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shimmering shallows

Shimmering Shallows
Murmur to time and
Softly, sweetly slip away.
Minnows darting fro and to
Will catch
A ray of escaping sun
And reveal to us
Their innocence.
Pebbles shiny, worn
Are tapped from security
By naked toes and
Relinquish their fate
To the caresses of the stream.
Breezes stir
The long slender fingers
Of the willow.
They entangle
The golden strands in silken repose.
A reminder of our entrapment
Once again.
There’s no escape –
Not even here.
—Susan Bertz

indian summer

The soft glimmer of sun shimmers through
the muted hues of autumn leaves crushing softly underfoot.
A gentle breeze caresses my cheek and lifts
my hair to play dance-games with the sun.
Thinking of you, I wonder if you feel
the inner glow of autumn’s warm love –
the sublime rapture that captures my spirit
and begs you to join.
—Carolyn Alexander

autumn

He stands by the side of the road,
Battered by the wind.
Time is no stranger to him
And he has not far to go.

Yesterday’s glory is but a mist
of a memory,
And its splendor but a bitter
relic of times past.

Worn with the dust of many roads
A victim of fate,
Everything that was or will be, he sees
With clearer eyes,
But there is no time.

Frail and tired, he staggers now
and falls
And vanishes forever in a sky-bound cloud of smoke.
—Victoria Matthew

dream on a spring day

Embrace me,
Warm spring breeze.
Sway my light body
Through the air
And land me
On a gay flower
In some green meadow.
Place a shiny raindrop
On a petal
So that I may have
Some water
To quench the hummingbird’s thirst
When he comes to serenade me.
Then – blow harder,
Warm spring breeze,
And sweep my body
Into a walnut shell
Floating on a stream.
May I travel
Until I come
To rest
On a water lily
Forever.
—Mary L. Rubenstein
As the bus jogged past the sign saying "Saint Elizabeth's Mental Hospital," through the gates, and up the circular drive, I wondered how many other buses and cars full of curious, anxious visitors had been here. The grounds reminded me of a college — cheerful flower gardens, flowing marble foundations, plush, emerald grass, and gray benches for "thinking places." I was encouraged by the majestic brick buildings with white columns, shaping the hope that the interior was just as lovely.

"So far, so good," I thought, stepping off the bus. As we assembled in the parking lot, I noticed several pairs of eyes peering from windows which seemed to be hazed in a white mist. Moving closer to the building, I saw the mist becoming mesh and finally thick, restraining wire, reminding me of that used on animal cages.

The group moved slowly to the assembly hall where we were to be given instructions. There was much nervous chatter, sometimes giggles. How does one act in a situation like this? What am I supposed to do or say to these people we are visiting?

The gray assembly hall became quiet, and as I raised my eyes to the stage, a thin, sloppy man walked on. In a casual manner, he said, "You all know what we're here for — to observe, learn, and sometimes laugh. Laughter here is inevitable, as sometimes their actions are so utterly ridiculous. You may ask and answer questions freely; they know why they're here.

"For the first hour you will have guides. After that I suggest you tour in groups of three or four. If you run into any unmanageable problems, there is a red button. Push it and you will have assistance in a few moments.

"If they become affectionate or hold your hand, do not panic. This is a normal action for them. Don't forget to smile, and good luck." The abrupt closing of the speech somehow deepened our anxiety; most of us reluctantly rose from our seats and slowly meandered from the gray hall.

Our guide was a fat, jolly lady who looked as if she knew exactly how we felt. Before she began the tour, she sympathetically told us, "Remember — these people are humans just as you and I are. Some of them will warm your heart the moment they look at you with those pleading, wistful, loving eyes. Others will frighten you somewhat because their expressions are so distant. Show an interest in them, and they will probably respond. If you have any questions about their histories and so forth, do not ask in front of them. Wait until we move on, and I will try to answer your questions. The first building is one in which elderly women are housed.

Once when I was a child, I was forced to go into a sideshow at a fair. Everyone had told me of the two-headed man, the woman who was half man and half woman, and other freaks; when I reached the entrance of the side show, I suddenly felt ashamed and had a sinking feeling. After the show I was nauseated.

As I entered the building now, I had the same feeling I had experienced at the door of the side show. I was ashamed of being human. Man has the tendency to think he is invincible. Looking at these women, I knew that he is not.

Most of them appeared to be over fifty. None of them wore make-up, and their hair was not combed. Although there was sufficient sunshine, the gloomy room with its gray painted walls added to our apprehension.

The guide then asked us to mingle with the women, so several of us began walking around the room and asking some of them questions. One woman, who looked about seventy, came up saying, "Did you finally come to take me home?" The hope apparent in her face forced me to say, "Of course, if you want to go. I'm sure you must have many friends here you'd hate to leave, though." With a blank stare, she turned and ambled away.

I was suddenly startled by a hand slipping into mine, and I turned to see who it was. A tiny withered woman croaked, "Wanna' see my crocheting? I sell it to a big company in New York." "Certainly I do. My mother is learning to crochet."

She led me to a table containing over a hundred dresser scarfs, some yellowed with age but all intricately and beautifully done. "They're just beautiful. May I buy one?" "Oh, no, Honey. My company won't let me sell them individually."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I'd love to have one. Thank you for letting me see them."

The guide then signaled us that we had to move on to another building. As we went out, a dishevelled, toothless woman stood by the door, kissed our hands as we left, and said, "Thank you." Strangely, I felt like Judas. The fresh air smelled better than I had ever realized.
The guide waddled along to the next building saying, "This building houses the younger men from about ages twenty to forty. In many ways they are normal males, so you may expect a few whistles and cat calls."

Realizing that these men had not seen a group of well-groomed young ladies for some time, we felt the uneasiness well up as we hesitantly walked through the door which the smiling guide had unlocked and now held open. "Smile, girls."

It was immediately apparent that a group of young ladies was not expected, for many of the men began straightening their collars and running their hands through their hair. Some, however, just stared wistfully, hardly noticing us. The grayness of their uniforms in their gray room added to the hidden uncertainty churning inside me.

When we entered, we immediately began to mingle as the guide had previously instructed. Out of the approximately thirty men in the large room, one caught my eye. He had been watching me since I came in, not staring but looking interested. He appeared to be about twenty-five and was tall and thin. His hair was dark, as were his eyes; here were the "pleading, wistful, loving eyes" of which our guide had told us. He had been writing when we entered, and now he held the pencil poised as if he were about to write a great manuscript. He reminded me of my visions of Poe, who always seemed so tragic.

Afraid that I might do something wrong, I slowly worked my way around to him. Several of the men were drawing, others carving, and others simply sitting. If asked a question they would respond with short impulsive answers. Most of them volunteered nothing.

As I approached him after talking to others for about ten minutes, he folded a piece of paper and put it in his pocket. He did not look down or withdraw.

"Hi there," I said as cheerfully as possible.
"What are you doing, writing a letter?"
"Yes, I'm writing to a friend of mine. What's your name?"
"Heather. Heather Forrester. What's yours?"
"Adam. With no last name because I have no right to have one."
"Why? Everyone has a last name."
"No. Not me. Until I have found myself, I will have no last name."
"If that's the case, then I should have no last name either. I have no idea who I am or where I'm going."
"Then maybe you should stay here. We'd love to have you."
"I'd like to stay, but I'm afraid I can't. Do you like it here?"
"Yes, it's my haven and my heaven. Here no last name."
"I know what's out there. That's why I'm in here."

Adam had moved closer now, and during our entire conversation had not taken his eyes from mine. I was becoming uneasy, for I found this man too easy to talk to, a man who had been removed from society because his thoughts and emotions were supposedly different. Yet I felt I could tell him anything I had ever felt or experienced and he would understand.

"Are you married, engaged, or something?" he said.
"No. Why do you ask?"
"Just curious. I thought you probably weren't. You're too honest for that."
"I don't understand what you mean."
"When one is in love or just likes someone, he sometimes hides it in idle chatter, afraid to declare it. Why are they afraid? If I'm ever in love, I'll declare it the minute I realize it."

At that moment, the guide said, "We must move on, girls."

"I have enjoyed talking to you, Adam. Maybe I'll visit you again sometime."

"Please do, Heather. My Eden is sometimes very lonely."

Walking toward the door, I realized that I was very sorry to be leaving Adam in his Eden. My thoughts rambled on: Why must people like that be outcasts? His power of understanding and his imagination are overwhelming; his emotions are quite deep, quite human. No, don't pity him; respect him.

I caught up with the guide and began to question her about Adam. He was called the "Philosopher," because of his high intelligence and understanding. He was not married nor did he have any known relatives. Because he was so normal, non-violent, and quiet, he had been given "ground privileges," which meant he was free to go and come on the grounds as he pleased.

The rest of the day was filled with tours through other women's buildings, tours of the facilities, and tours on one's own. My thoughts, however, were filled with tragic compassion for Adam. Our conversation was haunting me.

After the guided tours were over, I was free to go anywhere I desired. Partially because of my weariness and partially because of my concern for Adam, I decided to sit on one of the gray benches and gather my thoughts.

"I had come here today with the idea of being terribly frightened, terribly depressed. I have not been frightened. Depression, however, is another thing. I don't think 'depressed' is the word for my feelings now."

"Helpless,' 'bewildered,' 'sad,' and 'sorry' are probably more accurate. What will happen to Adam? What would happen if I came back to visit him? Would he come out of his Eden? Or would I be drawn in?"

"Heather."

"Oh, Adam! You startled me."

I turned to face
him. He was now taking advantage of his ground privileges. He sat down beside me.

"I have something for you, but you must promise not to open it until you are leaving. This is very important to me."

Not being sure of the rules concerning visitors taking articles out, I said, "Adam, are you sure it's all right? I'd hate to get you in trouble or break some of your rules on my first visit here."

For the first time he laughed and said, "You sound as if you think they'll arrest you or something. You said your 'first visit.' Does it mean you'll come back?"

"I don't know, Adam. I must go now. I see the bus is loading."

As I stood up, he put a small, folded, somewhat crumpled paper in my hand. "Don't read it now, Heather. Please wait 'til you're leaving. Please. Goodbye." He turned and walked away quickly.

I boarded the bus and wearily took the front seat. The note was burning in my hand, but I was determined to wait until the bus started and we were leaving before I opened it. As the bus rolled down the drive toward the distant gate, I slowly unfolded the crumpled note. I hesitated in anxiety and uncertainty.

In a beautiful handwriting was written:

Dearest Heather,

I need you and love you. Please come back to Adam's Eden.

All my love,

Adam

As I looked up through the distorting tears in my eyes, I saw Adam rigidly standing beside a sign which said:

YOU ARE NOW LEAVING SAINT ELIZABETH'S MENTAL INSTITUTION PLEASE VISIT US AGAIN.

--Linda B. Adkins

REFLECTION AND REVERIE

A black heart is often the ash of some tragic fire; a scorched soul, a most unfortunate human holocaust. Never think yourself so noble to deny another's kindness. Habit is a redundant noise which all too unknowingly can make no sound. Procrastination of thought is sure stagnation of spirit. Heart and mind can seem so far apart, but are they? Men are born like cards on edge, only to topple, unless they stand together. Falling snow is among the quietest music I know, a symphony of near-silence. Don't make mountains out of molehills just to climb them.

