEARD A MAN SPEAK QUIETLY, I LISTENED FOR A WHILE.

HE SPOKE FROM HIS HEART TO MY WOE, AND THEN HE BOWED AND SMILED.
WHAT IS REAL BUT COMPASSION AS WE MOVE FROM BIRTH TO DEATH?
I LOOKIN' FOR REXROTH'S DAUGHTER, AND I'M RUNNIN' OUT OF BREATH.

SPRING'LL COME BACK, I KNOW IT WILL. IT'LL DO ITS BEST.
SO USEFUL, SO ENDANGERED, LIKE A LION OR A BREAST.
OH I THINK ABOUT MY CHILDREN WHEN I LOOK AT ANY CHILD'S FACE,
AND PRAY THAT WE WILL FIND A WAY TO GET WITH ALL THIS AMAZING GRACE.
IT'S SO COLD OUT THERE TONIGHT, SO STORMY I CAN HARDLY SEE.
AND I'M LOOKIN' FOR REXROTH'S DAUGHTER, AND I GUESS I ALWAYS WILL BE.
I ALWAYS WILL BE.

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