THE LINNET'S WINGS

Flen Flyys and Freris -- Assonance, Non sunt in coeli, quia gxddbor xxkxzt pg ifmk. What the heck?

The Cats of Copenhage

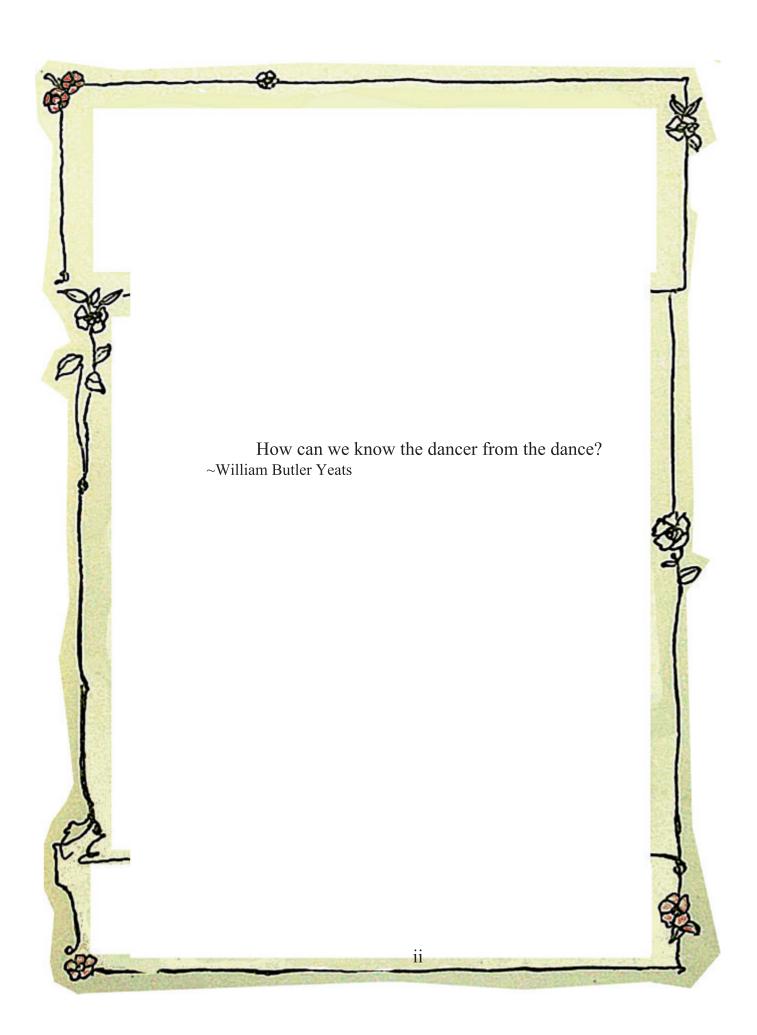
But 'twas for the baby' . . .!!

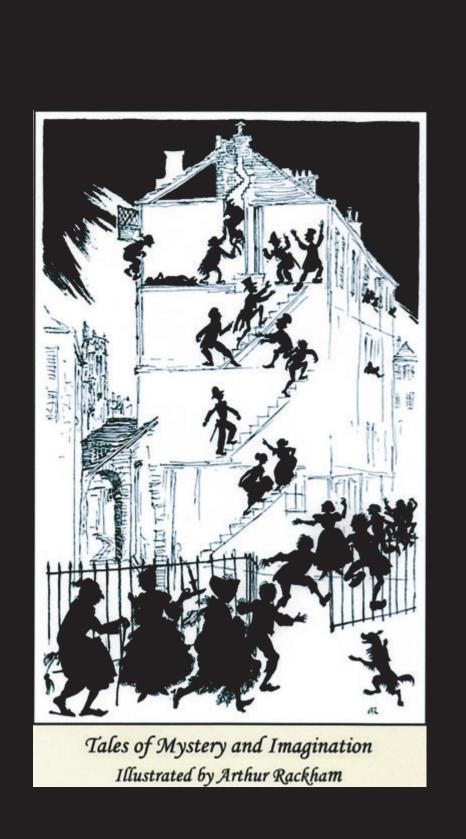
The rumour now runs; my old mother misses some devil--apparently me. That devil, in truth, remembers her kisses, her ratty old coat and her tea. Yelsin, translated by Russell Bittner 2012

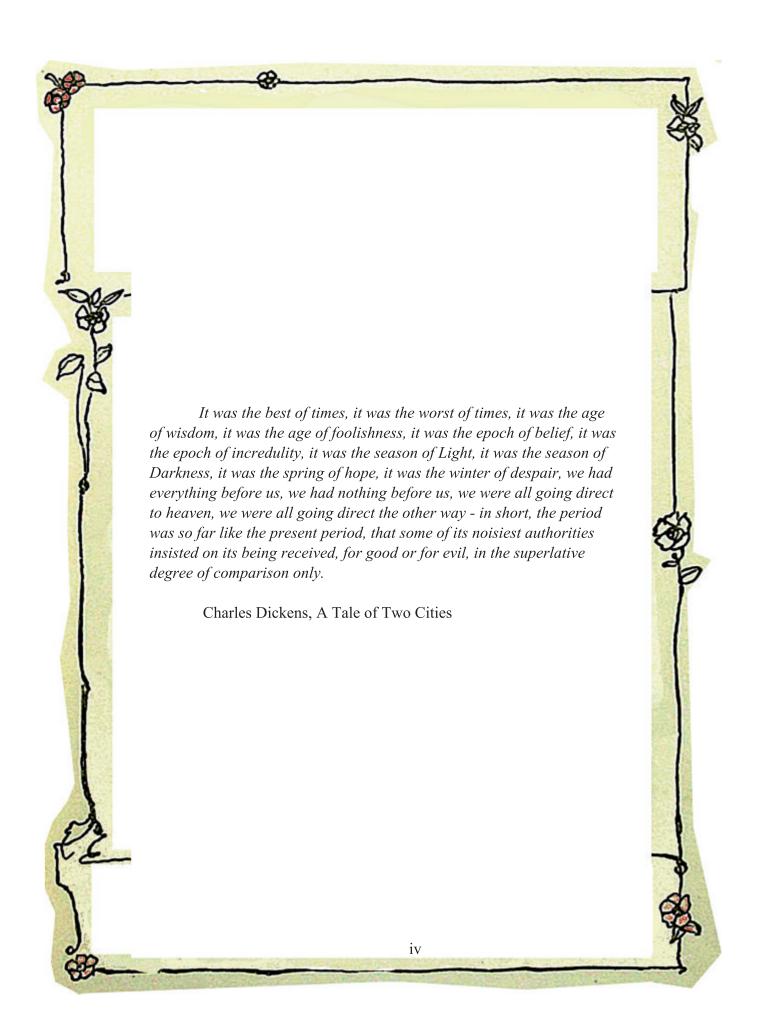
'Among her most resilient hallucinations was one of an anthropoid, wanding on its fingers on the carpet, and staring back at her.' Horacio Quiroga, translated by Diana Ferraro 2012