--James Orndoff
DEJECTION

Hammer met end of shaped steel
Flesh is torn and bone is crushed,
Pain's streaks shot from head to heel —
Hard to bear . . . but bear He must.

He gazed through tears at laughing eyes
And vowed to stand the mocking cries;
While scarlet ribbons paid the price,
The words rang out, "Is this the Christ?"
Eyes wandered for a single friend,
Chanting crowd cried, "Crucify Him!"
Then, from His pain, "Forgive them, God . . .
Forgive where unknowing feet have trod."
Insight scanned the coming years,
And Jesus Christ wept bitter tears.
"Oh, Father of love, forsake not me;
I cannot live this agony - "
With pain-rocked strain for one last breath,
He found His peace in waiting death.

He Who'd offered the Drink of Life
Found no aid for parched throat.
He Who'd ended mankind's strife
Now alone bridged man-made moat.
He Who'd lived the perfect life,
Free from flaw found full in men,
Became the error of the world . . .
That it might find God's love, through Him.

--Jean Gandy

OUR LADY

Forever will our lady come
To trees of bark so cut, so grey,
And leave a babe in arms now young
In numbered days since shepherds prayed.
The rain of inches, rain of acres lends
An inside way of cleansing outside faith,
So shores must bleed as waves of rainbows end
In cow and cattle type of death.
She'll hear inhuman-human cries
And damn with hers our tears of smoke.
So that our prayer might happen unrehearsed
The streams are chapels, seas the altar fire.

--Rody McDaniel

\[ \text{a. cory} \]
BUT THE HEART

They dressed you in a fine suit and brought you down to meet him. His wife smiled and asked you how you were, but he just stared at you. And when he shook your hand, your fingers hurt, but you did not say anything, because you knew even then that you could not cry in the presence of such a man.

You went home with them and they took care of you. The woman was gentle and pulled the bedcovers up to your chin. The man only stared and turned out the light. But later when it was dark and you lay in that strange room, he came again, and sat by the window so that you could see him in the moonlight and you were no longer alone.

They took you back to the other children, that big man and his gentle wife. But soon they came back again and when they took you home the second time, they took you home to stay. That night in the living room, the woman said, "You're our son now. To live with us always. And you can call us mother and father if you like." And she kissed your forehead. The man shook your hand. You did not understand, but the pain in your fingers was wonderful.

Soon you called her mother and she cried a little when she thought you were not looking. He took you to the park, and he showed you the motor of his car. You went walking together and ever so quietly, ever so carefully, you called him father. He turned and stared at you a moment and then he nodded and smiled slowly and you walked on.

There was a question, but you were not sure exactly what it was. Only sometimes—sometimes you wondered and you were afraid. You did not speak of it, but somehow he knew. And when you were alone, he put his hand on your shoulder and said, "Nicht Fleisch und Blut; das Herz macht uns zu Vatern und Söhnen." And when you asked what it meant he told you that someday you would also understand. And somehow that was enough.

After the woman died, he did not speak for a long time. And sometimes he would stare at you as he had in the past, but he did not see you. And again you worried because you could not enter his world, and he would not enter yours. Even when he smiled again, and spoke with you, you wondered if he knew you were there.

His hair turned from black to gray, and from gray to white. You left him for a while and went out on your own. It was good to be a man, but it was better to return to him and have him call you Son.

And now he lies before you. And they say he is dying. But like a child you keep repeating, "Gods cannot die. Gods cannot die." And he is your god. How strong he was, how wonderful. Now how quiet he lies. How fragile. And yet he is still a god. And you know he saw you all the time and that he under-stood. "Nicht Fleisch und Blut; das Herz macht uns zu Vatern und Söhnen." And you loved him. Yes, loved him. But more than this—he loved you. And now you understand. 'It is not flesh and blood, but the heart which makes us fathers and sons.'

--Lys Vermandois

IF YOU FALL GET UP

circle around; then seek,
hide from behind a tree
come out;
search and you shall find;
circle around
ring-around-a-rossey,
then, be careful
the tree has roots.
we all fall down.
get up,
and search,
life is gone unless
you find beneath a root
a prayer of words
to the Playground Attendant;
a tree has long roots.

--Dorothy Seymore
SMALL APOSTROPHE TO A TRUMPET
Sharp, knife-like thrust of a trumpet bursting forth from darkness,  
Rise, flaming sound, to the crest of all the sky.  
Rise on the wings of the golden-feathered eagle, morning;  
Up, up the heights of glory; fade away, die.

THE RHYTHMICAL RISE AND FALL OF THE SEA
The rhythmical rise and the fall of the sea  
With low, swelling music is calling to me.  
From out of the hot town I’ll wander tonight,  
When first breaks the moon’s pale and half-shrouded light.  
I’ll sit on a sharp crag and listen once more  
As smooth waves chant love songs to the eager shore,  
As light winds stir starfish with warm, salty breath  
And whisper that beauty may linger in death.

Here silent and silver the sea creatures play  
With strange, soundless laughter till first breaks the day.  
Here black waters glisten immeasurably far,  
Each bright pool of moonlight a singular star.  
All traces of time with the tides’ motion cease  
This world is immortal and I am at peace.

SMALL APOSTROPHE TO A FALLING STAR
Sword of light,  
Lo, thy flight,  
Swift descending  
Cleaves the night.  
Flying star,  
Planets are  
Flaming golden  
Near and far  
In thy lee.  
Bright and free  
Be thy falling  
To the sea,  
Dark the sky.  
So might I  
Shedding glory,  
Wish to die.

POEMS
of
Loraine

AFRICA
Burning blue stars light the  
Fierce tropic night where swift  
Wild things that creep send their  
Pulse like a chant through dense  
Jungles of fear.

Whirling, lithe limbs outthrown,  
Eyes glowing golden-bright,  
Dark frenzied natives stomp  
Round pyres dancing with  
Orange liquid flame.

Black-glazed and sullen a  
Wide, sluggish river crawls  
Through unknown, desolate  
Places where frogs bellow  
And huge apes roar.

Perilous, wonder-filled  
Land like the spirit’s deep  
Recesses and the dreams  
Lurking in chambers dark  
Ever alive.
MOON SONG
What is it that glows with goblin fire,
Luminous in the black, haunted night?
Lost in a great oak it climbs ever higher,
As pure and as sure as a beacon light.
A crystal, dancing sphere that soon
Will find the sky and become the moon.

What is the song without any words,
Whose notes fall softly as golden dew,
More soothing and sweet than the carols of birds,
Warbling in whispers that morning is new?
Now mothers cease to stroke and croon
Lulled by the lullaby of the moon.

THE WORLD WITHIN
There was a world within a man,
A world of power, a world of might,
A world where endless sea-tides ran
And rolled and roared both day and night.

A darkness in this world lay.
The dark was thick, the dark was deep,
The blackness drove the sun away
And did its sullen secrets keep.

A fire raged within the core
The fire seared, the glare was bright.
The seething darkness cringed before
The blinding brilliance of its light.

The rain fell gently on the earth,
The rain was soft, the rain was kind
The rain was welcome to the turf
That could no other savior find.

HOW STRANGE THE DREAMS
How strange the dreams of a waking night
In spring when leaves with the emerald light
Of flaming stars are lit and the earth
Is wet with rain and a promise of birth
And life and hope is the whispered breath
Of wind in woods where the face of death
On broken bough and stained bark seems
Less harsh as the moonlight softly streams
Throughout a wilderness of grass
And thrusting shoots and trees; as glass
Will catch a crimson fire's glow
Reflect the flames and sparkle, so
The silent brook is a jeweled sky
And the tremulous breeze is an aching sigh
From the lips of earth, both rich and warm
That call forth phantoms of mystical form
These fleeting ghosts of eternal spring
Are born of the songs that new mothers sing,
Of the throbbing earth, of the stirring night,
Of returning faith, of the dawning light,
They are the flickering embers of love,
Forgotten dreams of the mortal that move
To the echoing strains of an ancient tune
In the madness inspired by a silver moon.

OUT OF THE BLAZING LIGHT
Out of the blazing light,
Out of the dark and bright
Out of the world, no banner unfurled,
The clear note unuttered, his soul passed that night.

Winds of the day have blown,
Wings of the night have flown,
Earth has been blessed, and he laid to rest,
And over his body the wild grass has grown.

Death is no foe, no friend,
Death is the end, the end.
Some few have wept, a vigil have kept,
A white candle lighted his soul to defend—

Candle and sun burned low,
Swift fades the living glow.
His light has fled, and now he lies dead,
His spirit abandoned to oncoming snow.
The next morning she learned that the trial about man and his fate. 'Man has a soul. Man will live on.' Don't you know that once he is dead, he is dead? He has a heart that beats until he dies, and then it stops beating. And man dies." He faced her again, and in his eagerness he knelt beside her. "You know they will let you go. All you need to do is to tell them you found out that He was imaginary when your brother died. Say you don't believe in God. Sarah, are you sure there is a God?"

Sarah sighed. "Roger, you used to listen yourself. And you liked to believe – I could tell by the look in your eyes. No one wants to die and just become nothing. You know. Why deny it? You know it as well as I do."

His tone was cold when he answered. "Do I? Do I know, Sarah?" Abruptly he left, his mouth in a tight line to keep it from trembling.

Sarah closed her eyes and squeezed her hands tightly together. What was wrong with her? Was she really a freak? Was there really no God? Of course, of course, there was a God. Luke had told her about Him. And it was in the Book, the outlawed Book. Yet why did they outlaw a Book about such a kind person? He is so gentle, so loving, and so wise. No, no. She couldn't deny His existence.

There was another sound at the door. It was an unfamiliar one, heavy and self-assured. She opened her eyes to face the most powerful man she had ever seen. Shakily she sat up. "Your Highness –"

He stepped boldly into the tiny cell. "Lie back if you do not feel like sitting up." He sat very straight in the rickety chair in the corner. "I sent Roger in first to see if you had been tricked. He says he is convinced you were, that you are now ready to confess your guilt and place yourself in our hands." His smile was benign and faintly mocking.

Sarah was silent. A slight flush rose in her face. As she watched the arrogant face of His Highness, she felt a sudden repugnance, followed by pity.

As if he were reading her thoughts, he laughed gently, the same mocking tone in his voice. "You blame me for your punishment? Am I perhaps a lost soul?"

His tone disturbed her. Was he trying to trick her? Why? He already had enough evidence to put her to death. He must have some ulterior motive. "We're all lost souls," she said. "Once we're dead, we're dead. Remember?" Her voice was sarcastic.

"You mock me, do you?" All his playfulness vanished. A cruel gleam entered his eye. "Are you going to confess? Or do I –" He did not finish, but the look in his face made her draw back. A chill crept over her. She was afraid. When His Highness chuckled amusedly and turned to leave, she felt ashamed of herself. Then she was alone, and she was still afraid.

"Are you awake?" The voice was quiet, hesitant.

