

# New Poetry from George Kramer: “Three Snapshots of Superman’s Mother,” “Google Earth”



ASTRONOMICAL DISTANCE OF LONGING / *image by Amalie Flynn*  
Three Snapshots of Superman’s Mother

*Budapest, Hungary. December 1944.*

This stagnant end squats over its vile start  
*Faster than a speeding bullet!*

from the slag pile, the louse waste  
*More powerful than a locomotive!*

the fecal secretions of war  
*Leaps tall buildings in a single bound!*

the girl's father was sought for  
*It's a bird, it's a plane, it's Superman!*

the column of Jews being  
*Truth, justice and the American Way.*

marched to the river.

*This is a job for Superman.*

It was then that God stole her belief  
but left her fraught wonder.

***Fort Collins, Colorado. November 1963.***

The vertical hold hop-skips,  
horses drawing hearses  
plod inside the droning box,  
fusing to the vitreous reflection  
of his mother's tear-streaked face.

Preschool Superman stews.

No president calls Him to Dallas.

He was not consulted  
on preempting His TV show for this  
dull parade.

His caped powers, though mighty,  
are no match for the elegiac bagpipes or  
the morose Kennedys on this untuned Magnavox.

***Alexandria, Virginia. April 2016.***

Floating in my feeble galaxy of lost atoms,

I peer at an old picture frame.  
Behind glass the girl's silver halide half smile  
issues a cautious greeting across  
this astronomical distance of longing.  
I orbit that smile's twilight glow –  
a planet where love has nowhere to go.

## **Google Earth**

Somewhere Gerardus Mercator  
met on an equator  
the ragged hunter who first drew  
from warm pitch and raw whisk  
the rugged path she found  
to the grazing grounds.

Their compasses agreed:  
on friable parchment  
mapmakers must have  
their maniacal dragons, their  
flawed seas, and their ranges  
of rumpling blunders.

An old wall was woken by  
a flattened paper globe,  
a remnant copy etched  
by an ancient calligrapher  
with a cliff grip  
chiseling a copper plate.

It is easy to see what is lacking here:  
a map's crinkle, or its volcanic dimples,  
green alpine frock, sweat of ocean.  
No chance for glass-headed pins,  
and lands not thick nor lean are plially lying  
on a polarized screen.

Swipe past the displaced perspective  
and its warning of the asphalt assault,

sharp canines snapping  
at the ribs of gated jungles,  
as the electric sky thunders  
down boundless data.

In this benign monitor light I read  
about the first arrow and its story  
of the bloody hand that held it  
and the slaughters that it stopped.  
We daily stride newly into changeless air  
on the journey to pixel from dot.