SPRING 20

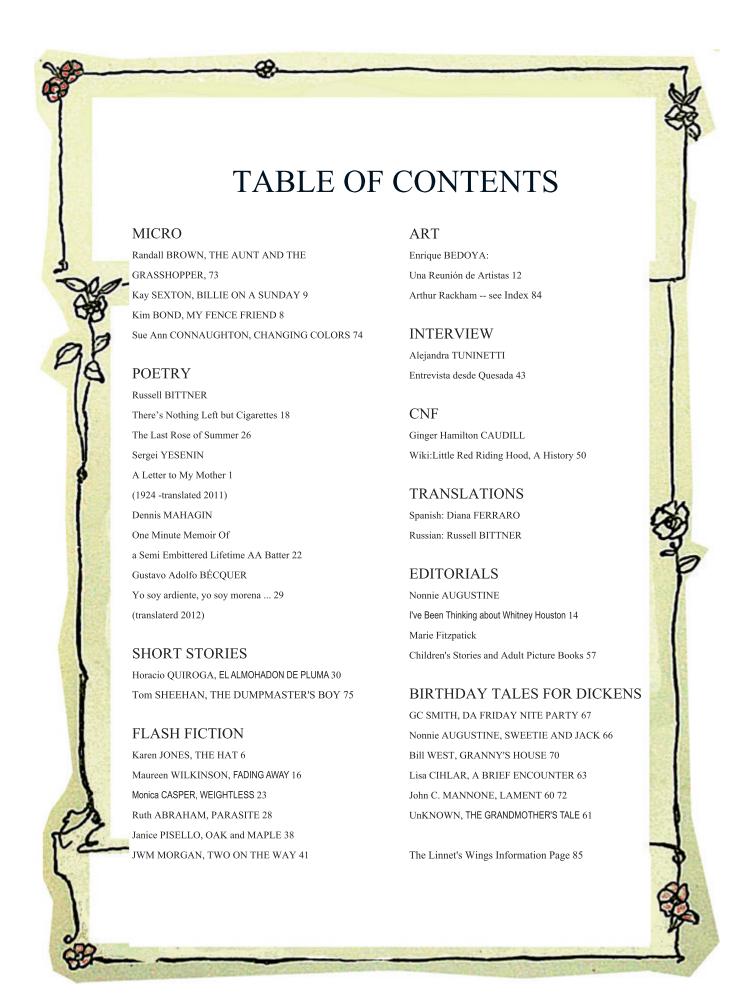


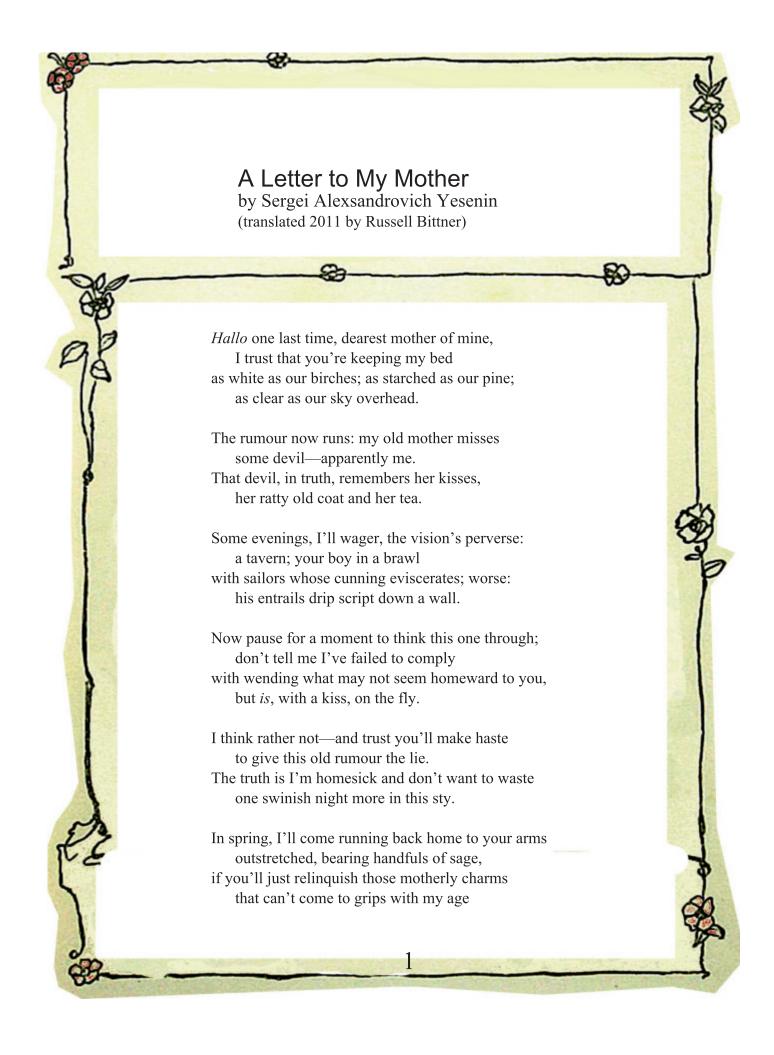


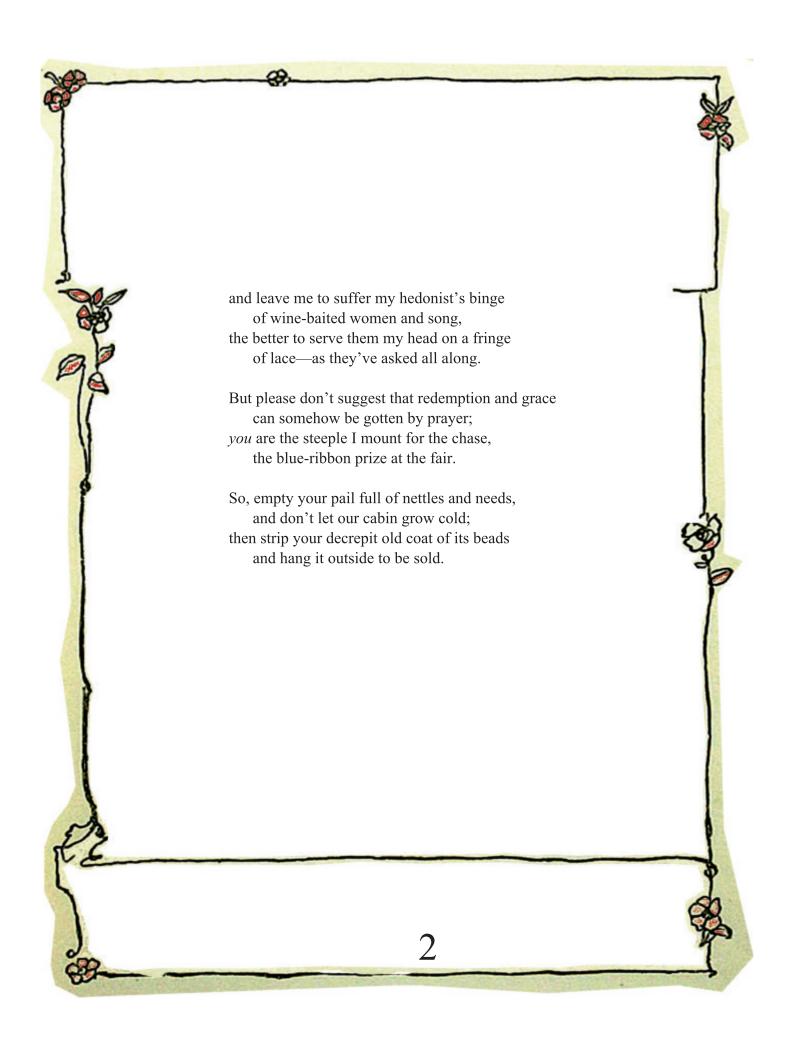


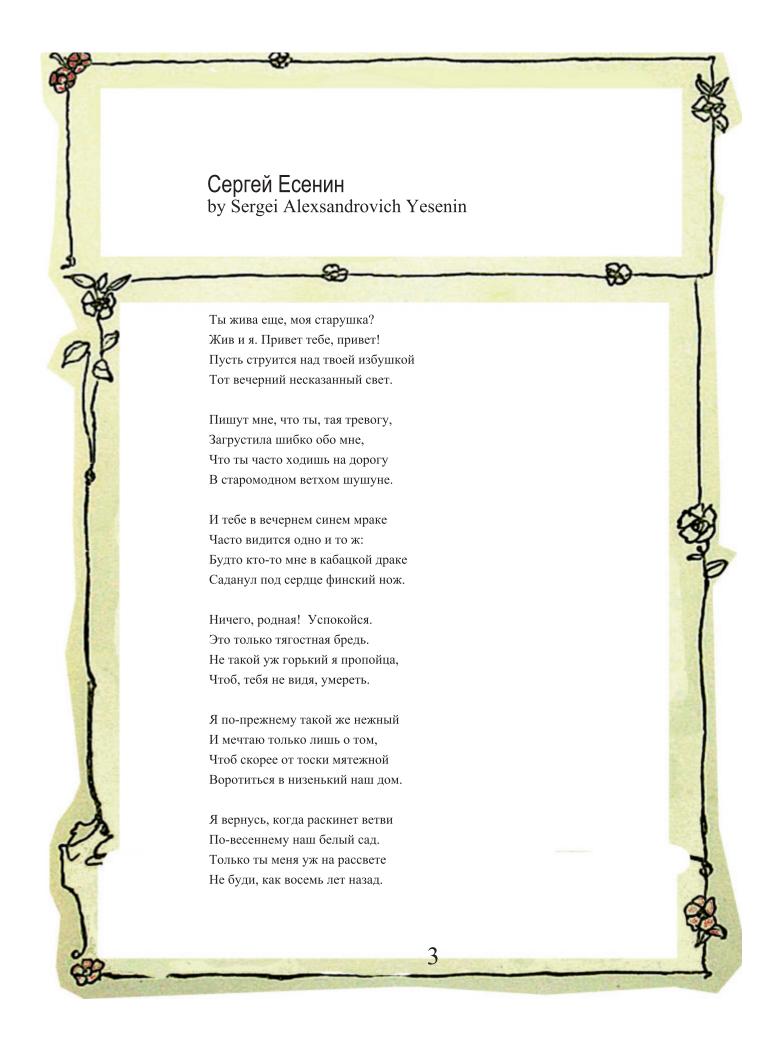


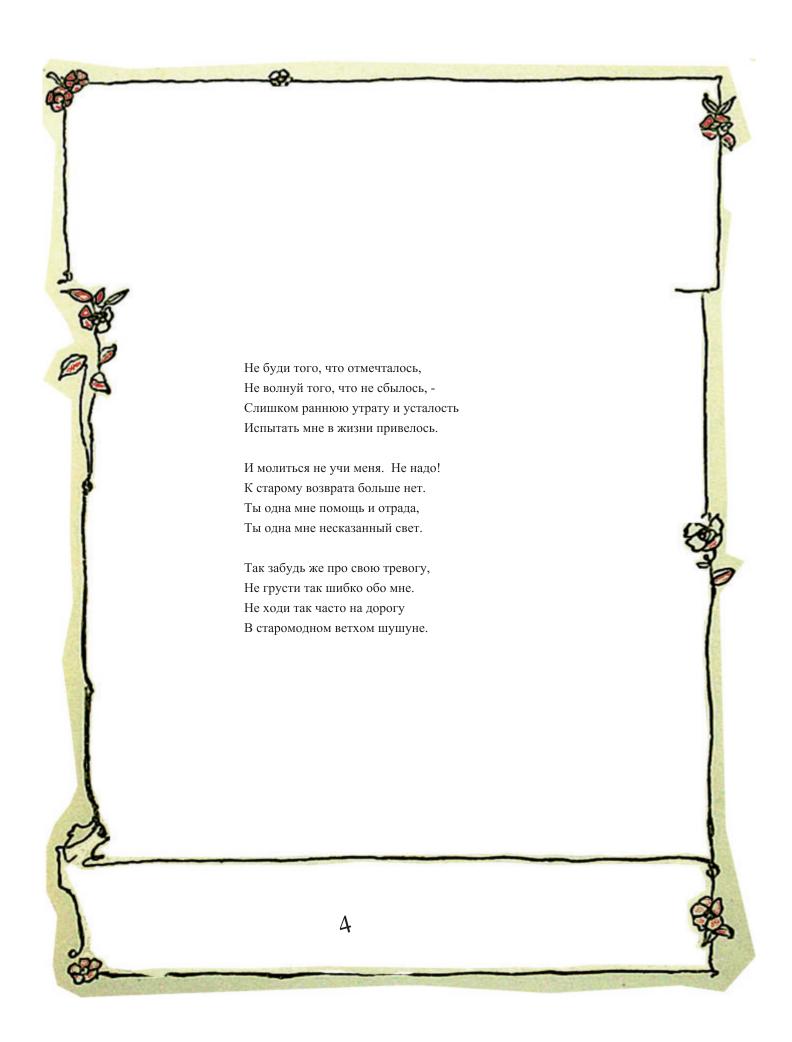


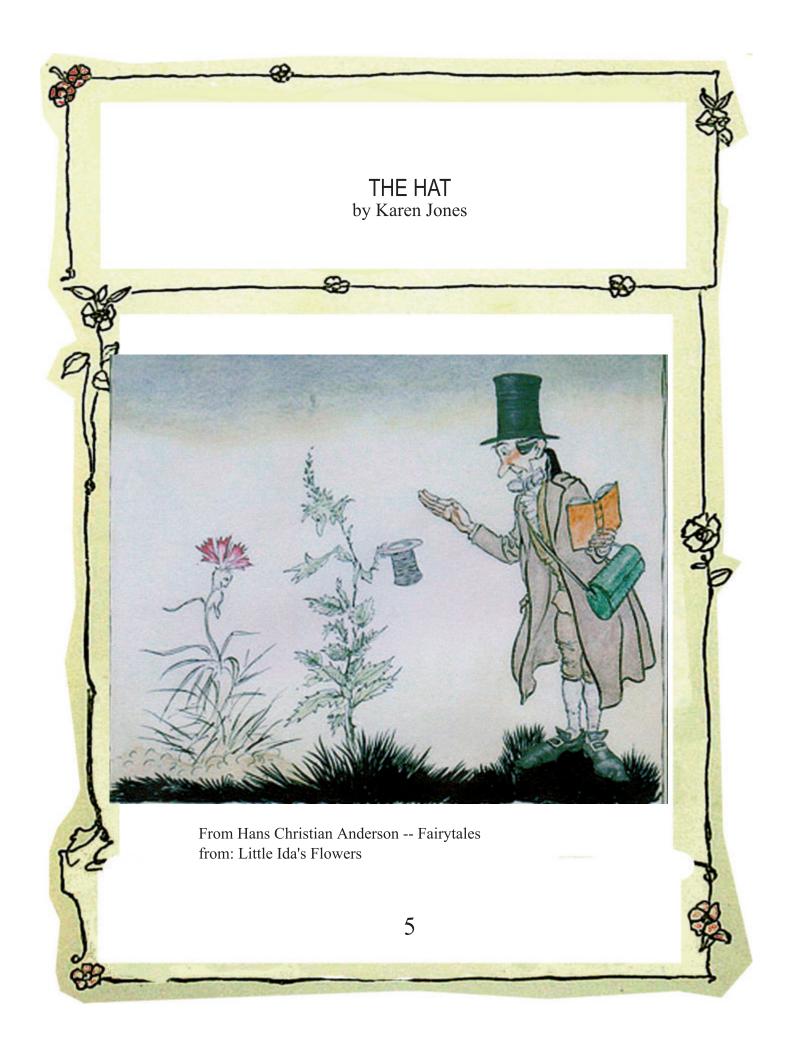




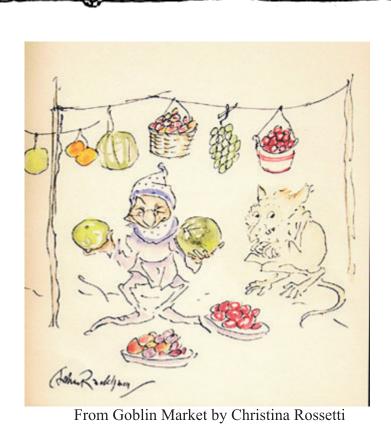








Ian acquired a hat in the hope of acquiring a personality. He stood in front of the mirror, posing the hat with different outfits. Would he need an entirely new wardrobe now that he had a hat, a life? Should his colours be bolder, his cut designer, his price tags pleasingly just beyond his means? Or maybe this hat could breathe its fabulous fashioned felt into even his saddest beige, polyester, over-washed piece of attire. Should he stop ironing creases in his trousers? Accept that car coat had seen its day – that its day was March 15th 1973 and it was no longer 'in'? He pushed the hat to a jaunty angle and became mischievous; his upward glance playful, beckoning. He tilted the brim forward, watched a shadow cover his over-sized nose and magically sculpt it into something more streamlined. He pushed it back, exposing his ears. He shuddered and jiggled it back to jaunty. Jaunty – that was who he had become. Definitely jaunty. He searched through his wardrobe for something worthy of the hat, but nothing worked. He found his suit. The hat looked uncertain, perched on his head as though it wanted to throw itself onto the bed and weep at its mismatching. The suit joined the pile of rejects on the bed. The poor light in the basement apartment made his appraisal more difficult. The low ceilings felt oppressive above the hat; it needed more space. He had to go out. But what to wear? Leaning further into the cupboard, reaching into the darkest corner where only spiders and memories survived, his hands touched leather. That one time, that one week when he was young, before she rejected him, left him shamed in front of the whole class, that one week before he chose to be the geek forever, that week he had worn leather. Could this be the match for the hat? He had lived with so few excesses Gandhi would probably have told him to get a life, so he knew it would still fit his incongruously youthful frame. The leather felt heavy, he had to straighten his shoulders to take the weight. He felt taller. He threw the hat up, caught it on his head, let it fall where it felt right. Ian turned and faced the mirror. A stranger peered back. A handsome, confident, mysterious man. The man found his keys, strode out the door and took the stairs to the street two at a time. A blue sky, higher and wider than any he had ever seen, spread above the hat. The man set the hat to its perfect jaunty angle and let it lead him to his fate. ©-2012-Jones



MY FENCE FRIEND by Kim Bond

I had a friend that lived inside my wooden privacy fence. The image of her face emerged in the grains of wood.