She still refused to move her head. At the opening click of the door, she turned slightly and saw her own pain reflected in the eyes that stared back at her. "You told them," she whispered as the guard moved away.

"No. They just found out. I told you –"

"No, of course not. That's why Luke –"

"Shut up about Luke!" The boy faced the wall opposite the girl. His voice had become sharp and biting. "Why couldn't you leave that old Book alone? No, you had to go and get some high ideas...
would be postponed until the cut on her head had sufficiently healed. She had a few days left to live, to think, to be alone, and to be afraid. Roger did not come to see her.

The Book, if she only had the Book! She remembered a phrase from it. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Her mind refused to finish the quotation. She sat up abruptly and struck a fist into her open palm. "I know, I know, I know there is a God," she repeated over and over again to herself. "I know." The thought kept her calm until the time for the trial.

The courtroom was spacious, but depressing. The walls were grey, like those of the jail. She walked unsteadily, still weak from loss of blood, but her mouth was resolute as she waited for the ordeal to begin. Rising shakily, she stood erect when His Highness entered. But her lips did not move when the rest of the people chanted the oath of allegiance to His Highness. She had long ago stopped saying the pledge; she had only mouthed the words. Today was the first time she had not pretended. She felt giddy at her daring as she stood silent.

The ordeal began. His Highness wore a grey robe and sat peering down at the crowd. He did not usually try minor cases, but in cases involving heretics, he was both judge and jury. His eyes sought out Sarah Malicious hate shot from them. He had seen her motionless lips.

"The trial will now begin." His Highness spoke, and Sarah stood up to be officially charged. "Sarah Tyler, you are charged with the crime of heresy. The evidence will be presented."

Sarah sat down and clenched her hands together in her lap. As the trial proceeded, her hands began to tremble. Where was her God now?

The lawyer for His Highness stood up. There was no lawyer for Sarah. Heretics pleaded their own cases so as not to implicate their lawyers in their heresy of believing in a God. In his hand, the lawyer carried the Book. "Your Highness, on October the twelfth of this year, 3200, my guard and I found this book—" he held up the Book for the ruler to see—"in the home of Sarah Tyler. This was only two days after Luke Tyler's death. As all know, Luke Tyler was publicly executed for heresy. She was known to be greatly influenced by her brother. She stole the Book from police headquarters where it was being kept. She still speaks of the immortality of man. After I question one witness about certain talks she used to engage in, I will conclude my evidence." He turned toward the crowd. "Roger Finn, please step forward."

Sarah's head shot back. Her eyes followed Roger's tall frame. A dull pain stabbed at her. When she looked questioningly at him, he avoided her eyes.

"Mr. Finn, please tell His Highness the nature of the talks the accused Sarah Tyler used to impose upon you."

Roger cleared his throat. When he spoke, his throat felt parched. "Impose is the right word to use. I once loved Sarah. However, when her brother began to fill her head with these foolish ideas, I tried to tell her that he was wrong, that she should not listen to him. She refused. Then she began to try to convince me. I was gentle at first and tried to humor her. When she grew more vehement, I said she should see a psychiatrist. She grew indignant and said I was the crazy one, not her. Then I realized she was a heretic."

The crowd was quiet. Cases like this were rare. Except for Luke's, there had not been a trial for heresy in many, many years. Of course, it was impossible to convince everyone that once a man is dead, he is dead. But who ever heard of a person living on? How could anyone live when his heart no longer beat?

His Highness nodded his head slightly in satisfaction. This was going to be an easy case.

"Is that all?" the lawyer prodded.

"There's only one thing more—" Roger hesitated.

His Highness cocked his head greedily. Roger glanced from His Highness to Sarah and began to speak rapidly, his voice thick with emotion. "Sarah said that God had created everything, and that He rules everything; that He was kind and gentle. She said that His Highness was cruel and evil to banish Him and His Book."

There was a gasp from the crowd. No one had ever dared to speak of His Highness in this manner. Surely Sarah would be shot even if she did confess and say she no longer believed in God!

The lawyer spoke. "Very well, Mr. Finn. That's all. You may step down." He placed the Book on the table in front of him and sat down.

His Highness's voice was curt. "Sarah Tyler, please stand and state your case."

Sarah stood up as Roger moved toward his seat. Her tortured eyes bored into his. He seemed to quail under her silent accusation. As he sat down, his cowardice overcame him; he felt sick.

Sarah faced His Highness, her face as pale as the white bandage covering her forehead. But her eyes were fearful as she began to speak. "Your Highness, I am guilty only of loving the kindest, gentlest Being that exists. And that Being is not you— but God. How can you deny His existence? You do not create life. Where did the trees, the sky, and the mountains come from? Certainly not from you. Through God, man lives on, even though his heart does not beat. Man lives on earth with the permission of God and dies when He calls. His soul rises from the dust. In this way he becomes immortal. He goes on forever because of the love of God. God extends His Hand; and we clutch it, being the helpless mortals we are. Yet this hand pulls us from our earthly hovel to a pureness we have never known before. Everyone of you who denies His
presence will die and remain dead. But He is forgiving, too. He will not shut you away. You damn yourselves. He is there waiting for you ... and me. Your Highness, I cannot deny the existence of such a Being. There is a God, and a Heaven!"

The crowd, which had grown uneasily quiet as her soft voice spoke, now broke into rapid murmurings.

His Highness stood up in quick anger. "I sentence this girl, Sarah Tyler, to be shot at dawn for heresy. As proof of his disbelief in God, Roger Finn will be her executioner. Case dismissed." He turned and strode from the room.

Roger's head fell forward on his chest. Sarah closed her eyes and breathed deeply. The crowd of people filed out, but Roger did not move. There was a vague disturbance playing about their faces. This seemed more than a trial. It seemed as if they had participated. There was a mood akin to panic stirring in their breasts. Surely there could not be a God?

Sarah sat numbly in her cell. Her God had not saved her. Yet what had she said? "This hand pulls us from our earthly hovel to a pureness we have never known before." She smiled to herself. A hand tapped her on the shoulder, and Roger stood before her.

"Sarah ... Sarah, I'm sorry. I was afraid — afraid to die." He grabbed her hand. "Sarah ... I'm sorry. I don't want to die. Why did you have to say what you did? You could have said Luke tricked you."

Her expression was both sad and angry. "Roger, I can't say something I know is a lie. I have to be honest. I don't want to be cruel and banish Him, too. You were wrong. Now you must shoot me. I thought you loved me. First you betray me. Then you lie. Now you must kill me. But remember that you are not only killing me. You are killing a belief. You are killing the hope for all humanity. If someone doesn't keep telling them, mankind will die."

Roger buried his head in her lap. "Sarah, tell me what to do. I don't want to shoot you. I can't murder you! Sarah ... Sarah ..."

She caressed his hair sadly. "Roger, you have to shoot me ... or be killed yourself." Her voice was low and choked.

He raised his head, knocking her hand away. "But I'm afraid."

Sarah laughed, her voice oddly bitter. "Guilty? Guilty? Since when has anyone been guilty of loving God?" Her voice rose. "Guilty of loving God? All of mankind is guilty ... not me. He is here and they say He does not exist. Roger, you are wrong. You have betrayed yourself. All of mankind is guilty. And you will be guilty tomorrow because when you kill me, you will be killing a faith that can exist only by loving God."

His face twisted with pain, Roger jerked his hands away and viciously slapped her. As he fled from the cell, the imprint of his hand reddened on her face. Sarah touched it and dropping her head, cried in despair.

Later that night a step was heard beside her cell. His Highness peeped in between the bars as the girl slept, a troubled look on her face. "I listened to you today. I heard you speak of someone I have long hidden. You must be crushed. The people must not know. They must never realize that they have a choice. Man would once again become free and strong. That will not happen while I live. Men are happy slaves, chained to their stupidity, cowardice, and ignorance. When God goes, so does the hope and freedom of man. When God goes, I have power. When I die, I become the dust of eternity. Then someone else rules. This will go on forever because God has been shut away." He leaned toward Sarah. "Sleep, you fool. You think your God will save you. Well, I know He won't. He did not save your brother, and He will not save you. I almost listened to your brother and waited to see if God would save him. But he died." He became gloatingly pensive. "Tomorrow I will watch you die." With one last look at her sleeping face, he turned and walked heavily away.

In another part of the town, Roger tossed fitfully. His body was bathed in sweat, his mind a cave of indecision. Pressing the pillow against his chest, he began to speak in a half whisper. "God... if there is a God. Sarah tells me there is a God... yet why would He let this happen to her? God, I love Sarah. Don't make me do what His Highness commands. It will be the same as if I killed her. Don't make me do it. Stop me from living until it's over. Don't make me a part. God... God..." His hands crushed the pillow. "God... don't make me do it. I have not the courage to stop myself. Stop me. Yet if You do, You kill me." His laugh was bitter. "The stupid uselessness of it all! I do it, and one dies; I don't and two die. God, I curse myself and the human race. And I curse You for being so cruel. I do not understand, yet I love Sarah and curse You, though I think I love You, too. Please stop me! I can't do it myself. I cannot help Sarah. If she dies, I curse You and man together. And I... damn... myself." He closed his eyes tightly and tried to sleep.

Sarah awoke abruptly, as if someone had touched her on the shoulder. Blinking her eyes, she let them travel over the gloomy darkness of the jail cell. As her eyes wandered to the cell window, she noticed the light from the stars beaming down on her cot, throwing a pale brightness on her haggard face. Suddenly she felt compelled to pray. At first the words came haltingly; then they tumbled out on top of each other, and she prayed as a child might.
"I know You rule the Heavens and the earth. You are in the flight of the bumblebees, the wind that blows, and the green of the trees. Now You are in the deepest crevices of my heart. I know that You are the only reason that I live. Now You will be the only reason that I die. But all I ask is the courage not to break and deny You. I know there will be others to tell them. You will not let them die in ignorance. Some day they will all know Your kind and gentle love. God, stay with me. I don't want to die. I am only human. Just please... do not let me run. Help me." Her body relaxed and a calm peace settled over her.

Dawn arrived. A slightly chilling breeze blew her hair as she slowly walked toward the wall against which she was to stand. Roger stood some thirty feet away with a rifle in his hands. His hair was disheveled, and his face distraught. He jerked involuntarily when he saw Sarah refuse the black scarf to put over her eyes.

His Highness approached and smiled arrogantly at Roger. "I knew you didn't believe that nonsense. You won't be sorry. I promise you. I am honored by your loyalty to me. A generous repayment awaits you after this is all over." He patted Roger on the shoulder. The boy had an urge to strike him. Stepping back, His Highness nodded to the guards beside Sarah. They nodded in return and moved aside. His Highness raised his hand for Roger to shoot. Closing his eyes, Roger raised the gun. He opened them to glance at Sarah. She was motionless, her hands hanging limply at her sides. Yet when he looked into her courageous eyes, he saw tears were running down her cheeks. Tears dimmed his own vision. His hands trembled.

His Highness was patient. "Aim once more, Roger. Prepare to fire."

Swallowing, Roger raised the gun again. He sighted along the barrel at Sarah. The voice of His Highness crackled in the tense air. "Fire!"

