

An interstellar immigrant chooses to fume: The poetr'y of Nic'El (Fragment 23a)

A pop pome about the pop personality Nic'El

(Translator's Note: This confessional pome was written in the traditional Kryptonian metre known as 'Ravishing Souffle', the favoured poeti'c style of the wandering Bards of that long deceased bleak world. The nearest example on Earth is 'beat poetry', itself a sub-form of 'Biblical free verse' and given fulsome expression in the poetr'y of Walt Whitman (no relation to the king of chocolate), a wandering Bard of that long deceased bleak city, New York. No attempt to capture the beauty of Kryptonian poetr'y is ever successful, therefore I have not bothered to try.)

YOU perhaps have heard of my cute younger brother Kal'El?

He and I were placed into separate rocket ships (black body, yellow trim, with turbo charged warp drive of course; the kind that kicks in if you get too close to a black hole) when our lovely ice-planet Krypton (you would have loved the skiing) was about to be ripped apart by seismic waves caused by that worlds bizarre orbit with its oscillating distance and inevitable proximity to our beastly sun - HIS pocket rocket landed in the wheat fields of muddled America and close enough to LA and Hollywood for him to become famous.

I still to this day think they gave little Kal the better rocket while they stuffed my larger frame into the prototype dad threw together during a nasty blizzard which kept us all housebound on a particularly perplexing summer. Our parents claimed to love us both equally, but they always favoured the younger one: HE got bigger slices of cake (so what if he's growing? What was I doing, shrinking?) and HIS towel was always put on the hot-rail in front of the heater to dry, while mine was left in the damp bathroom 'to air'.

My rocket was deflected by an asteroid close to your (now mine - I feel so close to all of you) planet, and landed in southern Europe where I was found by two Greek peasants, Maria and Nicos Vougiouklaki, who kept goats and whose own children had long since left home to seek the bright lights of mains powered city streets in western capitals, where they established well regarded take-aways, featuring souvlaki and just about anything you can think of, wrapped by mid-sized pita bread.

Size is the real secret to using pita bread effectively - most people use too small a size or, what is to say the same thing, stuff too much onto the pita bread; is it any wonder I often ask myself, why you can't roll it properly and most of the contents end up on your shirtfront or windcheater or in my case the blue and white Lycra suit I've been wearing recently - since my heroic pedigree has been revealed to the world - but I still can't get a decently proportioned souvlaki, and I'm a superheroic person with a sense of humour.

Anyway, they adopted me, as well as adapted me to the ways of the peasant Greek mind which as you know, if you are sufficiently well educated, is the repository of the collective wisdom of the Greek classical age as well as the less original, and somewhat desultory, byzantine orthodoxy. But it was when I saw that my younger brother had matured into a somewhat pompous, self righteous public figure with

horribly bad dress sense (my goodness, those colours in Lycra?) that I decided to come forward myself and try and put my superpowers to good use. The poor flake Kal'El, as portrayed in the media, showed he had no sense of irony, or any capacity for nuanced thought or perspective, no subtlety, or even Socratic penetration disguised as smartarse doubt.

That's LA for you. All sheen and no substance.

Unlike me, with my collective Greekness, as it were, pouring out of my pores.