I was sitting outside in a lawn chair listening to the birds chirp when I first noticed her long, sad eyes staring at me. She had a pointy chin and a straight mouth with a cigarette hanging out of it.

I did not mind that she smoked; I smoke. So we sat outside together for hours on end, smoking and sipping dark blended coffee with rich real cream.

She never said much. I suppose it was because of her silence that I spoke such a great deal. My conversation would start with something mundane, then every last thought that ever occurred to me would seep right out of my brain and pour into her ear.

No matter how intense or private the information I shared, she would only reply with an occasional "Mmhmm" or "Me too." Her expression never changed either. Always the same sad—nearly tortured—eyes staring back at me.

Then one day, I got on the subject of smoking, and she finally began to converse with me.

"I'll never quit," she said. After a deep puff of her cigarette, she removed it from her mouth and continued, "I would cease eating before I stopped smoking. I will be a smoker until the day I die. But to spite them all, I will not die for a long time. Either that or I will die of something completely unassociated with smoking. Like a shark attack or something."

I turned my head and smirked. "You cannot control how or when you will die. Besides, how could you possibly die of a shark attack?

You live in a fence, and it is not a beachside fence either. This fence is as far from one coast as it is from the other."

My friend shrugged her shoulders. Then, she returned to her normal quiet state again.

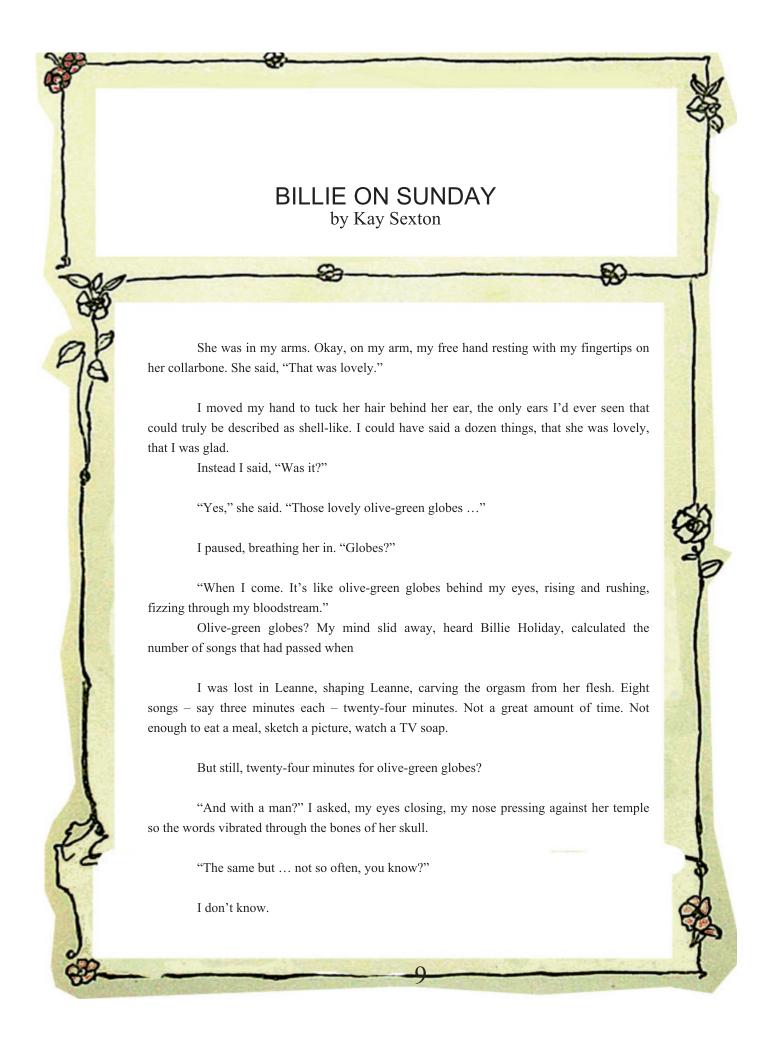
The matter did not distress me much until the day I walked outside to enjoy a cigarette and sip dark blended coffee with real rich cream alongside my friend. Only, she was not there.

In the grains of the wood—the very planks she had always been, I saw a shark's outline. Instead of her pointed chin was a pointed tail.

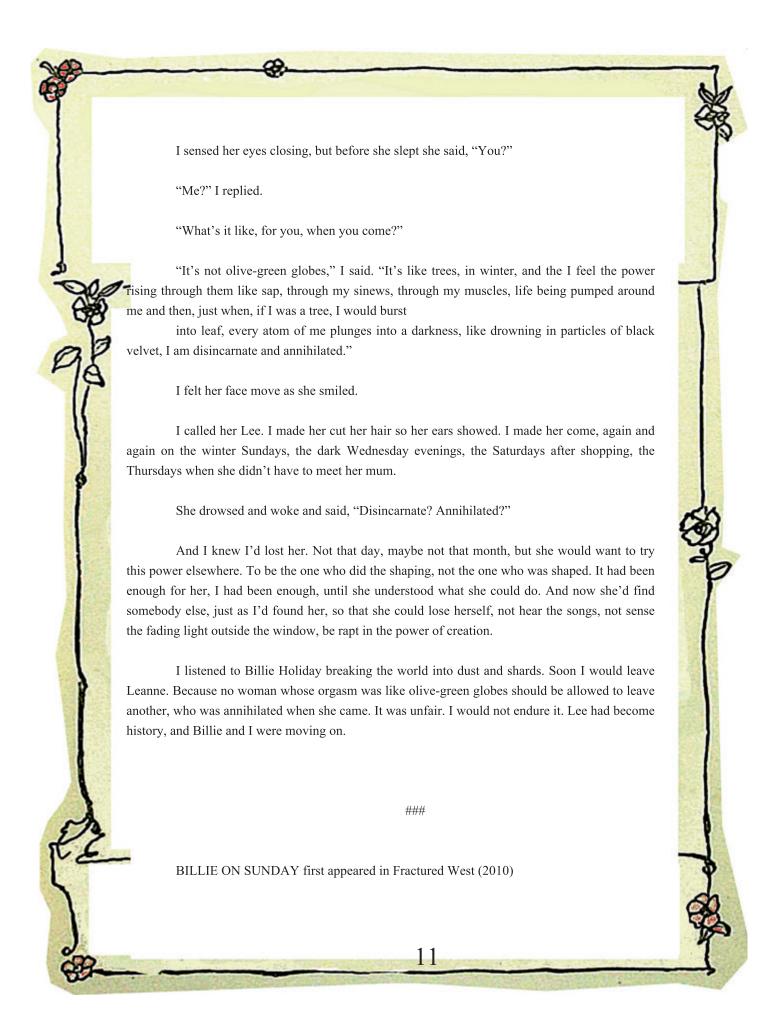
In place of her sad eyes, I saw a gill. The cigarette was gone, and there was a fin. I knew the shark ate her the moment I saw that smirk on his sly face.

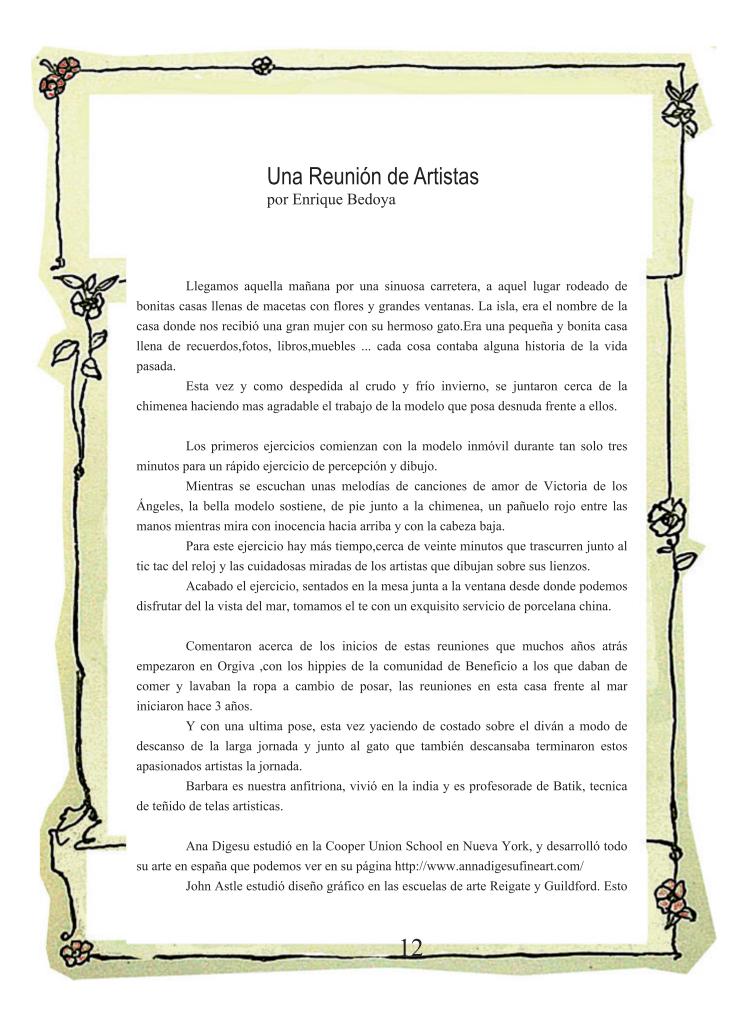
Thus, the friendship with my companion who lived inside my wooden privacy fence ended before I truly got to know her likes and dislikes or her views and opinions. I do take solace in the idea that much of her essence was revealed to me through her long, sad eyes.

Although my own eyes have grown a little sadder, I still sit outside to smoke and listen as the birds chirp.









fue seguido por años en la publicidad y la enseñanza en Camberwell College of Art. Esta es su página web http://www.nerjanadfas.org/showcase.php?showcase

Gordon Roberts ha estado sumergido durante toda la vida en el mundo del arte y diseño de marcas famosas de ropa y complemantos, pinta con pastel bellos paisajes y tambien practica cada semana con modelos en estas reuniones

Jan 2012, Bedoya

BIO

Sergei Alexandrovich Yesenin, (sometimes spelled as Esenin) 1895 -1925, was one of the most popular and well-known lyrical Russian poets of the 20th century. Born to a peasant family, he moved to Moscow when he was seventeen and worked as a proof-reader. His first volume of poetry, "Ritual for the Dead," was published when he was twenty-one.