There was an instant's hesitation. The gun exploded. Sarah crumpled to the ground. She started to raise her hand, but it fell back.

"See me in my office," His Highness ordered crisply. Motioning the guards to remove the body, he walked away.

Roger dropped his hands and ran toward Sarah. "I'll take her," he whispered jerkily. The guards nodded briefly and left.

When he was alone, Roger stared horrified at the rifle. Forcefully he flung it away. Covering his face with his hands, he sank slowly to his knees by Sarah's body. Tenderly he touched her bandage, running his hand along her cheek.

"Sarah, Sarah! Why did you make me kill you?" His voice grew hoarse. "I loved her... but I was afraid. No one wants to die... I know You exist, God. But why didn't You save her?" He began to pound the earth with his fists as his voice rose to a scream. "Sarah! Tell me I didn't kill you! Say it's not my fault! Sarah! Tell me! Is there -- ?" --Augie

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FUNERAL FOR THE IDLE

Stand and hold your breath until the air rushes in and chokes and tightens and you breathe no more.

Stand and stomp your foot until the blood gushes and streams red and blue and you bleed no more.

Stand and cry until the tears turn to floods and oceans and so deep and you swim no more.

Stand and be the man you profess until you rot green, brown, and black and you decay no more.

Stand and watch the world spin by faster and faster and faster and faster and you circle no more.

Yea, man, you cry and bleed and wait and watch and do nothing and you are no more.

---Dorothy Seymore
the whistler

It is dark.
Nothing is heard
But my heart
Beating,
Lulling
Me to dream.
Suddenly
In the dark
Something is heard
Besides my heart.
A few mournful notes
Upon the wind,
Followed by footsteps
Echoing
Thin,
Clearly,
Tormenting,
Beckoning
Me to rise
And see
The stranger
Whistling
Beneath
Night skies.
My head says
Don't.
You are practically
Deep
In
Sleep.
My heart says
Fly
To the window.
See the stranger
Whistling
A melody —
Tragic,
Magic.
My heart has won
The battle.
I search
Into infinite blackness,
Straining eyes
To find him.
But no.
The whistler has departed.
He, like his mysterious music,
Is carried further
On the wind
Beneath night skies.

THROUGH
the RAIN

The rain was a thin mist, nothing definite, not hard cold drops, or at least, not to her. It wasn't entirely depressing either: it just made her think straight. She enjoyed walking in the rain now. It gave her a sort of peaceful feeling, and the solitude she ached for. One could not think in the dorms, where girls were always chattering, or shrieking, and popping in and out, and making her want to beg, to cry, for solitude. Around her there were occasional people hurrying from place to place, covering their heads to avoid the rain. She walked very slowly, enjoying the rain, because she didn't want to get back.

She surveyed the campus through the wet veil, and all around her was a wall of buildings and a network of walks. The walks were rules, strict and unbending, that not only were expected to be obeyed, but had to be obeyed. If you stepped off that walk, your best friend would turn you in. But you didn't wait for your best friend to turn you in. Oh no; you turned yourself in. I confess — I confess for every blade of grass I've stepped on. I confess for living — for wanting to live! I confess! I confess! But the buildings were the worst. They were all uniform, of gray unyielding rock, with dull red roofs. And they surrounded you, and looked down on you with an austere expression. And the gaping eyes, seeped in years of unblemished honor, were embedded in the stony countenances of the forbidding spinsters, and warned you to stay on the paths.

As she neared her dorm, which looked like all the other dorms, she stared up at the gray building, at all the windows, row on top of row. In each one, the shades were drawn. But suddenly her eyes came across an open window in which there was a bunk bed all unmade and disheveled. Her eyes widened. The building looked like a very fashionable lady, prudish and prim, impeccably dressed and self-assured, that didn't know her slip was showing. And she grinned. And then she laughed. And then she laughed and laughed and laughed. Hysterically.

—Jennifer H. Yane
The room was silent except for the inconsistent hissing of the hot-water pipes. The snow was still falling and looked as if it might not stop for some time.

A girl sat reading her lesson for the day. She wanted to have all the answers ready. The wooden door opened slowly, revealing the figure of a man, not her instructor nor a fellow student. He was dressed in a brown shirt with pants of the same color. In his hand he held a floor duster. He seemed surprised to see someone in the room as class did not begin for another hour. His face was dark and creased. It was a face that showed a life of work, of manual labor. It was a face like many others and yet deep and warm and strangely sincere.

After a brief pause when the strangers exchanged a questioning and answering look, he pushed his mop between the desks leaving a clean oily path.

He stood at the blackboard on which several French phrases were written, reminders to the girl that the room was used by more than one teacher. There was a dark gray rag in his hand that left a black streak as he went over the slate surface. He turned to the girl. As she looked up, he asked, "Are you going to use this?"

"No," she answered. "That's for some other class." And he began to wash away the scrawled white words that meant nothing to him. His image was vaguely reflected by the wet black surface. The darkness of his shape gave him a very strange and most singular look.

She was reading again. And he continued his quiet work. Again the oily trail was left behind his mop. "Can't do a very good job this fast," she half heard him say. "Oh, yes," was the droned reply. She answered because he was older than she was and it is polite to speak when spoken to.

He was working his way back to the door, silently gathering the dust. "You'll be home this time next week."

"What's that?"

"I say you'll be home this time next week, won't you?" He repeated the words, only this time they came slower so as to make sure she caught each one.

"Oh yes, I guess I will be," she said blankly.

He continued to push the mop over the worn wood boards. Before leaving he turned to her saying, "Well I hope you have a nice vacation."

She looked briefly into his eyes and nodded, not knowing exactly what to say or whether his words required a reply. The room was again silent as the large white half-melted flakes continued to fall.

—Julia Mason
Es Said sat alone in the dim room. The first gray light from the afternoon sun only accentuated the bareness of the chamber. The dark table and the chairs that surrounded it seemed to become lost in the grayness of the walls. No sound came from the street several floors below or from the hallway outside.

Es Said sat, staring at the scarred table, and thought. "They'll come soon. It's theirs now, they've won. Strange that I should have thought all these years that the land was mine. I am the intruder; it's theirs and his. It always has been." Slowly he raised his fingertips to his left eye. "My eye hurts. When I was a young man the pain didn't bother me. I'm too old now. Yes, that's the trouble. I'm too old to fight any more."

There was a click and a harsh yellow light filled the room. Es Said heard several men enter, but he made no move to notice them. He feared to look at them, feared the doom he would see in their faces. They were old, beaten men like himself. Men whose fathers had come from France to begin a new life; men who had started farms, who had worked and slaved in the soil; men who had grown rich and raised many children. And now, it was to be taken from them. There was no place in Algeria for them any more. They sat silently at the table and lit their pipes. The smoke slowly filled the closed room and the light became less harsh.

Time passed and the door opened many times. Old men sat at the table and were silent. Young men leaned against the walls and talked in hushed tones. Two Muslim soldiers entered, laughing. Noticing the grim faces, they became quiet and went to an empty corner. One stood, his hands in his pockets, looking around the room. Suddenly, he whistled under his breath.

"What is it?" his companion asked.

"Over there. The old man, Es Said, 'The Fortunate One'."

They stared at the man sitting at the table. His thin, short body was clothed in a simple white suit, and a thick burnoose covered all of his head but his face. His gnarled hands were clasped on the table, moving lightly as if unused to being idle. His face was tanned, and wrinkled and gaunt. A short gray beard came to a harsh point, making his face appear longer and thinner. One eye was covered with a dirty white dressing and the other appeared to be black but was hidden beneath half-closed lids.

"Who is he, anyway?" the taller man whispered in awe. "I mean, I know he has a large property, and he fought like the demon to keep Algeria French; but who is he?"

"Who knows," the other shrugged. "He's French, you know. They say he came here years ago and married a native girl. She died a couple years later and he raised their son by himself. Some people say his son left him to join our side when the fighting broke out. I don't think so. How could a father and son fight each other for seven years?"

A small group of men entered the room and one carefully placed several papers, pens, and bottles of ink on the table. Then he stepped back.
to wait. His eyes met Es Said for a moment, then he looked away, ashamed. He cursed himself silently. He had no reason to be ashamed, and yet he could not look at the old man. Impatiently he glanced at his watch. Donier and El Abbas were late. Slowly he began to sway back and forth, the tune of a march running through his head.

Suddenly everyone in the room seemed to tense and come to attention. Two men had entered, talking softly. Oblivious to the others they stopped in the middle of the room and continued to whisper. Then, seeming to agree on something, they turned to the waiting secretary.

"Well, is everything ready, Ben Ibn?" one asked, his heavy voice filling the room.

"Yes, El Abbas," he answered rearranging the papers on the table. Es Said rose slowly and stood silently staring at the two men. "This is the leader of the French National resistance, Es Said," Ben Ibn continued. "Es Said, El Abbas."

El Abbas nodded his head and stepped back. Es Said remained motionless, his knuckles resting lightly on the table. The other man stepped forward and slowly extended his hand.

"And this," Ben Ibn's voice broke the silence, "is Henri Donier."

Es Said stared for a moment at the tall man whose quiet and thoughtful face had once been so familiar to him. This man he had once loved was now his enemy — his enemy. How harsh the words were! He sat down and gazed at the table. Donier drew back his hand and motioned for the secretary to begin.

"You have read the agreement for a ceasing of hostilities?" Ben Ibn asked.

Es Said nodded his head, still looking at the table. After all this time of not seeing each other, not hearing from each other—now they were meeting.

"And you will sign for all these men?"

The men around the table nodded silently, and Es Said picked up a pen and dipped it in the ink.

"Sign here and here and here," Ben Ibn pointed out and then stepped back.

The pen scratched noisily on the stiff paper. Everyone in the room remained motionless, staring at emptiness. All seemed to be somehow embarrassed — embarrassed to look at themselves. Only Henri Donier gazed at Es Said, searching for something in the lined face. Slowly the old man laid down the pen and leaned back in his chair.

"Thank you," Ben Ibn rasped and quickly gathered the papers. Without speaking the men rose and left the room. Es Said sat, his head resting against the back of the chair, his eyes closed.

"They're gone. It's done now," he thought.

"Henri, Henri, how changed he is since he left. Taller now than I remember. It's done. It's done now."

Es Said sighed heavily and a shudder passed through his body. "What irony, what terrible thing there is here and how confused it all is. But this is the way it must be. Son must be enemy of father and loyalty must come before love. I must remember that. He left me. He fought against me. He took everything I gave him and turned it against me. He is my enemy."
“Papa?”
Es Said looked up. Henri was standing by the table, staring down at him.
“Papa,” he repeated coming slowly to his father’s side. “It has been a long time.”
“Yes,” Es Said’s voice was harsh and dry.
“Yes,” the younger man cried.
“You will still have the land, Papa,” Es Said laughed dryly.
“I can supervise the land but it will no longer be mine. I can only show you how to plant it. No, I don’t want your land. You have fought me and won. Take it and go.”
Donier began to pace nervously around the room. “What will you do now, Papa?” His voice shook. Somehow he had to say it all, somehow he had to let his father know.

