

A Prayer for Christopher

« *Regarde St Christophe et va-t-en rassuré.* » Remembering Christopher Peloso.

Dear Christopher.
There is so much I could say
to your disappearing act,
to your despair,
to your demise.
Though all I can think is,
there but for the grace of God....

Oh, Christopher,
how my heart splits for you,
oozes hurt in that slow, honeyed way
that will last way longer than the headlines
meant to immortalize you.

I had so much hope for you—
prayed, after your last rescue,
that you'd find that path back to
where you once were—
the way I did, in my own,
circuitous way.

I cheered you on,
eyes understanding your emptiness
behind the glare of headlines and
official photographs,
knowing you could pull through this
if only you could hang on,
keep breathing,
start to believe.

Dear Christopher, I cry for you.
For the choice you made months ago
but only finally arranged to act upon.
For the ache that must have kept
you awake, even in sleeping.
I remember, re-live, those days, so easily.

The soaking wet sombering
drapes of doom that darkened every day
into night before daylight.
The endless laneways of shadows and promises
that raised eyebrows and led nowhere.
The energy it took to feign normal,
to not think of escape
to not see every work day,
every walk around the block
as an opportunity not to come back.

Dear Christopher,
your lump in my throat tightens,
threatens tears,
remembering those hope-less days
remembering the years they lasted
remembering how inescapable they were,
remembering how all I wanted was to walk from it all.

For me, Christopher, that life is
long ago and only yesterday,
Nine years of learning a different path,
a celebration of myself,
a concoction of me, hurts and all.

Had you only managed your holding pattern wee longer,
Had only someone could convince
you he believed in you,
Had only you could find how
to believe in yourself.

Oh, Christopher. I am so sorry,
so sad.
So certain, you could be me.
Had you managed to
hang in, just a little longer.