A supporter of the October Revolution of 1917, he soon became disillusioned with the Bolshevik government and criticized it in his poem, "The Red October Has Deceived Me." Despite his popularity among the Russian people, most of his writings were banned by the Kremlin during the reigns of Joseph Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev. His poetry survived the censorship and his complete works were republished in 1966.

Yesenin married five times and had four children with three different women. He was briefly married to **Isadora Duncan** (pictured with Yesenin) in 1922 and to **Sophia Andreyevna Tolstaya**, a granddaughter of **Leo Tolstoy**, in 1925. Sophia tried to get him help for his well-publicized alcoholism, but he suffered a mental breakdown, was hospitalized for a month, and committed suicide two days after his release. The day before he hanged himself he cut his wrists and wrote a farewell poem, allegedly in his own blood. He was thirty years old.

Today Russian schoolchildren learn **Sergei Yesenin's** poems. Musicians have set his works to music. He was criticized by many of the literary elite, banned in his own country for years, but today his poetry is adored in Russia and available to be treasured by us all. The Linnet's Wings is proud to have Russell Bittner's translation of "A Letter to My Mother," in this issue.

I've Been Thinking about Whitney Houston by Nonnie Augustine

We have a translation done by Russell Bittner of a poem written by Sergei Yesenin in this issue. Yesenin killed himself when he was thirty. He was an alcoholic, but he didn't drink himself to death. He hanged himself. Would he have lived longer without all the drinking, without the five wives, without the depression? Without the genius? Idle conjecture, isn't it?

In 1971 I spent food money on "Pearl," the Janis Joplin album that was released a few months after her death by heroin. I played it over and over and over again on my crummy stereo. She was 27 when she died. Because she sang the way she did, with no distance at all from her heart to mine, her death felt like a personal loss. Back then I wore round pink-tinted glasses, you know. Just like hers.

Bob Dylan has made it to 70. He's still busy-writing, singing, touring. A few weeks ago I sat in a theater and listened to Pulitzer Prize winner Charles Wright read his poetry. He was born in 1935.

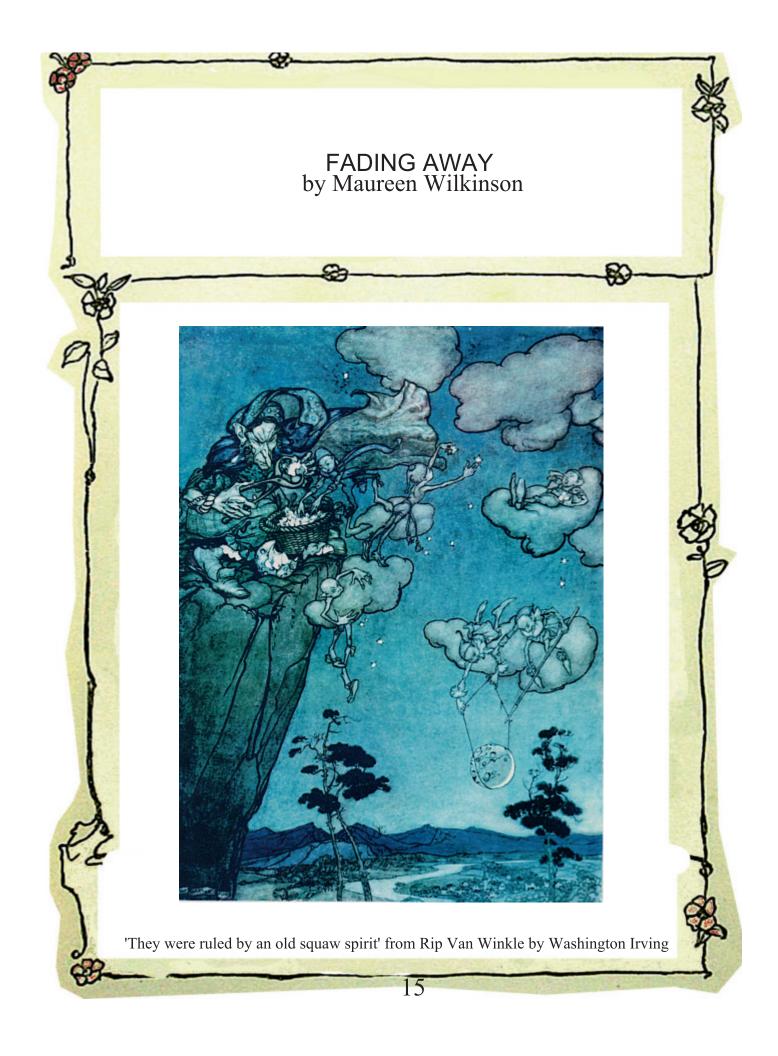
We could all make lists of artists who killed themselves one way or another, and lists just as long of our magic-makers who lived long lives. Accidents or disease take us whether we have fame or not. We all depart.

For some of us a first drink is pretty much a non-event. For others it is the first of way, way too many. How many of us have had prescriptions for a pain killer in our medicine chest? No telling, really. We are, mostly, safe enough in how we use them.

We like to make generalizations, but I don't think they ever work. Not really. Fire can be explosive, consuming, but it can also warm us, save us, light the way. I wish Sylvia Plath had lived longer, written more poems. But that's silly, isn't it? When she chose to die she was just too sad to go on living. I don't think she died because of her talent or because she blazed too brightly. I can't know, of course, but maybe her writing kept her going a little longer than she would have lived without it. Not for me to say.

When I was young I thought there was some kind of romantic link between artistic genius and early, self-destructive death. I've learned to think differently. Tragedy happens, hearts break, artists, and you and I, succumb or recover according to patterns so mysterious and random I now believe there are no possible conclusions to draw. I'm glad that some of our most creative people survived into old age, because their work will be there to nourish me as I move along my path. I'm glad Mick Jagger has survived his life so far, that Maggie Smith is making us laugh in Downton Abby, that Robert Frost, at 86, read a poem at JFK's inauguration. Creative people are either good at living life or not, their luck is good or bad, they are joyful or depressed, same as you, same as me.

Augustine-2012



Fortune turned its back on Jane Mclure from the day her husband and fifteen year old son were crushed to death in a surge at a football stadium. When Jane thought the pain of her loss was more than she could bear, her mother, Elisabeth and father John, gave her the strength to make a new start. Visiting every day to make sure she ate, and holding her when she couldn't contain her grief. Two years later her father had a stroke and passed away.

Lately her mother her mother hadn't been coping too well on her own and Jane wondered when all the misfortune was going to end. When electricity was cut off at her mother's house for the second time, because she had forgotten to pay the bill, Jane moved back home and took over the household accounts.

At first her mother protested. 'This is my home. I don't see why I should let you run it. 'It's just easier if I handle the money, mum. It will save you all that running back and forth to the bank.' Jane was sure if she took some of the burden, her mother would soon be back to her old self.

Once Jane had returned home her mother found ways to fill her time. Sometimes she pottered in the garden, window shopped, or lunched in town, and Jane thought at last things were settling down.

Jane looked up from her book as her mother pulled on a brown tweed coat and wound a wool scarf round her thin neck. Concern flitted across Jane's face and she ran her hand over her short, spiky brown hair. She didn't like the idea of her mother going out at night, but she could hardly forbid her,

'Where you going, Mum?'

Jane's mother looked at her blankly. The grandfather clock in the corner ticked loudly in the silence. 'Did you hear what I said, mum?'

'Yes, I answered, to visit a friend. Why don't you listen?'

The irritation in her mother's tone warned Jane to be careful. 'Must you go? It's cold out there.'

'What - do I have to ask permission to go out, now?'

Jane gazed at her mother's tight lips.' Of course not, Mum. But be careful won't you?'

'Don't try and teach your granny to suck eggs, Jane. I took care of myself long before you came along.'

'Well at least take a taxi.'

Her mother frowned and left, banging the front door behind her. Jane lay awake until she heard a taxi pull into the drive, and with a sigh of relief snuggled under the duvet and went to sleep

After supper the following evening, Jane lowered herself into a chair and opened her novel. Her mother flitted around the room opening drawers and moving ornaments and Jane found it hard to concentrate. 'What are you looking for, Mum?'

'Have you seen my purse?' her mother replied

Jane placed the book on a coffee table and stretched catlike in warmth of the fire.

'You're not going out are you?' 'I'm visiting a friend.'

'Do I know her?'

'It's not a she. It's a man.'

Jane felt a stab of unease, and sat upright in the easy chair. 'Who?

The purse was on the windowsill under a curtain. Her mother found it and with a click of annoyance rummaged in the bottom.' I need some money,'

Jane took the purse and snapped open the note compartment. 'You had plenty of money last night,'

'I spent it.'

'On taxi fare? Where does he live Lands End?'

'No, in the alley behind Carters grocery store.'

Jane's heart jerked into her throat 'You're joking,' she said.

'No I'm not. I found him crouched behind Carters dustbins.'

Like a flash of light it occurred to Jane how old her mother was. Jane wanted to believe she was the same strong woman who looked after her when she was a child. The same woman who ten years before had helped reshaped her shattered life. She wanted to believe her mother had been in no danger. Snakes writhed in the pit of Jane's stomach.

'You went into an alley to talk to a strange man! Oh, mum, no. He was probably an alcoholic, or on drugs. He could've knifed you.

'No he wouldn't - I knew him.'

With a sharp click Jane closed her mother's bag, and pressed her into a chair. 'You knew him. Okay, who is he?'

'What's that got to do with you?' Wrinkled eyelids hooded faded grey eyes, and her mother looked down at her lap.

'I just want to know you're safe, mum.'

'Do you take me for a fool?'

'Please, mum. Is he someone you worked with?'

Her mother's jaw set into a firm line. 'He was made redundant years ago. Now he has to pick scraps from the bin. I felt sorry for him, and worse than that, ashamed.'

The thought of her mother doing anything to be ashamed of surprised Jane. Could her mother have a guilty secret in her past? Perhaps she'd had an affair while she was married. Determined to get the answer to the mystery Jane probed further. 'Why would you feel ashamed?'

'Because I turned him away years ago.'

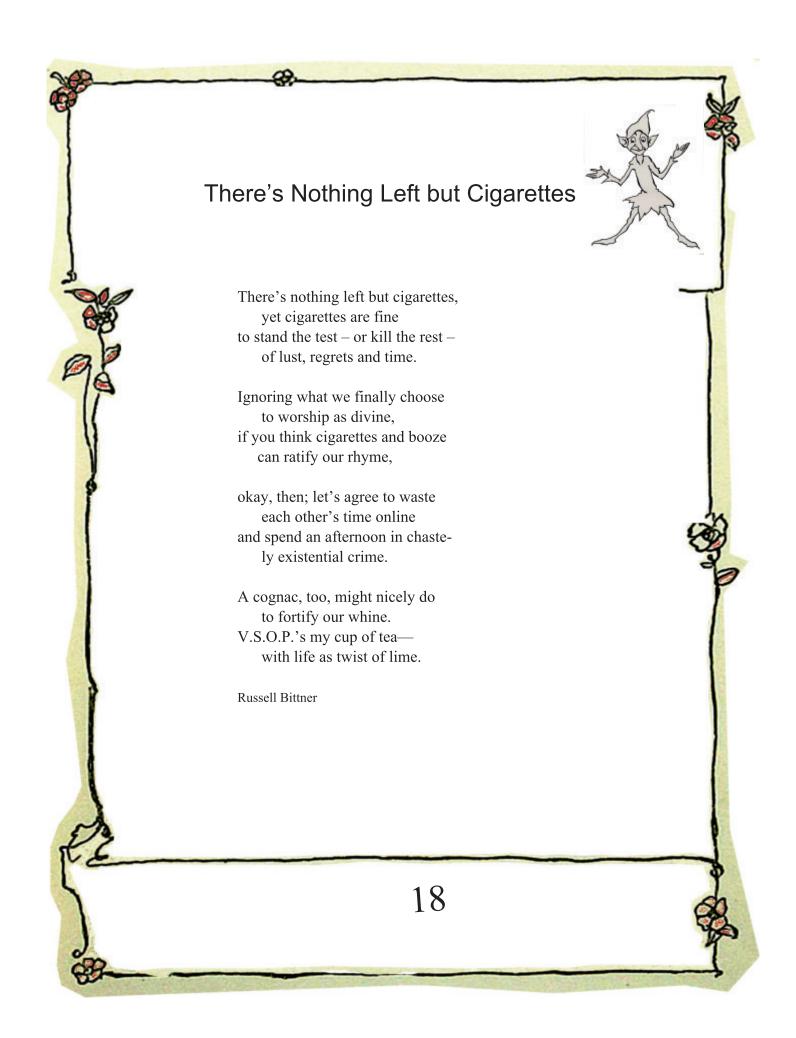
'An old lover?'