“Who knows. Perhaps I will go to England. I have friends there.”
“Papa, please,” Henri put his hands on the table and leaned toward the old man. “Please come with me now. Come to my home.”

“Me?” the old man questioned softly.
“Yes, you are still my father.”
Es Said rubbed his bandaged eye and nodded.
“Me?”
Henri slowly raised himself and looked out the window. “Papa, Algeria is one thing – you and I – that is another. The country, the land, that is something, yes. But you and I. I am your son. I always have been and I always will be. You know that. You must realize that! No matter what happens it will always be true. I was a boy when I left. I did not know, did not understand everything, but surely you must see. I do not understand everything, but I know what has happened is wrong, so very wrong. You can love the land as you love a son, but it cannot give that love back to you.”

Henri's words echoed in the man’s mind. You can love the land as you love a son. You can love the land, then, also as you love a father.

“Papa,” the young man began again, “I’m married now. Anna and I. We’ve talked about asking you to come and live with us. We want you to.”


“Yes, Papa,” Henri replied softly. He looked at his father’s tired face. “We’re expecting a child, a boy, next month.”

“A child already!” Es Said exclaimed slowly rising. “So, I am to be a grandfather? And you are sure it will be a boy, too.”

Henri looked quickly down at the floor. “Well,” he stammered, “I... I don’t know. We... We want a boy. I...”

“Yes. Yes.” Es Said interrupted staring at his son. “You always know. If you say it will be a boy, no doubt it will be a boy.” Es Said’s head ached. But it cannot give that love back to you. But it cannot give that love back to you. “No,” he told himself, “the time is not right. I have learned to hate. Now I must learn to love again. I must have a chance to forget these seven years. I am too old to move so quickly.”

“Papa,” Henri walked to his father and placed his hand on the old man’s arm. “Papa, will you come with me?”

“No, not now,” Es Said whispered. “Perhaps at New Year.”

“New Year, then. You promise, Papa. You promise you’ll come to us at New Year in Oran!” Henri pressed.

“Yes, I promise,” Es Said replied slowly nodding.

Henri held out his hand and now Es Said took it and held it for a moment. They stood in silence for a moment and then Henri turned and left. Es Said walked painfully back to the table and sat down heavily. He stared at the table top, then slowly putting his hands over his face he began to cry – long, silent sobs shaking his body. Outside the sky turned a soft, quiet black.

—Lys Vermandois

wind

The wind blows strong today,
Setting the leaves afluttering.
It blows from the distant mountains,
Bringing the chill of deep woods and cool streams.
It blows from the sunburnt desert,
Bringing the choking dryness of windswept sands.

It blows from the near-forgotten past,
Bringing with it Life and Death,
Success and Failure, War and Peace.
It blows into the unseen future,
Taking with it the promise of things to come,
Borne on its swift-beating wings.

It carries with it the sound of armies,
Ignorant hordes clashing in blind fury.
It carries with it the sound of music,
Comforting song wafted on the breeze.

The wind is still blowing,
Bringing with it the contrasts of life,
For it does not discriminate!

—James Orndoff
Kathy sat very still in the car, not having moved since she left choir practice with Mrs. Joinner. She clutched at her white choir robe with its red bow and stared out the window as the car sped through the familiar brownstone district. Her small green eyes wrinkled themselves into furrows of skin and brow. Her teeth chewed at the skin around her fingernail.

"Is it much farther to my house?" Kathy asked, still staring straight ahead.

"No, just beyond the next light." Mrs. Joinner slowed the car. There were always so many children playing in the street at this time of night. She had often thought something ought to be done, but, well, things like that need to be handled by people with professional training; still, it was a shame. She looked down at the tiny figure with the white choir robe. "You are quiet today." She hesitated to say more; it might not be the right thing to say to a child. Kathy fingered the hem of her plaid dress.

"Does everyone really love everybody else? Mrs. Burrows said today that we're told in the Bible to love everyone." Kathy avoided Mrs. Joinner's stare, still toying with her dress hem.

"Well, everyone tries to love each other. We don't dislike anyone unless they are very, very bad, and then we try to forgive them." Mrs. Joinner turned her eyes back to the road. Perhaps that wasn't the best thing to tell a child; but then, who really knows what to tell children these days?

"But," Kathy looked up at Mrs. Joinner, "sometimes people hate people who love them, don't they?"

"Sometimes, Kathy, only sometimes. But no one hates you. No one."

"I was just wondering. Mrs. Burrows said God would always love us. Do you think he really loves me?" Kathy leaned her head against the back of the car and waited for an answer.

"Of course, He loves you, Katherine. Why, do you know that He loves you so much that He knows how many hairs are on your head? Um, that's right, He knows just how many and loves you so much that He looks out for each one."

Mrs. Joinner pulled to the curb in front of a one-story house, flat-roofed as were all the other surrounding houses that had been built in mass quantity up and down the block. It had once been
painted white but now was a worn shade of gray, showing signs of driving rains and children's hands. Mrs. Joinner was going to give Kathy's hand an affectionate squeeze, but, deciding against it, she leaned over to open the door.

Kathy sat very still for a moment, as if trying to decide her next move. Turning to face the door, so that her short legs dangled to the pavement, she said, "Good-night; thanks for the ride." She slid off the seat and stood facing the car.

"Kathy, tell your mother that I'll pick you up at ten Sunday morning. Maybe she and your daddy will come."

"No, they won't come. You know that. She wouldn't let me, except Mr. Burman said it was wrong not to send me; it's like not going to school. Besides, Mrs. Kelly, next door, lets Mary Elizabeth, and Mrs. Bruster sends Thomas." Kathy turned and started up the stairs dragging her choir robe behind her.

"That you, Katherine?" a voice bellowed out from the kitchen. "You're late. Supper's near about done. Pick up that robe. Always dragging everything, your clothes, your toys, your feet. Go call your father to supper. And don't yell!"

Kathy went to the back porch and watched her father work his way to the steps. "Supper's ready. Mama said to come on." Kathy went back inside and sat at the table.

"Well, what nonsense did they teach you today? God only knows why I let you go at all! Don't just sit there; go get me a knife to cut this meat. Where is your father?"

Kathy walked to the sink as her father came in and seated himself at the table. Placing a sharp knife at her mother's plate, Kathy sat down across from her father and stirred her tea.

"Well, answer my question!" Her mother hacked at the pork in front of her. "What did they tell you today?"

"They must have told you something," Kathy's father spoke slowly. "What's the matter, you too stupid to hear?" Then he looked at Kathy. That was wrong to say. He hadn't wanted to say it, not like that anyway. They just came out, those words, like his wife's.

"They told us everyone loves everybody and God loves us all." Kathy blurted it out and then hid her face behind the tea glass.

"Well," Kathy's mother reached for the butter, "if that ain't the dernest bunch of lies I've ever heard."

"I don't care if you don't believe me. Mrs. Joinner said it was true. She said God loved me and people loved me. She said God knew how many hairs are on your head, kid?"

"I don't know." Tears welled in Kathy's eyes.

"Well, how the hell is God gonna know if you don't? Quit that bawling at the table. Go on to your room; you're ruining our dinner."

Kathy stood and slowly walked down the hall to her room. She stood before her mirror and pulled at her hair, slowly counting. The tears fell and ran down her cheeks. She ran into her mother's room and tore through the large wicker sewing basket. Clutching the desired object, she went back into her room and stood again before the mirror. She parted her hair and tried again to count.

"One, two, three, four, five, six ...." She faltered, the tears fell faster. She clutched a pair of scissors in her hand and slowly began to cut the brown tresses from her head and lay each hair on the table beside her. She counted and cut and counted.

"I've got to know how many so God will love me; I've got to know how many so Mama will love me; I've got to know how many so ...." Her voice broke into sobs as the scissors snipped another hair and she counted silently.

---Dorothy Seymore

doubtless fools

Doubtless fools are ever fooled
To think a wiseman wise,
For what are fools anyway
But wisemen in disguise?

---Carolyn A. Steinla

a grain in a philosopher's brain

A scientist he read
Remarkably led
Him to arrive at this quelling conclusion
That an ape in his bed
Mutationally bred
What he termed as a cranial illusion.
Or,
This man we call Id
Is conveniently hid
Under theories and thoughts and surmises
And the role of this Id
Is displeasure to rid
And make man
In all sorts of small sizes.
Or,
The complexities we know
And the problems we grow
In our lives that we raise to supremacy,
The fox and the crow
And all beasts termed as low
Solve with food and air and fecemacy.

---Linda Clark
The chain stuck a moment and then the high gate lurched open. The old man stepped down from the sidewalk onto the gravel path. Carefully closing the gate, he hunched his shoulders deeper into the worn brown jacket. His fingers fumbled with the lock and he leaned over so that his pale eyes were only a foot from it. Even after he had got the lock closed, he remained bent over—partly because lately he had found it so much harder to straighten his shoulders.

"Grandpa," he smiled weakly as he shuffled down the path, "I guess you must be getting old; ain't the man you was. Least you can still see across the field, even if you are blind close up! But ain't it a beautiful day? Best kind of day—cold enough so the boys don't get overheated, warm enough so their fingers don't freeze. It's a good day!"

He passed a low brick building and nodded his head slowly. From the open windows came the shouts and laughter of the players. "Good," he murmured, "They're excited about it!" He passed through the labyrinth of steel and wood that was the bleachers and then began climbing the dark concrete of the grandstand stairs. "Central, Central High, you're the best, Better than, Better than all the rest," he sang softly and his breath turned into strange, haughty beauty of the empty seats, or the sidewalk onto the gravel path. Carefully closing the gate, he remained bent over so that his pale eyes were even so fast, and he could feel his heart beating, but he had to tell the coach. "Murtaugh!" he called as he saw the little man limp cart onto the field. He could see the coaches down at the far end zone. "Maybe . . . " he thought as he stopped the cart, "that Murtaugh's pretty new. Maybe he just don't know that set-up. That's it! He just don't realize the little man's the one." He turned and hurried down the edge of the field. His legs ached when he moved so fast, and he could feel his heart beating, but he had to tell the coach. "Murtaugh!" he called as he saw the coach and the two other men heading toward the gate. The tall man stopped talking and turned to watch the old man hurrying toward him.

"Yes, Turner" he asked. "What is it?" The old man stopped for a moment and closed his eyes. The wind rubbed against his neck and pushed its way down his back. "Well, Turner, what is it?" the coach repeated impatiently.

"Mr. Murtaugh," the old man gasped. "Back when I was coaching . . . Well, we had a play. I mean it's just what you need. You know that little blond boy — "

"Look, Turner," the coach snapped, "things are different now than when you were coaching. We've got enough trouble as — look, I'll be the coach and you take care of the field, o.k.?" He paused a moment. "Oh, and Turner, the far end lines have to be limed again before tonight. See that it's done, will you?"

"Yes, Mr. Murtaugh," the old man murmured softly as the men left the field. He walked slowly back toward the tool shed. He looked across the field to the empty seats and exclaimed, "They'll win! It's a good day!" And then he repeated more softly, "It's a good day!" The cold wind spun around him and brought tears to his eyes.

