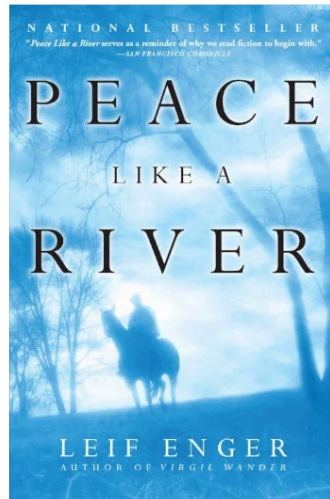


Writing Like Swede in "Peace Like a River"

3.3.26 - Golden Bean Cafe - Belval



I'm currently reading *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger, whose title is pictured above. In the book, Reuben's younger system has quite the fantastical (is that a word) and romantic view on life, which she pours into her writing. Reuben gives snapshots of Swede's poems/stories throughout the book. They consist of old western, cowboy ballad type of poems that follow ABAB or AABB schemes and have that sing-song kinda feel to it. Like a said, Swede is quite the romantic so she likens her family's trip west in their RV to a cowboy heading west into the badlands, and writes about their journey through this lens. I am enjoying the book, but I also am really enjoying the little windows you get into Swede's writing which paints their trip as both dramatic and heroic. I am nothing if not dramatic and heroic (or at least that's the picture I paint of myself in my brain) so today I thought I would try my hand and exercise my creative muscle with writing a ballad like Swede's about my life as I'm living it. I'm sure this will be quite a shocking piece of poetry to read but I am going to write it nonetheless. The real challenge is going to be romanticizing and making my extremely unordinary life look heroic. Or maybe I'll just cook something up creatively. Let's see where my mind goes and after I can break it down. Now let's get into it.

*In lands as distant as Marvin Gaye's lover,
Where skies are grey and like commercials, muted
Frontier Felix's expedition was long underway,
With the hard ranks to which he was recruited.*

*Frontier Felix was weathered and wise,
By hundreds of duels lost and won.
His saddle leather sun-faded thin,
Walnut grip splintered - hard to hold his gun.*

*Tintype of his brunette beauty tucked into his hat,
His unborn baby's cries filled the wind,
Felix urged his mount onward lost in thought,
Smooth, soft reins remind him of his lover's skin.*

*His home and wife on his mind, like ketchup drizzled on fries,
Will he make it home in time to hear his baby's first cries?*

*One final duty - an outlaw on the run;
Felix rode hard after his trail.
Bring him bound and he'd earn release,
Ride too slow and he'd miss his child's first wail, lads,
Yes, he'd miss his own child's first wail.*

*He rode so hard his horse was a No. 2 pencil,
Worn right down to a knob.
As he rolled and lit up a cigarette,
The first shot split through the scrub*

*Rocks chipped, whizzing filled the air
Trading bullets like stocks, each man taking their turn,
Crouched and hidden behind a boulder,
Felix reloaded, his tobacco burned.*

*A body sprawled out among the granite,
Like dice cast lazily across the ground.
His face preserved in shock and awe
His mouth still open though without sound*

*Frontier Felix stepped out to this ghastly sight,
But he didn't feel dismay
For he knew he was free that very night
To head his family's way*

Lol this was actually mad fun to write. For the premise I tried to base it off the fact that if my team finishes top 2 I get to go home earlier and make it home in time for my sister's graduation. If we finish 3rd in the league I have to stay out here an extra 3 weeks to play a relegation series, causing me to miss her grad. I was thinking of western ways to portray this and

I landed on a cowboy making it home for his kids birth lol idk. I guess graduation is my sister being “born” as an adult so that works. W brain exercise fosho.

Frontier Felix, only a final job to see through

His wife ballooned and getting close, a mere two months 'til she's due

Yes, he shot that man down

Stanza 5 – The Ride / Rising Action

Purpose: Movement and urgency.

- Faster pacing
- Weather turning harsh
- Internal doubt
- Counting days
- Thinking of the birth

Shorter lines can help here.

This answers: *Can he make it?*

Stanza 6 – The Resolution

You must choose:

- He makes it just in time.
- He arrives too late.
- He abandons duty for family.
- He dies finishing the job.

This answers: *What does he value most?*