Her mother's eyes slid towards the clock. 'Look at the time - Daddy will be home from work soon and supper's not ready. Go wash you're hands Janie.'

Jane's heart turned over, and she gave her mother a small shake 'Come back, mum. Oh Jesus what's happening!'

A light came into her mother's eyes. 'Yes, that's who he was- the man in the alley. It was Jesus and he asked for a drink. He said he needed whiskey to keep out the cold. Wasn't that a strange thing for Jesus to say?' she said with a small smile.







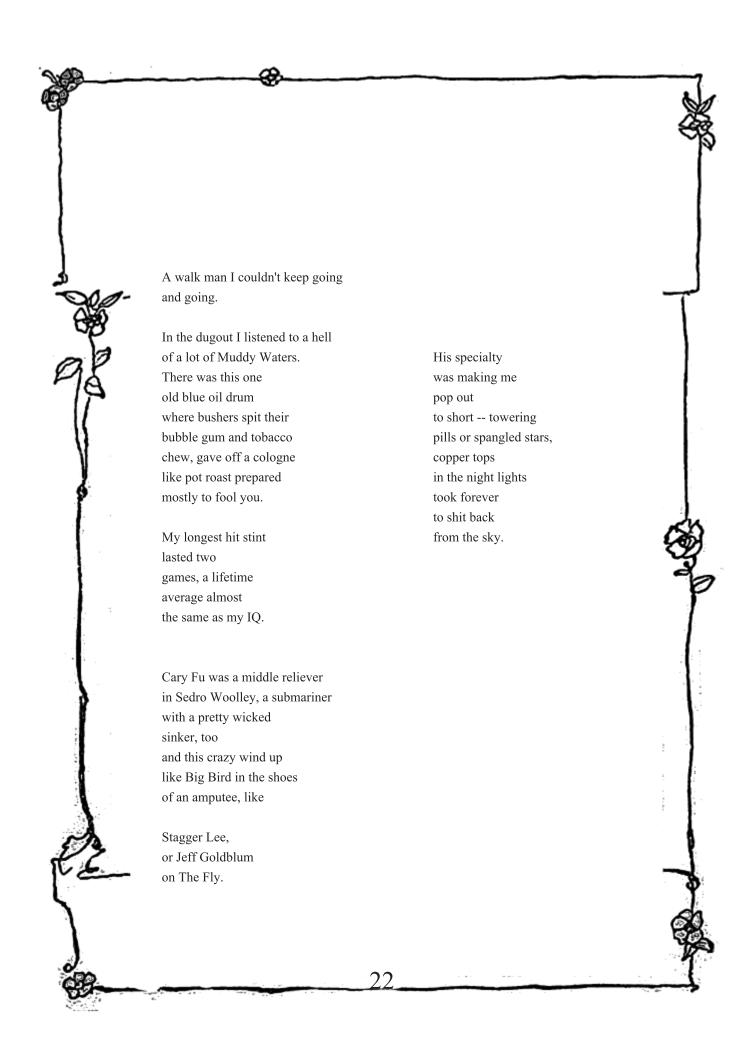


I watched our marriage end on Facebook while the History Channel told of the Lincoln assassination onspirators' stories. The best-laid plans of mice and men and murderers and married people came unraveled, bit by bit, as the program unwound and the newsfeed scrolled. I opened an article in the Guardian about young girls allowing themselves to be raped in order to maintain status within gangs. You complained about me not wanting sex. I point out that I don't have desire for you because you no longer respect me or admire me anymore. I call it a "chickenand-egg issue." The people who seek to save the girls believe the solution is education. I struggle to explain how I feel. "Booth holds a candle under a blanket to see the map, struggling to stay oncourse." "I want to feel that I'm more than a reflection of what you want and need, that I'm a separate, distinct person with feelings and value," I type. "I never wanted you to be my reflection. That would be bad," you type back. The apathetic memes scrolled by as I read your words. The irony wasn't lost on me when I wiped my eyes to stop the pain, and started plotting a "How My Husband Is" poster. "How He Sees Himself," "How The Children See Him," "How I See Him." I couldn't decide between a Roman conqueror and Superman, but then Willy Loman raised his hand. "Pick me, please," he said. Then it occurs to me that I don't know enough about Willy to use him as an example - but I wonder why he raised his hand. The Universe has handed him to me for a purpose. ©2012, Hamilton Caudill 20





"A curtain-lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering," From Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving



WEIGHTLESS by Monica Casper

The 737 climbs steeply, swiftly, vibrating like an unbalanced washing machine as metal meets atmosphere. The tense, blond man in the window seat, marks the sign of the cross. Once. Twice. Etching anodyne faith in the thin cabin air. He sighs heavily and leans back in the cramped seat, his long legs contorted at odd angles to his body. Los Angeles smolders below, a dusky oasis.

He breathes in. Out. Tries to calm his frenetic heart hammering in his chest. Dread anesthetizes his whole body. He flexes his frozen fingers to work some life back into them. He is tempted, in a kind of reverse blasphemy, to trace the cross one more time, to wake his numb hands. Maybe break into St. Vitus's dance, too. That would surprise the perky flight attendants. At least he's not trapped in the cavernous gut of a C-130, nose-to-nose with some taciturn, sweaty grunt.

Major Mac Armstrong's dirty little secret? He hates to fly. His bulletproof physique and badass attitude keep soldiers in line, but on a plane, he feels like a newborn giraffe surrounded by hungry lions. Nothing but air molecules and hammered steel between his mortal body and the unforgiving ground. Fucking fear of flying.

"Hey," says a honeyed voice near his left shoulder. "You okay?"

Mac shifts gingerly toward the aisle seat. There's not much room in coach for a six-foot-two former college tight end.

Then he wonders how he failed to notice her sitting next to him, a mere eight inches between his body and hers. Later, unable to sleep in yet another nondescript hotel with shitty art on the walls, in yet another anonymous town across from the Taco Bell, on yet another tedious training op, Mac will marvel at how oblivious he was to his surroundings on the airplane, to her.

The woman attached to the voice is a knockout. Slender, maybe five and a half feet. Long chestnut hair gleaming with streaks of caramel and butterscotch, like she's spent time in the sun. Her eyes are walnut with flecks of gold and a faint shimmer of green flashing inside the iris like northern lights. Delicate crow's feet promise to deepen enticingly and soft lips curve around small white teeth.

She's beautiful, an aging surfer girl.

Mac is telegraphed by a hopeful ache in his groin that barks, Hey, soldier, you're attracted to the babe in D-12! An elusive hint of warm cherries wafts from the woman's hair. Mac is dizzy; whether from her fruity scent or her tawny skin or insufficient oxygen, he can't tell.

"Are ... you ... okay?" she repeats, slowly and precisely as if she's talking to a dull child or a stunned accident victim. "You just genuflected, twice. I assume that means you're kind of freaking out?"

"Uh, what?" He stammers like an idiot. "Yeah. I'm okay. I think."

"So you're afraid to fly, huh?" she asks, head tilted, eyes dancing curiously.

He hesitates, nods. "Takeoffs still get to me. I fly a lot, but I just can't get used to it."

She offers her right hand. "I'm Callie. I'm not a fan of flying either."

"Mac," he replies, clasping her warmth. Her grip is surprisingly strong and he likes how her petite fingers feel inside his.

"Nice to meet you, Mac. So what is it you do that has you in the air so often?"

Mac hesitates. He realizes that out of uniform, he's just another guy. He could be anybody. Callie has no clue he's military, and he's reluctant to tell her the truth no matter how gorgeous she is. Mac is fiercely private by nature and duty, and the ability to keep secrets makes him incredibly good at his job.

She's smiling at him and she smells delectable, like an ice cream sundae, all succulent fruit and melted sugar with a bit of crunch on top. Mac would like to lean over and lick Callie's neck, maybe nibble her skin, and for a millisecond he is lost in the fantasy.

"Mac?" Her gentle query lures him back to reality.

He has another reason, too, for not responding: a family back home in Illinois, although he hasn't seen them in weeks. He imagines Jill lounging on the comfy corduroy sofa with their son Toby, watching TV. Blackjack no doubt curled up on the floor in his usual spot resting his shaggy head on giant, muddy paws.

Mac glances out the window. They are miles east of LAX now, hurtling through anonymous airspace above the nation he serves. The terrain below is rusty brown, cracked into geometric puzzle pieces of parched soil. Green clumps of trees and shrubs dot the landscape here and there, testament to a water source.

Mac is suddenly bone-weary, depleted at his core; a spent casing buried in choking sand. Is it really only a month since Carlos and Brandy were KIA? Or "got their damn selves killed," as Colonel Vacek put it shortly before the inquiry into their deaths.

Right this moment, Mac does not feel like much of a soldier, much less any kind of war hero. In fact, he feels like the worst kind of failure, an officer who let his troops die in a hot, violent clash.

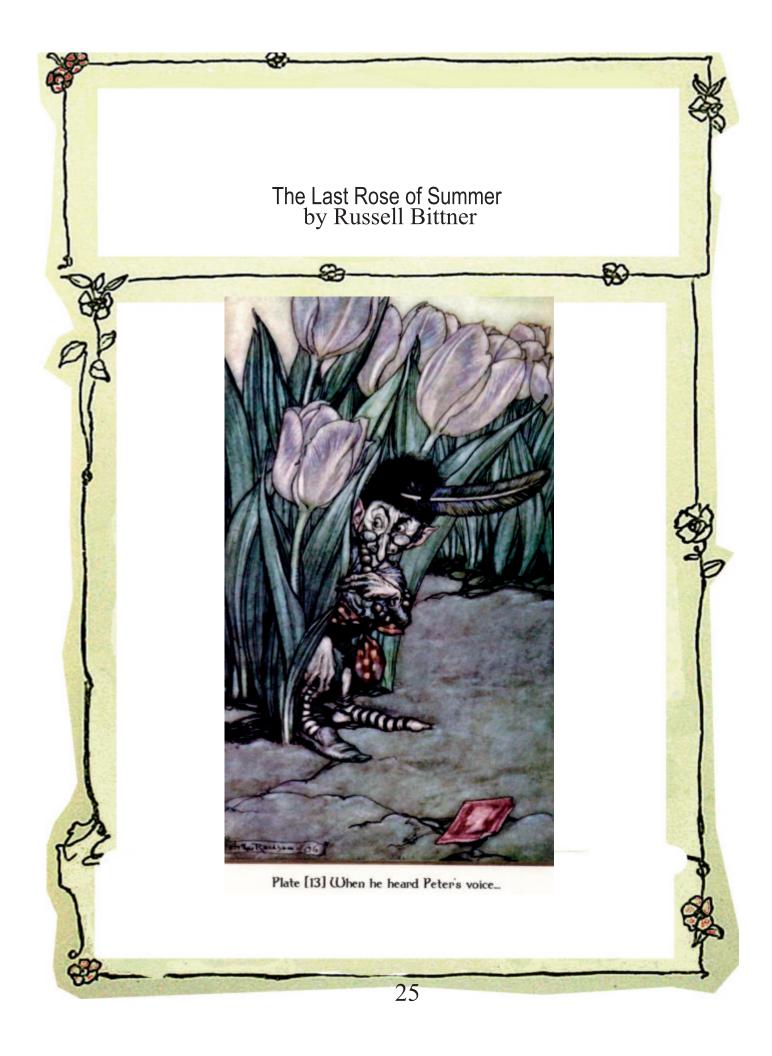
The Boeing has leveled off and no longer vibrates. It thrums like a giant industrial cocoon buffeted by a vigorous wind, like Mac's pulse.