—Lys Vermandois
Pale forests of frost glittered on the windowpanes, and the wind sighed around the corners of the house as if tired of blowing. Three stories below, a single streetlamp blinked and sputtered, casting a dim halo of light on the heavy snow. The gray evening faded silently into a grayer night, and soon I could see no farther than the skeletons of the elm trees. It was an old house, solidly built, and I could hear no voices from the other rooms. When I turned from the window, I found that my room was already deep in shadows, even though the last embers of a fire were still glowing in the grate. As I crossed the room, the wide floorboards squeaked and a large calico cat yawned and stretched on the bed. I petted her for a few minutes and she climbed sleepily onto my lap. Captain Witton’s wife had said there were calico cats at Double House for as long as anyone could remember. There had probably been calico cats before the wars, before the Big House, before the Canal, even before the first Wittons ever made the journey up the Hudson from New York City to Port Yuron.

It was not really a port in 1817. It was just a cluster of cottages on a hill overlooking a bend in the river. Goods from the north and west had been transported on the Hudson for years, but with the building of the Erie Canal people began to travel the wide waterway. The journey from Buffalo to Albany and from Albany to New York was a long one and stops were needed along the way. From this need Port Yuron was born — a resting place, a stop for the night, a comfortable hotel. Businessmen soon found that if they watched the flow of goods up and down the river at the Port, they could judge very accurately the wants and needs of the people of the wilderness.

In 1827, an eighteen-year-old drygoods merchant, John James Witton, moved his small family from New York upriver to Port Yuron. A Bostonian, he had married a Concord girl just two years before
the trip and they brought with them an infant daughter. The fortunes of the young family seemed to rise and fall with the fortunes of the Canal. The first winter, the Canal froze and the child died of a fever. Spring brought an unexpected amount of winter furs and Little House was begun.

The Bay Staters were homesick and they longed for a house that would be like the ones they left behind. What they actually built was a new kind of home. It was larger than most houses in Port Yuron—two stories, four bedrooms, summer and winter kitchens. Perched at the very top of the hill it was a square box of unpainted wood with four front windows that shone like unblinking eyes in the morning sun. In the front yard, they planted five Boston elms.

Soon the wet winds had changed the yellow wood to gray, and smoke had blackened the double chimney. During the six months when it snowed, the sawdust on the clay floor of the winter kitchen was damp and soft, but in the spring and summer it was always sweet-smelling, and the cats made beds in it by the fireplace. Beneath the house was the first cellar where food was stored, and beneath this was a second cellar—a small, dank room which was closed completely for years.

Not long after Little House was completed, a child was born in the nearly empty downstairs bedroom. Named John James for his father, the baby was the first of many children who were to grow up in Little House. For the first children this was a wonderful home. There were still knots in the floorboards to be punched out so that one could look down into the kitchen from the upstairs hall. There were still loose bricks in the fireplaces to be pulled out and hidden. There was still no grass in the front yard and any girl could make wonderful mud pies.

A railing was added to the narrow stairway, and the children put away their toys. The river froze and thawed, dried and flooded, while on the hill, Little House trembled in the winter winds and steamed in the summer sun.

No sooner had one family grown than another was begun. John James the Second went to Boston to visit his grandparents and brought a bride back to Port Yuron. Three rooms were added to the left side of the house, and to balance them, as he said, the proud young husband planted a new elm tree on the other side. The massive wooden beams which supported the peaked roof groaned and squeaked for three years and then finally settled into place. For three years the new Mrs. Witton sat before the fire at night mending her husband's shirts, listening to the ominous creaking, and praying. Logs burned and broke in the fireplace and fiery embers flew out onto the wooden floors, scarring the polished boards with shallow black craters.

John James the Third was quickly followed by twelve brothers and sisters, and Big House was built five years before the Civil War. In its three stories, the new home held two parlors, ten bedrooms, a dining room, kitchen, library, and storage room. It was painted white and all of its windows were flanked by heavy black shutters. On stormy nights these shutters were closed and only a glow from the warmth inside seeped out between the slats.

Mrs. Witton insisted on no furniture except a small table in the entrance hall, for she did not want the visitor's attention to be distracted in any way from the crystal and candle chandelier which had been shipped all the way from London. The furnishings of the other rooms were less impressive—simple sofas and chairs in the parlors, and high feather beds in the bedrooms. The wooden floors soon grew dark and scratched from the constant play of thirteen children.

The ceilings were high on the first floor and progressively lower upstairs until in the rooms on the third floor the eaves were only three feet above the beds, and the children could hear the wind and rain scuttling across the shingles at night. Three stairways led to the upper floors. The wide cherry-wood flight of steps from the entrance hall was seldom used except for weddings. The back stairwell led from the kitchen to the upstairs hall and the boards were replaced many times. A third staircase went from the back porch up to the roof where there was a small observation platform. There the boys came to follow the ships traveling the Hudson and to watch stars at night.

There were many passageways throughout the house—some open, some hidden. Through the halls there was a constant coming and going. The whole house seemed alive with movement and the sparsely furnished rooms echoed with the laughter of children.

A covered walk was built between the two houses and the home became known as Double House. The elm tree which the second John James had planted had already grown to such a height that the man was loath to cut it down, so he built the walk to curve around it. In a very few years, the roots of the tree began to force up the bricks of the walk and there was forever a hump which visitors never failed to trip over the first time through.

Just as Little House, the new building had two cellars—one for storing food, but the lower one for storing wine and the finest whiskey. Deep beneath the earth there was also a dark passage between the two lower cellars, and in the few years before the outbreak of the Civil War runaway slaves were hidden in these underground chambers on the last leg of their flight to Canada.

The end of the battle at Gettysburg found the windows of Double House dark and draped in black crepe. At the age of nine John James the Third took over the difficult management of the large home. There were fewer and fewer products to ship
up or down the Hudson and the railroads were quickly taking over the slower river trade. Double House seemed to reflect the troubled days; the outside faded to a dull gray because there was no whitewash to cover the exposed boards; the summer sun beat mercilessly down on the roof and the children from the third floor bedrooms slept on the kitchen floor; the leaves on the elm tree planted in such high hopes slowly turned brown, fell, and did not return; the front lawn which once stretched like a green blanket down to the next row of houses was plowed and planted with corn and beans; and even the cats seemed to feel the sadness, for no kittens were born for three years.

As soon as the children were old enough, they began to work. The boys became field hands, shop clerks, and dock boys, while the girls sewed and took care of the children of other families. One by one the Wittons left Double House and did not return. The third floor rooms were closed and then the second; the windows of Little House were shuttered and the doors locked. The mother died, and ten years after the war only the third John James still lived in the house above the river. The family urged him to sell the empty place and move down the hill, but the young man stubbornly refused; Double House turned grayer and weeds grew beneath the elm trees. The man waited and Double House waited.

A young engineer came to Port Yuron with plans for a new type of manufacturing of farm machines. The impoverished Witton became interested and before long the two were partners. It was five years before they finally found a machine that would sell profitably.

Double House got a new coat of paint and a new elm tree was planted, but still the house was quiet and lonely. Broken windowpanes and shutters were repaired and the lawn was replanted. Rooms were aired and a mural was painted on the walls of the passageway between the two buildings. Only when the house was completely painted and repaired would John James ask the engineer's sister to walk down the cherrywood staircase as his bride.

At the turn of the century Double House was alive as it had never been before. The third owner was determined to make up for the years he had spent in poverty. Bare wooden floors were either polished or covered with costly rugs. The old furniture of his childhood was replaced with fine, polished pieces. A small room on the second floor was furnished as a nursery where John James the Fourth was to spend his early years. Other Wittons who had moved away returned to visit and brought with them their many offspring to help the youngest owner explore the hidden passages and food pantries.

The double chimney of Little House was replaced and so was the outdoor plumbing. A wooden floor was put down in the first kitchen, and the cats began to sleep on beds. John James replaced his toy gun with a real one and took a short trip on the Hudson to West Point. Double House was fitted with blackout curtains and a young lieutenant who went to France returned a Captain.

With the world, Double House went through years of prosperity and extreme poverty. The cats were fed and the cats went hungry. The factories produced and the factories were silent. Through the twenty years, Double House stood, lighted in good days, dark in bad. Another bride came and the fifth John James. The boards continued to steam in the summer sun and tremble in the winter winds. The beams creaked and settled together a little more. The breezes blew through the empty entrance hall and brushed the crystal droplets against one another. A fire snapped in the huge living-room grate and the bricks grew a little darker. Past memories and dreams walked quietly through the passages and greeted the new. The fairies painted the windows with frost and the calico cats stretched and yawned.

My lap was empty. The cat stood at the door and mewed quietly. The room was in complete darkness and the fire was dead. There was a low rumble and a slab of heavy snow slid off the roof and fell noisily past the elms to the ground. The cat cried again and I opened the door for her. The hall was bright and warm, and as I stepped out I thought I heard someone behind me sighing deeply and contentedly, but perhaps it was only the wind.

--Lys Vermandois

turn the soil
plant the seed
and wait
out of toil
out of time
for the vine
too late
to wait
for the grape
and the vine
sweet is the weed
out of toil
out of time
--Carolyn A. Steinle
HAIKUS

COME TO ME AT NIGHT
WHEN I AM A SWAYING BRANCH
AND YOU ARE THE WIND.

--CAROLYN A. STEINLA

CLASP MY EYES LIKE HANDS
HOLDING CLOSE THE SPACE BETWEEN
THE FEEL AND THE SEE.

--CAROLYN A. STEINLA

ON THE BEACH ONE NIGHT
I WALKED MOON-FOOTED AND WARM
ON SOFT SANDY SOLES.

--CAROLYN A. STEINLA

I FELL THIS MORNING
OUT OF LAST NIGHT'S MEMORY
DOWN INTO TODAY.

--CAROLYN A. STEINLA

KNOW ME BY TODAY
YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW
ARE FACELESS FIGURES.

--CAROLYN A. STEINLA

WHITE SALT IN SHAKER
CASTS SAME SHADOW ON TABLE
AS BLACK PEPPER DOES.

--JUDI BURKHOLDER

SPREE, SPREE! CRICKETS TRILL
IN THE PRESSING HUMID BLACK
OF A SUMMER NIGHT.

--MARY CONSTANCE BELL

A CANDLE FICKERS:
IN ITS GOLDEN GLOW OF WARMTH
A WHITE MOTH HOVERS.

--MARY CONSTANCE BELL

STARK, LEAFLESS BRANCHES
CLUTCH AT SKY WITH OUTSTRETCHED LIMBS.
A RED-BIRD FLASHERS!

--MARY CONSTANCE BELL

CURVED MOUNTAINS LOOKING
LIKE FURRY KITTENS LYING
AROUND THE VALLEY.

--MARYLIN OPPENHEIM

SILENT SNOW CREATES
WHIRLING BEAUTY WHILE FALLING;
NOISY RAIN MAKES MUD.

--MARYLIN OPPENHEIM

TWO RACES DIFFER
AS MIDNIGHT AND MID-MORNING:
SAME SCENE, DIFFERENT LIGHT.

--MARYLIN OPPENHEIM

illustration: harriet delp
TRANSIENT THOUGHT

You know the tide may turn on the running sea and it will never—oh no never wait for me.