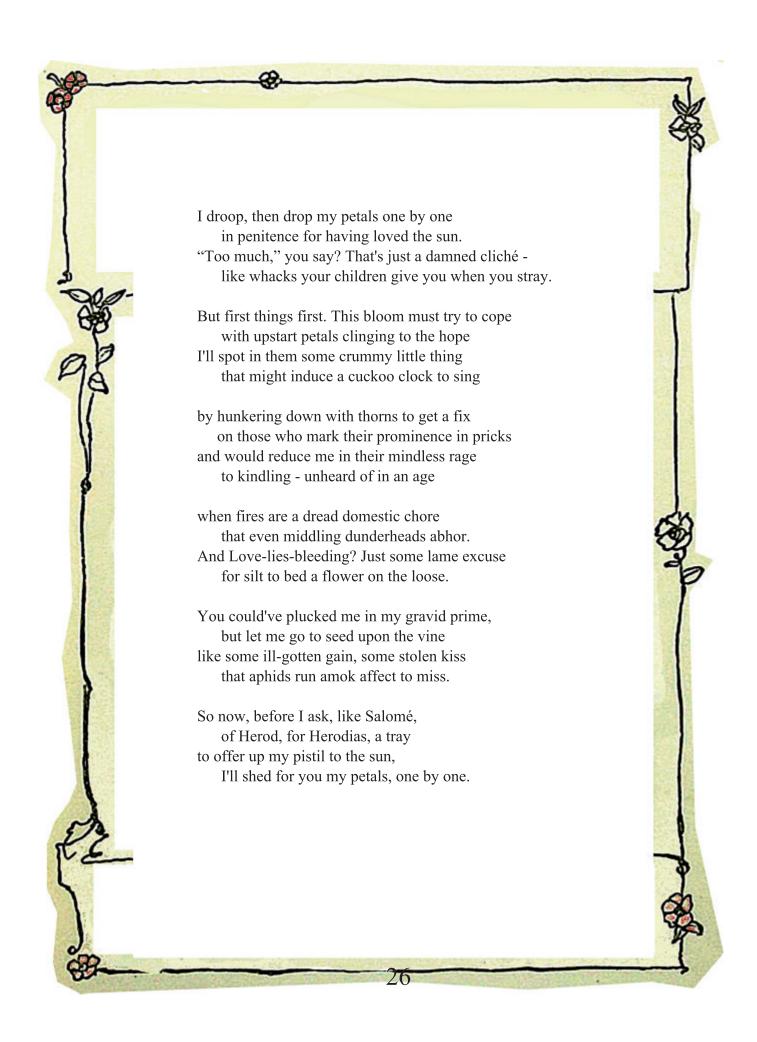
He turns to look at Callie. She gazes at him still, right eyebrow cocked, a tantalizing half-smile on her lips. She is lovely and solid and alive.

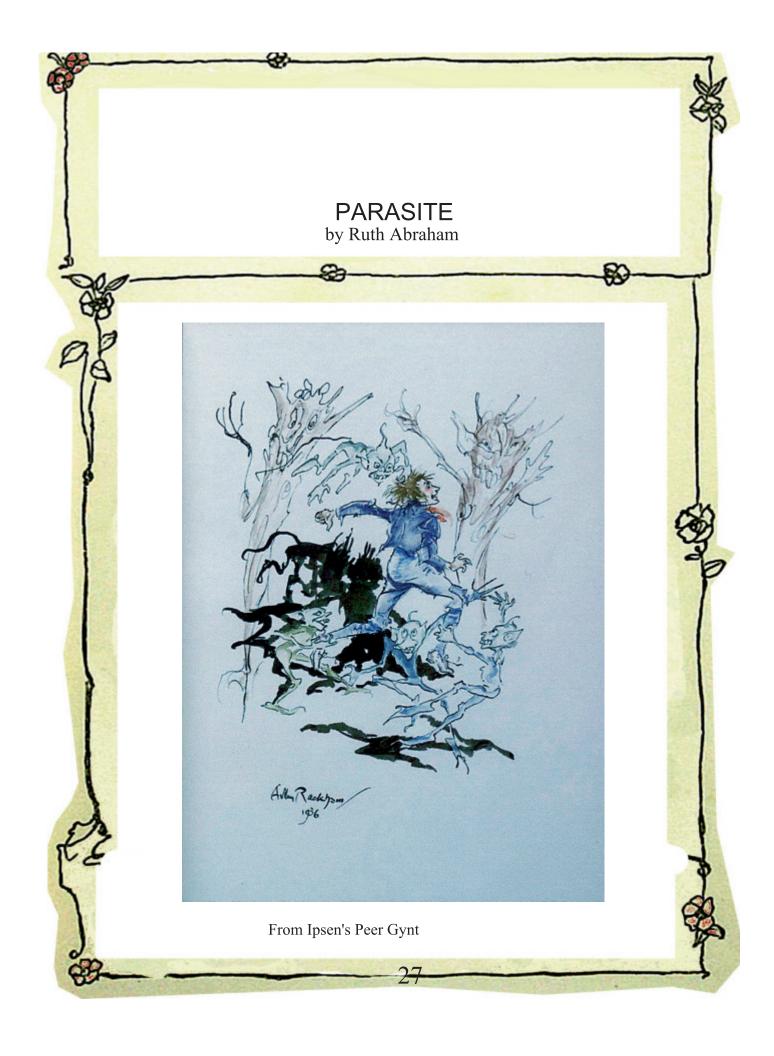
The war and his dead soldiers, Jill and Toby, are all so far away. In another time zone, another elevation, another life. He is here now, in this sealed capsule with a woman who smells like cherries and glows like the morning sun.

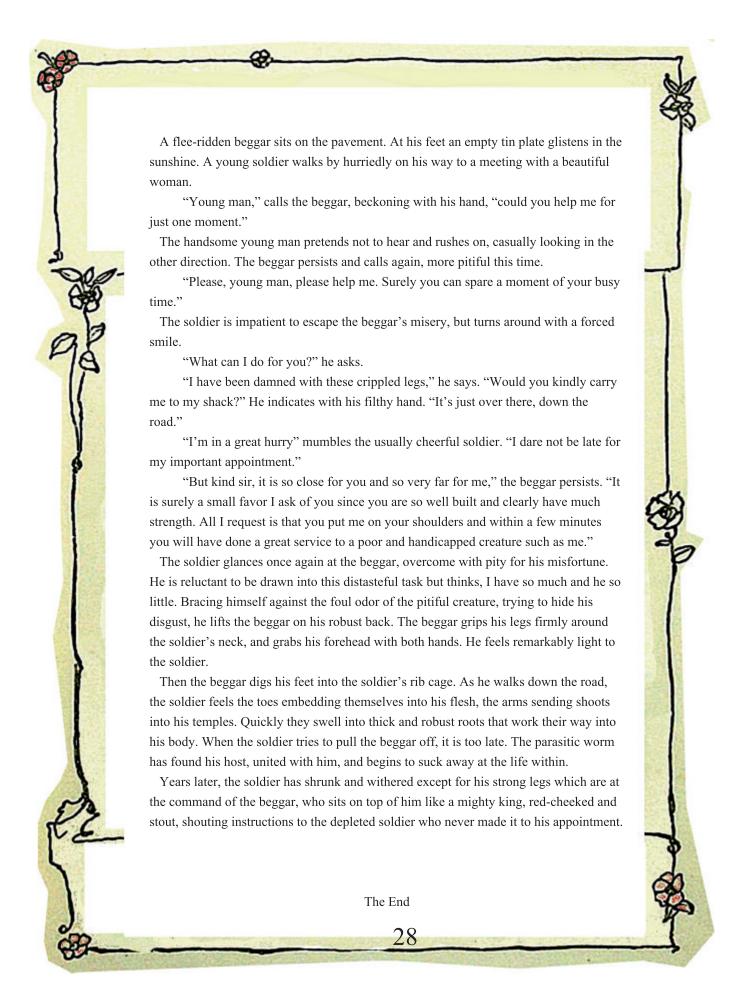
What the hell, he thinks.

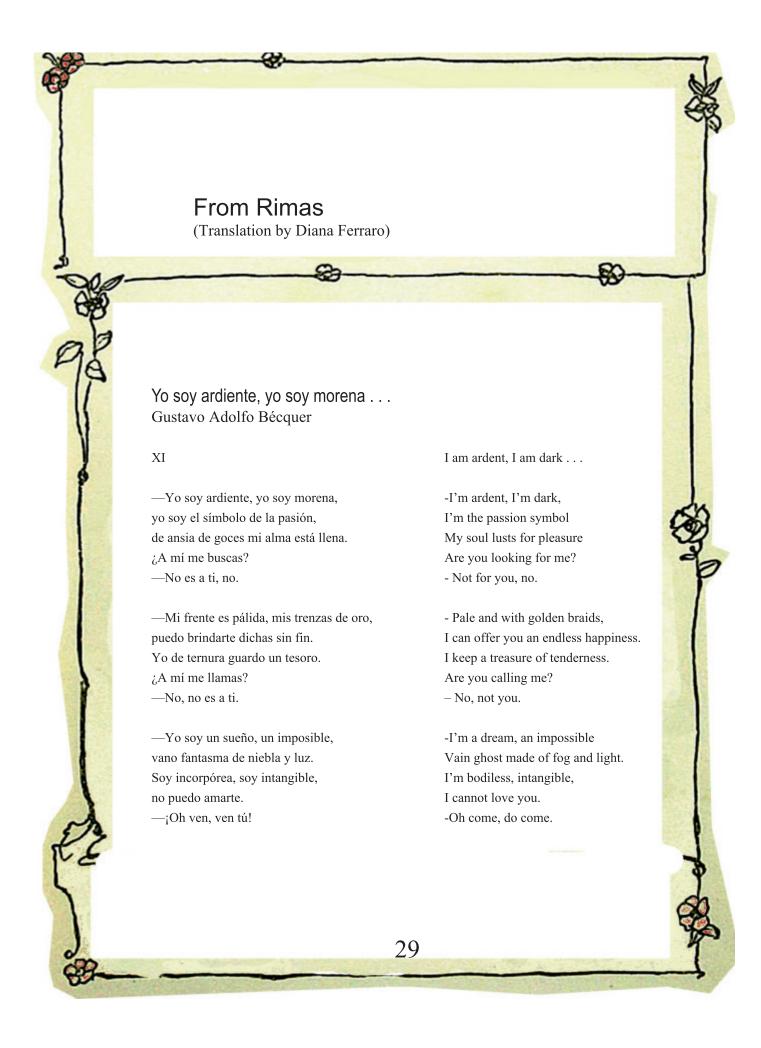
And words begin to tumble from Mac Armstrong's mouth like rocks in a landslide.











EL ALMOHADON DE PLUMA por Horacio Quiroga

Su luna de miel fué un largo escalofrío. Rubia, angelical y tímida, el carácter duro de su marido heló sus soñadas niñerías de novia. Lo quería mucho, sin embargo, a veces con un ligero estremecimiento cuando volviendo de noche juntos por la calle, echaba una furtiva mirada a la alta estatura de Jordán, mudo desde hacía una hora. El, por su parte, la amaba profundamente, sin darlo a conocer.