Star seeker that I am, I run and cannot hide from the sun’s white hot rays as into the sea I plunge,
Seeking depths of green and tangled grass—They wait within the shallow reaches, ah yes, they wait for me.

—Julia Mason

PALE SHADOWS DEEPEN

And merge with the night. In ignorance the world lies sleeping. Then... an undertone becomes audible. The crackle of minds.

—Susan Bertz

THE WORLD IS MENTALLY UPSET

The World is mentally upset; Everyone is mad. Chaos reigns In Man’s domain, Always dreaming Laughing, screaming Shouting, weeping— Hell is reaping Insanity for all All join hands in mass derangement So, your mind’s a little loose; So, your brain is slowly crumbling And your thoughts are all a-jumbling And helter-skelter come a-tumbling, So you’re crazy, what the deuce!

Wander in your mind’s confusion Everything is all delusion And yet delusion’s all we have to go by. If in dreams you find release In fantasies you are secure Then go on dreaming—that’s the cure And madness be your peace.

Normality? The Hell you say! Normality’s a farce: The only norm is abnormality, The only real is unreality; Insanity’s an essentiality, So go your merry way. Atlas has dropped his Marble, And let it roll where it may fall So go ahead and lose your marbles—Insanity for one and all!

—Jennifer Yane
In the years preceding World War I, Italy found itself in a period of adjustment to its new status achieved by national unification. This period was a restless one and a time of uncertainty. Culturally there was emerging a revolt against 19th century romanticism and the unyielding Italian tradition. Italy had not followed in the pattern set by Spain and France in their internal revolutions, and Italy was ripe for upheaval.

Futurism technically began as a literary movement as advanced by Filippi Tommaso Marinetti in his Futurist Manifesto published in the Parisian newspaper Le Figaro, February 20, 1909. It announced a program of violence and exuberance that has never been surpassed or written about in Italy. Damning the past, it made a bold break with tradition. Marinetti said that the new symbol of poetry should not be Pegasus (the classical symbol of poetry), but the racing car “with its hood draped with exhaust pipes like fire breathing serpents.”

In putting forth the principles for writing Futurist poetry and literature, Marinetti stated that the new poets must “break with tradition, destroy the past, close all libraries and museums, look to the future and to the future alone.” The moonlight theme was to be done away with. The Futurists exalted the machine, speed, violence, and war because they felt that life is basically a struggle. In radical terms they wanted only to portray their vision of modern life based on the machine and speed — their symbols of the future. The Futurists, like artists before them, felt a need to be true to themselves and to find a means of expression that honestly described their era. Marinetti remarked, “a roaring motorcar...is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace.” In saying this he made it clear that the present modes of expression were not adequate to do justice to the new philosophy with roots in speed and mechanization. Of his new-found mode of expression Marinetti said it is “a materialistic poetry, lacking all style, nourished on raw sensations and molded by external things; it is dynamic, its rhythm both regulates and is regulated by human action; it is a bundle of energies unfolding; finally, at its best it is epic.”

Marinetti’s literary rebellion was taken up by a group of painters who were at the time working with Neo-impressionism: Umberto Boccioni, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, Carlo Carro, and Gino Severini. (Boccioni wrote a manifesto similar to Marinetti’s, urging Italy’s young painters to join the fray.) These artists found the key to their expression in the color of the impressionists. They agreed with the impressionists that no object can be separated from its surroundings but absorbs the color of those objects around it. However, they added to this concept the effect of motion — realizing that motion changes the shape of an object just as light does. They dealt with two kinds of motion: that which moves inward toward itself and that which moves outward into space, “mingling its rhythms with those of other objects and eventually merging with space itself.” Also, the Futurist painters believed that our senses can not be isolated from one another, but that each affects the other. They also strove for an identity between object and motion. Although Marinetti’s manifesto exhorted the machine and science, mechanical forms hardly concerned the artists. They often used the acute angle to show tension and stress. In Russolo’s Dynamism of an Automobile the speed, power, and motion that were advanced by Futurist poets are seen exemplified in a painting. Dynamism was their key word — their key to the future.

Speed was also a criterion of Futurist poetry as well as Futurist art. The Futurist poets hoped to discover the basic activity of matter which had always been considered inert. Marinetti expounded, “After hours of relentless toil, the creative spirit seems suddenly to shake off its shackles and becomes prey to an incomprehensible spontaneity of conception and execution. The hand that writes seems to break away from the body and move off into the distance, far from the brain that has likewise freed itself and looks down from its lofty station with awe-inspiring lucidity on the images that unwittingly flow from the pen.”

Futurist poetry did away with traditional syntax, eliminated punctuation, repudiated metrics, employed onomatopoeia to justify use of new sounds, modified accepted words and readapted old ones, made use of pictorial typography, introduced mathematical and musical notations — all in the attempt to free itself from tradition and to establish a more workable expression for art. Another characteristic was a very frequent use of analogy, a device intended to make bookish memories dispensable and to call on freer use of the intuition. Rosa Clough says it was this intuition that sent “the poet down the stream of motion, synchronized his breathing with the rhythm of the motor and his pulse-beat with the throbs of metal, of stones, of wood.” In poetry
analogy was seen like this excerpt from Marientti’s Battaglia:

monoplane = balcony-rose-wheel-drrrrnum drill-gadfly
defeat - arab ox bloodiness

wounds

shelter

humidity fan coolness

Severini’s Dancer = Sea + Vase of Flowers illustrates how analogy was used in art. The sun’s rays light on the ocean waves, recalling the rhythm of a dancer with waving arms. 11

The Futurists also made use of images. Severini’s Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin, which depicts gay Parisian nightlife with its bits of red petticoat, purple skirt, curls and bows, portrays, says Joshua Taylor, “a wide range of remembered experiences.” 12 Corrado Govoni, another Futurist poet, was able to evoke quick impressions by using splashes of color. “The Little Trumpet” by Govoni evokes an analogy through the use of colorful images:

The Little Trumpet

All that is left

of the magic of the fair

is this little trumpet

of blue and green tin,

blown by a girl

as she walks, barefoot, through the fields.

But within its forced note

are all the clowns, white ones and red ones,

the band all dressed in gaudy gold,

the merry-go-round, the calliope, the lights.

Just as in the dripping of the gutter

is all the fearfulness of the storm,

the beauty of lightning and the rainbow;

and in the damp flickers of a firefly

whose light dissolves on a heather branch

is all the wondrousness of spring.

The joyousness of Govoni’s “The Little Trumpet” is imitated in Severini’s The Blue Dancer, with its “swinging curves and eruptive angles....” 14

Piero Jahier, who often dealt with the moral issue of conscience and principles, uses a dragon analogy in these lines from his poem “Evening Party”:

But I saw — just in time —

the breath of my feelings

freezing against your faces.

Just in time you looked at me

as if I were a fire-spitting dragon. 15

The gloriousness of Futurist philosophy can be felt in “Eighth Poem” by Giovanni Papini, a solitary man who searched his soul for a solution to the needs of his era:

I march at instinct’s urge; I look around me, master of the desert;

in the hollow silence I listen

to my convinced and open words.

Finally, and forever, alone;

happy, lighthearted, cigarette in my mouth,

away from truth and triteness.

I go where nothing can touch me.

I become everything I see;

I am the shadow of the wall, the light of lights.

I breathe, embrace the sun

not fearful of any harm.

I am the beloved lover of myself,

I kiss lip with lip, I squeeze

one hand with a burning hand,

fully I possess myself, I can’t pretend. 16

The Futurists tried to portray all of modern life, knowing that life was changeable, that one thing leads to another — sight to sound — vision to emotion. In the preceding poem by Papini the speaker speaks of solitude → touch → sight → breath → touch. Luigi Russolo was fascinated by the idea of combining responses of different senses in one painting. In Perfume he uses color and line shapes to evoke a heavy scent.

Type painting really welded painting to poetry. Carra’s “Free-Word” Painting (Patriotic Celebration) makes us of diversified letters. Taylor calls it “a rousing work that seems to go off like a siren.” 17 It has as much movement as Balla’s Abstract Speed = Wake of Speeding Automobile, or in a more abstract form one could compare it to Balla’s Mercury Passing Before the Sun as Seen Through a Telescope. Speaking of Carra’s painting, Mr. Taylor says, “It is a close fusion of painting and writing. Beginning in the center with

EVVIVAA L’ESERCITO

and

EVIIVAA IL REE

(Long live the army! Long live the King!) it spirals outward with the HUHUHUHUHUHU of a siren and loses itself in echoes, shouts, songs, and the noise of traffic — TRRRRRRR and traak tata traak.” 18

The free-word technique is exemplified in poetry by the following work by Palazzeschi:

Tri tri tri
fru fru fru
ihu ihu ihu
uh iuh iuh
.............
 .............
Aaaaa!
Eeeeee!
Iiiii!
Ooooo!
Uuuuu!
A! E!! O! U! 19

Enrico Falqui, one of Italy’s major critics, said that in stressing speed the Futurists had to resort to materialistic means (“onomatopoeia, incomprehensible musical and pictorial symbols of sounds.
and colors”), thereby “destroying the spirit of the work itself.”

Undoubtedly Futurism produced far greater painting than poetry. Painting is a medium that lends itself well to speed, as can be seen in the swirling masses of Boccioni’s Dynamism of a Human Body, Dynamism of a Cyclist, Russolo’s Plastic Synthesis of the Actions of a Woman, Balla’s Girl Running on a Balcony, Russolo’s The Revolt. Much of Futurist painting, however, involved much more than a unique concept of speed. Boccioni’s Mourning expresses the misery of the era, and Balla’s Work, Bankrupt, and The Stairway of Farewells are of value as social and psychological comments on pre-war Italy.  

Balla: Abstract Speed – Wake of Speeding Automobile.

Taylor points out that “Futurism was not a style but an impulse.” It was born out of an understandable desire for new horizons. It was important in that it helped point out to Italians their moldy traditionalism and the need for Italy to enter into European cultural affairs. Ezra Pound stated that "Marinetti and Futurism gave impetus to all European literature." The movement, continued Pound, that Eliot, Joyce, and he initiated in London could not have occurred without Futurism. The Futurists said, "Our art will probably be accused of tormented and decadent cerebralism. But we shall merely answer that we are the primitives of a new sensiveness, multiplied hundredfold, and that our art is intoxicated with spontaneity and power."  

The Futurists were eager for Italy to join World War I. Many of them enthusiastically joined the army, and several were killed or wounded. Perhaps the more promising talents were left on the battlefield, or perhaps the glories of war were dimmed in the post-war years. In any case, Futurism technically came to an end after the war. There then emerged a group that rejected the modern civilization that the Futurists had professed to accept—the Dadaists.  

The Dadaist movement, originally literary in origin as was Futurism, was founded by Tristan Tzara with help from Hugo Ball and Hans Arp and was born in 1916 in a Zurich café, the Cafe Voltaire. Zurich in 1916 was a refuge from the horrors of World War I. It was also “the trysting place for revolutionaries, an oasis for the thinker, a spy exchange, a nursery of ideologies, and a home for liberty-loving vagabonds.” Dadaism was based on a nihilistic philosophy in its denial of all traditional and existing principles. Dadaism’s skepticism led to the total negation of man: "Measured by the scale of eternity, any activity is futile," said Tzara. Andre Breton said, "It is inadmissible that man should leave a trace of his passage on earth." Everything was of equal significance. What is right? What is wrong?  

We go forward you and I as sleepwalkers. And the trees, they are trees, the houses, the women that go by are women, and all is what it is, only what it is.  

The real world surrounding the Dadaists was a nightmarish one, and they intended to observe its sordidness and despair with objectivity. To them the world was absurd. Some critics of the movement felt that Dadaism might be wrecking what illusions about reality were left to man. But to Andre Breton, Louis Aragon, and Phillipe Soupault there was nothing left to tear down, and they felt that Dadaism was "merely an inventory of the ruins, and a declaration of the failure, or more accurately, the death of civilization." Many people saw in such beliefs either an outrageous pose or the ramblings of insanity. But the Dadaists expressed a bitter joy that caught the tone of post-war Europe’s wretchedness. Andre Breton expressed this in the opening lines of his manifesto, Confession dedigneuse, in saying that he was “absolutely incapable of resigning myself to my lot, wounded in my highest conscience by the denial of justice which in my eyes original sin does not excuse at all; I shall not adapt my existence to the absurd conditions of all existence in the world ....”  

Like the Futurists, the Dadaists used alliteration, word association, and suggestiveness in their assault with new techniques in poetry. Hugo Ball used pure sound "for the voicing of mental states, just as he had abandoned, in other experiments, normal conjugations and declensions." In such lines as the following, the spirit of post-war intellectual pessimism is given striking, if baffling, expression:

```plaintext
gadjji beri bimba
glandridi lauli lonni cadori
gadjama bion beri glassola
glandridi glassola tuffi i zimrabim
blussa galassasa tuffim ximrabim.
```

Ball wrote, “With these poems we . . . surrender the world, in this way conserving for poetry its most sacred domain.”  

The Dadaists experimented with typography. With letters placed at random on a page they sounded out cries of anguish and despair.
The artist Francis Picabia made use of this technique in a drawing for a periodical. 33

The most absolute Dadaist poems certainly give the impression of incoherence. But through their primitive utterances the Dadaists saw themselves as the prophets of a new freedom. They were beginning all over again like children in hopes to find a meaning in life. "Dada" is French baby talk for "hobby-horse" or a colloquial word meaning any hobby or idea that is plain foolish. The Dadaists supposedly chose this word by chance by letting a dictionary fall open to a page and sliding a knife across the page to a resting place where it pointed out the word "dada." This to the Dadaists was just another example of life's element of chance. In any case, it seems most appropriate for such a Dadaist poem as

Grim glim gnim bimbim
grim glim gnim bimbim...
bun bimbim bam bimbim...
œ be œ be œ be œ be. 34

In art Duchamps arranged marble blocks, a thermometer, wood, and cuttlebone in a bird cage and entitled it Why Not Sneeze, Rose Selavy?, certainly qualifying thereby as the creator of one of the most arresting titles ever given to a work of art. With utter disrespect for the past, a painting of the Mona Lisa was retouched with a moustache and a title that expressed an indecent French pun. Technical books and illustrations were also retouched and given such titles as The gramineous bicycle garnished with bells the pilfered greybeards and the echinoderms bending the spine to look for caresses. Dadaist sculpture included works like a urinal with the title "Fountain" and a miter box with a plumbing trap entitled "God." Whatever anyone else admired they despised; whatever anyone else believed in they mocked. They were deliberately incomprehensible, studiedly outrageous, and they pledged themselves to respect nothing, not even themselves. 35

There were other artists who dealt with a phase of Dadaism most closely associated with Surrealism — the exploitation of the subconscious. The poetry of Pierre Reverdy tries to reach the "real" world of the unknown, by exploring the world between dream and awakening. "Miracles await him there: the sun roams around a house, the sound of a bell dies away, a word is said, there comes a bird, or the wind, or a hand, or another hand holding snow." 36 In this poetry, as well as in the art that is comparable to it in spirit, there is a mental plasticity conjured by images and sensations. There is no relationship to logic or human values. Raymond says that a "strange anxiety" hovers over Reverdy's poems. This is especially reflected in his poem "Everything is Dark."

Everything is dark
The wind goes by singing
And the trees tremble
The animals are dead
There is no one any more

Look

The stars have stopped shining
The earth no longer spins
A head leans over
Its hair sweeping the darkness
The last steeple left standing

Strikes midnight. 38

André Breton dealt with images in his poetry too. His "My Wife With Her Wood-Fire Hair" paints with words a picture comparable to Marcel Janco's Composition 676 or Paul Klee's Painting in Watercolor 1918 with collage-like bits and dabs of images.

My wife with her wood-fire hair
With her thoughts of heatsparks
With her shape of an hour-glass
My wife with her shape of an otter
Between the tiger's teeth
With her teeth of imprints of a white mouse
On the white earth
With her tongue of rubbed amber and glass
With the tongue of a doll opening and closing its eyes . . . . 39

Hugo Ball, as mentioned earlier, was one of the leaders of the Dadaist movement. Later he was involved in the Surrealist movement. His poem, "The Sun," like the poems above, is a collection of images, but they are so obscure and Boschlike that this work definitely reflects the Surrealist work of Dalí, particularly as it is seen in Gecpoliticus and The Persistence of a Memory.

Through the slits of my eyes
A perambulator passes.
Through the slits of my eyes
A carriage bangs
Away over them. My boots soar on the horizon
My legs stretch out right to the horizon
A carriage bangs
Away over them. My boots soar on the horizon like the towers
of a sinking town. I am the Giant Goliath.
I digest goat cheese.
I am a mammoth's calf. Green grassbugs snuffle me.
Grass spans green sabers and bridges
And rainbows over my belly.
My ears are giant pink shells, open wide.
My body swells
With the sounds that are trapped in it.
I hear the bleating of great Pan. I hear the vermilion music of the sun. It stands up on the left. Its wisps flash vermilion into the world's night.
When it falls it will crush the town
and the church towers
and all the front gardens full of crocus
and hyacinth and will blare
like the tin of children’s trumpets. 40

Even though most Dadaist poetry will sink to oblivion, there are some lines that are important in that they express man’s sorrow and despair in his eternal soul-searching. Louis Arragon’s “Air du Temps” is a fine lyrical statement of this despair:

Have you not had your fill of commonplaces
People look at you without laughing
They have glass eyes
You pass, you waste your time, you pass,
You count to a hundred and you cheat
to kill ten more seconds.
Abruptly you stretch out your hand to die
Don’t be afraid
One day or another
There will be only one day to go and one more day
And then that’s it
No more need to see men or the dear little beasts
They fondle from time to time
No need to talk to yourself at night
to keep from hearing
The wail of the chimney
No need to raise my eyelids
Nor to hurl my blood like a discus
Nor to breathe in spite of myself
Yet I do not want to die
Softly the bell of my heart sings on ancient hope
I know the music well. But the words
Now what exactly were the words saying
Idiot. 41

Dadaism met its end when Freudian interpretation gave meaning to Dada’s “apparently irrational fantasies.” 42 It is considered the forerunner of Surrealism, and many of the artists of the Dadaist movement became involved with the artists of the Surrealist movement. Although the Dadaists devoted their energies to the annihilation of all art values, their movement ironically created new art values by taking “parts from a broken machine like parts of a broken civilization and by making them make some kind of sense, salvaged something from our universal rubbish heap.” The Dadaist movement had to end, as it was based on “nothingness” — a nothingness that does not in reality exist. However, it was important as an artistic expression of the post-war years in Europe. Tristan Tzara said,

If I cry out
‘Ideal, ideal, ideal,
Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge,
Boomboom, Boomboom, Boomboom,’
I have given a pretty faithful version of progress, low morality, and all the other fine qualities that various highly intelligent men have discussed in so many books, only to conclude that after all everyone dances to his own boombooms. 44

Dadaism, as well as Futurism, was a concrete expression of freedom, a break with the past and a search for more suitable horizons. For all practical purposes there is no great distance between a Futurist poem and a Dadaist poem. “Both record only the downbeat of a thought, disposing psychic islets and blots of poetry, as it were, on the page....” 45 In theory there is a difference between the two poetic movements. There is an antithesis of attitude. Futurism is mainly a poetry of the senses, a fact which makes it temporal. Dadaism is more a poetry of the mind, dreams, and the non-temporal.

It is too early accurately to assess Dadaism and Futurism, but it can be said that these movements were exceptionally valuable as shock treatments — to arouse people to the wonders and woes of the modern world.

Others will come, perhaps, who will be better than ourselves, and who will discover other worlds to which our genius has not been able to attain; let them come, we will depart with the joy of having shown the way and created the means for advancing toward them.... 46

—Patricia Day
1 As quoted in “Art News,” Time LXXVII (June 2, 1961), 75.
Los Angeles, 1962, p. x.
3 As quoted in Hilton Kramer, “The Future That Came to Pass,”
The Reporter XXY (November 9, 1961), 50.
4 As quoted in Marcel Raymond, From Baudelaire to Surrealism.
7 Einstein was advancing his theories on relativity at about this
time, too.
8 As quoted in Rosa Trillo Clough, Futurism, New York, 1961, p. 44.
9 Taylor, p. 47.
10 Taylor, p. 69.
11 Taylor, p. 69.
12 Reprinted in Golini, p. 23.
13 Reprinted in Golini, p. 43.
14 Reprinted in Golini, p. 35.
15 Taylor, p. 110.
16 Taylor, p. 110.
17 Reprinted in Clough, p. 199.
18 As quoted in Clough, p. 199.
19 Kramer, p. 50.
20 Taylor, p. 17.
21 Ezra Pound as restated in Clough, p. 200.
22 Time, p. 75.
24 Raymond, p. 270.
25 Raymond, p. 207.
26 Raymond, p. 270.
27 As quoted in “Art News,” Time LXIII (June 28, 1954), 74.
28 Camillo Sbarbaro, “Be Still My Soul, Weary of Pleasure,” reprinted
in Golini, p. 47. This is a Futurist poem, but it expresses well
the prevalent mood of “nothingness” found in both movements.
29 Raymond, p. 270.
30 Raymond, p. 273.
31 As quoted in Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton, eds.,
Modern German Poetry, 1910-1960: An Anthology with Verse
32 As quoted in Life (XXXII), April 28, 1952, p. 105.
33 Can be seen on p. 46 of Dada.
35 Time LXIII, 74.
36 Raymond, p. 276.
37 Raymond, p. 277.
38 As quoted in Cecil Mackworth, ed., A Mirror for French Poetry:
39 As quoted in Wallace Fowlie, ed., Mid-Century French Poets,
40 As reprinted in Hamburger and Middleton, p. 60.
41 As reprinted in Raymond, p. 273.
Magazine, January 5, 1960, p. 44.
43 Canaday, 43.
44 Life, p. 105.
45 Raymond, p. 279.
46 As quoted in Clough, p. 189.
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Page 29: Taylor, p. 64
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