Durante tres meses—se habían casado en abril—vivieron una dicha especial. Sin duda hubiera ella deseado menos severidad en ese rígido cielo de amor, más expansiva e incauta ternura; pero el impasible semblante de su marido la contenía en seguida.

La casa en que vivían influía no poco en sus estremecimientos. La blancura del patio silencioso—frisos, columnas y estatuas de mármol—producía una otoñal impresión de palacio encantado. Dentro, el brillo glacial del estuco, sin el más leve rasguño en las altas paredes, afirmaba aquella sensación de desapacible frío. Al cruzar de una pieza a otra, los pasos hallaban eco en toda la casa, como si un largo abandono hubiera sensibilizado su resonancia.

En ese extraño nido de amor, Alicia pasó todo el otoño. No obstante, había concluído por echar un velo sobre sus antiguos sueños, y aún vivía dormida en la casa hostil, sin querer pensar en nada hasta que llegaba su marido.

No es raro que adelgazara. Tuvo un ligero ataque de influenza que se arrastró insidiosamente días y días; Alicia no se reponía nunca. Al fin, una tarde pudo salir al jardín apoyada en el brazo de él. Miraba indiferente a uno y otro lado. De pronto Jordán, con honda ternura, le pasó la mano por la cabeza, y Alicia rompió en seguida en sollozos, echándole los brazos al cuello. Lloró largamente todo su espanto callado, redoblando el llanto a la menor tentativa de caricia. Luego los sollozos fueron retardándose, y aún quedó largo rato escondida en su cuello, sin moverse ni decir una palabra.

Fué ese el último día que Alicia estuvo levantada. Al día siguiente amaneció desvanecida. El médico de Jordán la examinó con suma detención, ordenándole calma y descanso absolutos.

—No sé—le dijo a Jordán en la puerta de calle, con la voz todavía baja.—Tiene una gran debilidad que no me explico, y sin vómitos, nada... Si mañana se despierta como hoy, llámeme en seguida.

Al otro día Alicia seguía peor. Hubo consulta. Constatóse una anemia de marcha agudísima, completamente inexplicable. Alicia no tuvo más desmayos, pero se iba visiblemente a la muerte. Todo el día el dormitorio estaba con las luces prendidas y en pleno silencio. Pasábanse horas sin oir el menor ruido. Alicia dormitaba. Jordán vivía casi en la sala, también con toda la luz encendida. Paseábase sin cesar de un extremo a otro, con incansable obstinación. La alfombra ahogaba sus pasos. A ratos entraba en el dormitorio y proseguía su mudo vaivén a lo largo de la cama, mirando a su mujer cada vez que caminaba en su dirección.

Pronto Alicia comenzó a tener alucinaciones, confusas y flotantes al principio, y que descendieron luego a ras del suelo. La joven, con los ojos desmesuradamente abiertos, no hacía sino mirar la alfombra a uno y otro lado del respaldo de la cama. Una noche se quedó de repente mirando fijamente. Al rato abrió la boca para gritar, y sus narices y labios se perlaron de sudor.

—¡Jordán! ¡Jordán!—clamó, rígida de espanto, sin dejar de mirar la alfombra.

Jordán corrió al dormitorio, y al verlo aparecer Alicia dió un alarido de horror.

—¡Soy yo, Alicia, soy yo!

Alicia lo miró con extravío, miró la alfombra, volvió a mirarlo, y después de largo rato de estupefacta confrontación, se serenó. Sonrió y tomó entre las suyas la mano de su marido, acariciándola temblando.

Entre sus alucinaciones más porfiadas, hubo un antropoide, apoyado en la alfombra sobre los dedos, que tenía fijos en ella los ojos.

Los médicos volvieron inútilmente. Había allí delante de ellos una vida que se acababa, desangrándose día a día, hora a hora, sin saber absolutamente cómo. En la última consulta Alicia yacía en estupor mientras ellos la pulsaban, pasándose de uno a otro la muñeca inerte. La observaron largo rato en silencio y pasaron al comedor.

—Pst...—se encogió de hombros desalentado su médico.—Es un caso serio... poco hay que hacer...

—¡Sólo eso me faltaba!—resopló Jordán. Y tamborileó bruscamente sobre la mesa.

Alicia fué extinguiéndose en subdelirio de anemia, agravado de tarde, pero que remitía siempre en las primeras horas. Durante el día no avanzaba su enfermedad, pero cada mañana amanecía lívida, en síncope casi. Parecía que únicamente de noche se le fuera la vida en nuevas olas de sangre. Tenía siempre al despertar la sensación de estar desplomada en la cama con un millón de kilos encima. Desde el tercer día este hundimiento no la abandonó

más. Apenas podía mover la cabeza. No quiso que le tocaran la cama, ni aún que le arreglaran el almohadón. Sus terrores crepusculares avanzaron en forma de monstruos que se arrastraban hasta la cama y trepaban dificultosamente por la colcha.

Perdió, luego, el conocimiento. Los dos días finales deliró sin cesar a media voz. Las luces continuaban fúnebremente encendidas en el dormitorio y la sala. En el silencio agónico de la casa, no se oía más que el delirio monótono que salía de la cama, y el rumor ahogado de los eternos pasos de Jordán.

Murió, por fin. La sirvienta, que entró después a deshacer la cama, sola ya, miró un rato extrañada el almohadón.

—Señor—llamó a Jordán en voz baja.—En el almohadón hay manchas que parecen de sangre.

Jordán se acercó rápidamente y se dobló a su vez. Efectivamente, sobre la funda, a ambos lados del hueco que había dejado la cabeza de Alicia, se veían manchas de sangre.

- —Parecen picaduras—murmuró la sirvienta después de un rato de inmóvil observación.
- —Levántelo a la luz—le dijo Jordán.

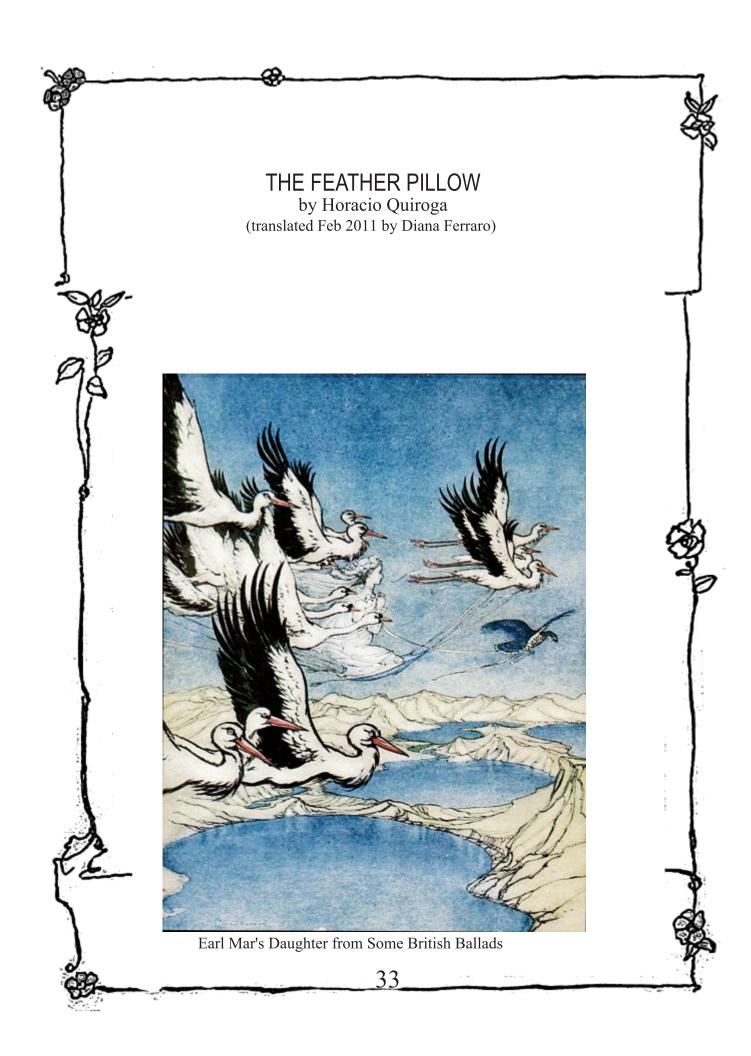
La sirvienta lo levantó, pero en seguida lo dejó caer, y se quedó mirando a aquél, lívida y temblando. Sin saber por qué, Jordán sintió que los cabellos se le erizaban.

- —¿Qué hay?—murmuró con la voz ronca.
- —Pesa mucho—articuló la sirvienta, sin dejar de temblar.

Jordán lo levantó; pesaba extraordinariamente. Salieron con él, y sobre la mesa del comedor Jordán cortó funda y envoltura de un tajo. Las plumas superiores volaron, y la sirvienta dió un grito de horror con toda la boca abierta, llevándose las manos crispadas a los bandós:—sobre el fondo, entre las plumas, moviendo lentamente las patas velludas, había un animal monstruoso, una bola viviente y viscosa. Estaba tan hinchado que apenas se le pronunciaba la boca.

Noche a noche, desde que Alicia había caído en cama, había aplicado sigilosamente su boca—su trompa, mejor dicho—a las sientes de aquella, chupándole la sangre. La picadura era caşi imperceptible. La remoción diaria del almohadón había impedido sin duda su desarrollo, pero desde que la joven no pudo moverse, la succión fué vertiginosa. En cinco días, en cinco noches, había vaciado a Alicia.

Estos parásitos de las aves, diminutos en el medio habitual, llegan a adquirir en ciertas condiciones proporciones enormes. La sangre humana parece serles particularmente favorable, y ne es raro hallarlos en los almohadones de pluma.



Horacio Quiroga (1878-1937) was born in Uruguay, as the son of the Argentine Vice-Consul, holding then both nationalities, Argentine and Uruguayan. He wrote short stories characterized by the supernatural and the bizarre. He is considered the founding father of the Argentine short-story. A great admirer of **Edgar Allan Poe**, he had an equally difficult life. He chose to live in the jungle of Misiones, in the Argentine North-East and, very sick, he took his life drinking a glass of cyanide. His best-known works are the collections of stories Stories of Love, Madness, and Death (1917), Jungle Tales (1918) and Anaconda (1921.) The Feather Pillow is an early story from 1907.

Her honeymoon was a long shudder. Blond, angelic and shy, her husband's harsh temper froze her bride's childlike dreams. She loved him very much, though, when at night they returned together through the street she, slightly shivering, would sneak a look up at the tall Jordan who would been mute for an hour. For his part he loved her deeply without making it known.

They had married in April and during the three months they lived a special happiness. Without a doubt, she would have wished, for less strictness in that rigid heaven-of-love, for a more expansive and unwary tenderness; but the impassible face of her husband always restrained her.

The house where they lived had no little influence upon her tremors. The whiteness of the silent patio – marble friezes, columns and statues- gave the autumnal impression of a bewitched palace. Inside, the icy glaze of stucco, without a single scratch on the walls, reaffirmed the sensation of an unwelcoming coldness. As they crossed from one room to another, their steps echoed all over the house, as though a long abandonment had enhanced its resonance.

In was in this strange love-nest that Alicia spent the entire fall alone. Nevertheless, she decided to throw a veil over her old dreams, and she lived as one who were asleep, not wanting to think about anything until her husband returned.

It wasn't odd that she would lose weight. She had a slight influenza attack which insidiously dragged for days and days, which she wasn't recovering from. Finally, one afternoon leaning on her husband's arm she was able to go out to the garden. Uninterested in her surroundings, she glanced from one side to the other. Then suddenly Jordan, with a deep tenderness, caressed her head, and Alicia broke-up in sobs, wrapping her arms around his neck. For a long time, she cried out her silent dread, redoubling her weeping at his slightest attempt to caress her. Then the sobs became sparser, while she dwelt hidden by his neck, without moving or saying a word.

That was the last day Alicia was on her feet. The next day, at dawn, she fainted. Jordan's doctor examined her, and ordered quiet and absolute rest.

-I don't know- he told Jordan at the street door, with his voice still lowered—She has a weakness I cannot explain, and without vomits or anything. If tomorrow she wakes in the same state, call me at once.

The next day Alicia was worse. There was a consultation. A completely, unexplainable, acute and galloping anemia was diagnosed. Alicia didn't faint again, but she was visibly on her way

to death. Her bedroom was the whole day with the lights on and in a complete silence. Hours went by without any sound being heard. Alicia dozed. Jordan spent most of his time in the living room, also with all the lights on. He paced the length of the room with tireless obstinacy. The carpet swallowed the sound of his steps. From time to time, he entered the bedroom and repeated his silent pacing along the bed, looking at his wife every time he walked in her direction.

Soon Alicia began to hallucinate: in the beginning, confusing and floating images, which later descended onto the floor. The young woman, with her eyes wide, wouldn't stop staring at the carpet and at both sides of the head of her bed. One night she suddenly remained watching fixedly. Later, she opened her mouth to cry out and her nostrils and lips were covered with sweat.

-Jordan! Jordan!- she shouted, rigid with fear, still staring at the carpet. Jordan ran into the bedroom and, when she saw him, Alicia screamed in terror.

-It's me, Alicia, it's me!

Alicia looked at him, lost, stared at the carpet, looked again at him, and after a long time of amazed confrontation, she calmed down. She smiled and took her husband's hand between hers, caressing it while she shivered. Among her most resilient hallucinations was one of an anthropoid, standing on its fingers on the carpet, and staring back at her.

Doctors uselessly returned. In front of them they had a life that was ending; bleeding dry day by day, hour by hour, without them knowing how or why. In the last consult, Alicia lay unconscious while they took her pulse -- passing her inert wrist to each other. They observed her in silence and then went to the dining room.

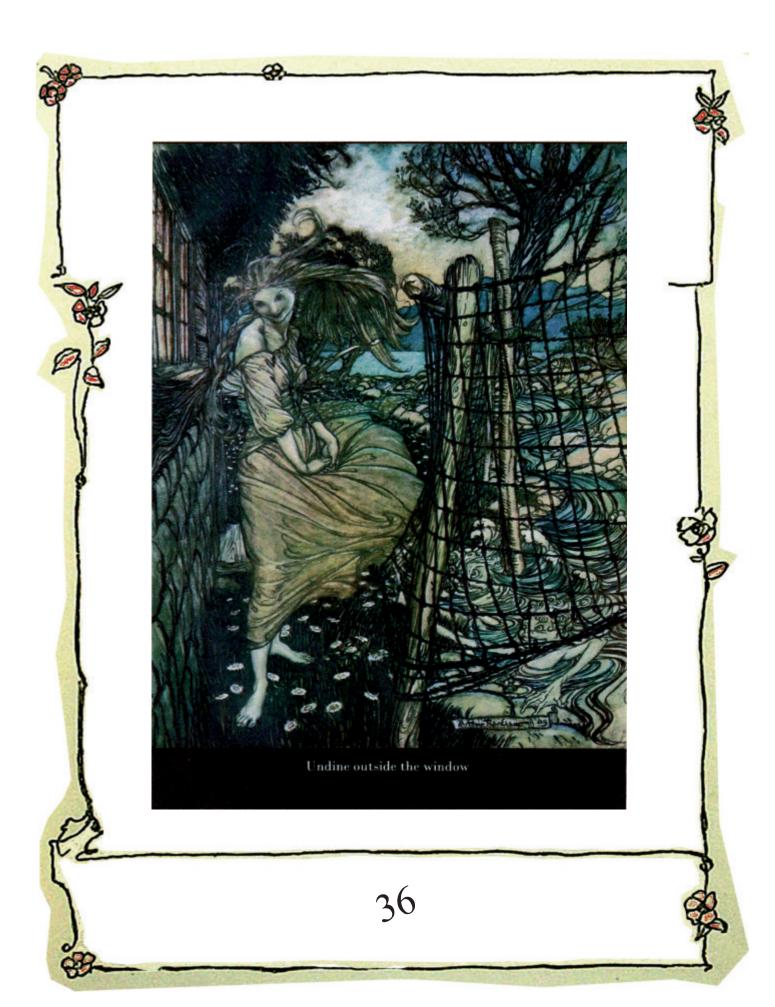
-Phew ...- shrugged her doctor, discouraged — It's a serious case, there is little we can do ...

-This is the last thing I needed!- snorted Jordan. And he abruptly drummed his fingers on the table.

Alicia extinguished as the delirium of the anemia, worsened in the afternoon and faded at dawn. During the day, her illness would not advance but every morning she would wake up livid, in a hearth stroke almost. It seemed that only at night her life drifted away in new waves of blood. When she woke up, she always had the sensation of being on her bed overwhelmed by a million kilos on top of her. From the third day on, this sinking never abandoned her. She could barely move her head. She didn't want to have her bed arranged or to have her pillow fixed. Her evening terrors came forward under the shape of monsters which crawled onto her bed, climbing with difficulty over the spread.

Later, she swooned. The last days she raved in a half-voice. The lights were on in the bedroom and living room like in a wake room. In the dying silence of the house, there was only the sound of a monotonous frenzy that was coming from the bedroom and the drowned-out eternal steps of Jordan.

She finally died. The maid, who came in later to unmake the now empty bed stared surprised at the pillow.



-Sir- she called Jordan in a low voice- There are spots on the pillow that look like blood spots.

Jordan approached her quickly and bent over the bed. Over the sham, to both sides of the hollow Alicia's head had left on the pillow, there certainly were blood spots.

- -They look like bug bites- mumbled the servant after observing the sham for a while without moving.
 - Bring it up to the light- Jordan told her.

The maid lifted the pillow but dropped it quickly, staring at Jordan, pale and trembling. Without knowing why, Jordan felt his hair standing on end.

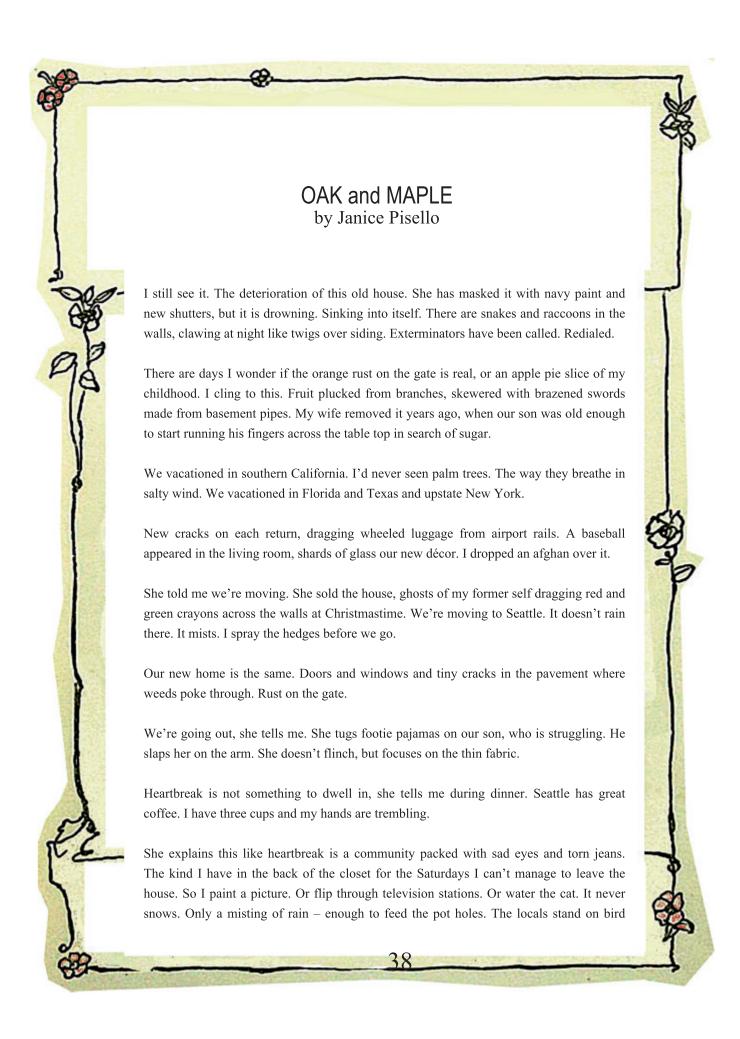
- -What's up- he mumbled with a coarse voice.
- -It's too heavy- answered the maid unable to stop her shudder.

Jordan lifted the pillow; it was extraordinarily heavy. They left the bedroom with it and, over the dining room table, Jordan slashed the sham and wrap. The upper feathers flew out and the maid cried out in horror, covering her head with her twitched hands: at the bottom, among the feathers, was a monstrous animal, a living and sticky ball. It was so swollen that its mouth could barely be seen.

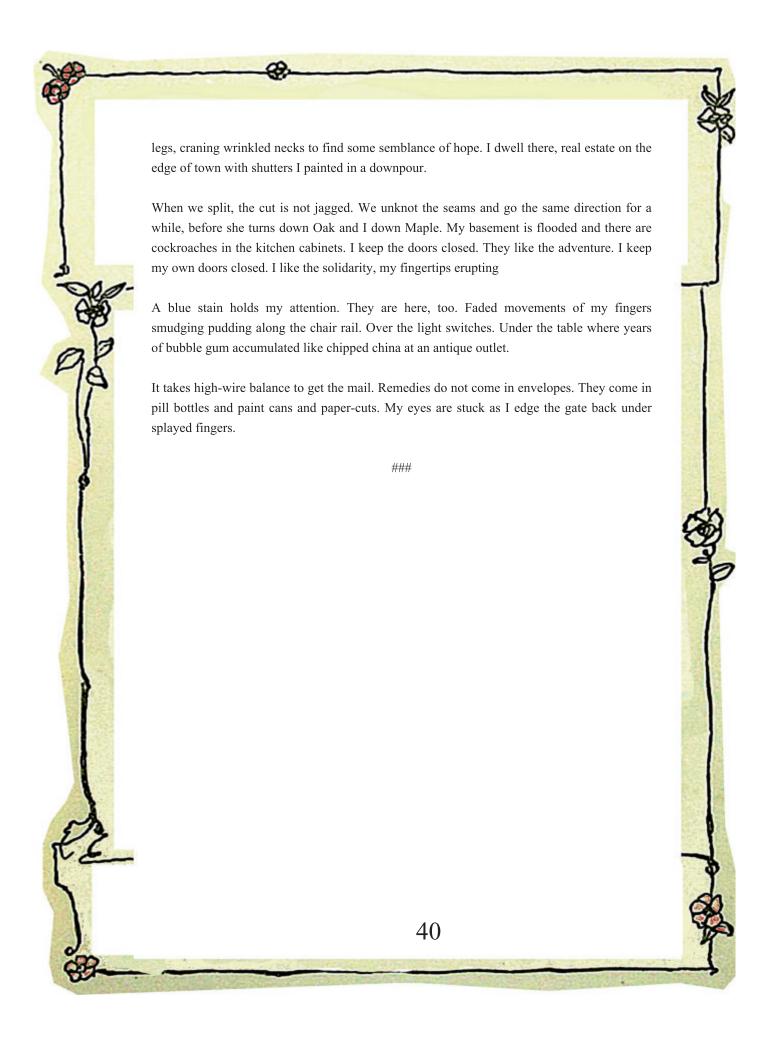
Night after night, since Alicia had been in bed, it had attached its mouth –or rather, its snout- to her temples, sucking her blood. The bite was imperceptible. A daily removal of the pillow would have certainly avoided this development, but after the young woman stopped moving, the sucking was vertiginous. In five days, in five nights, it had emptied Alicia.

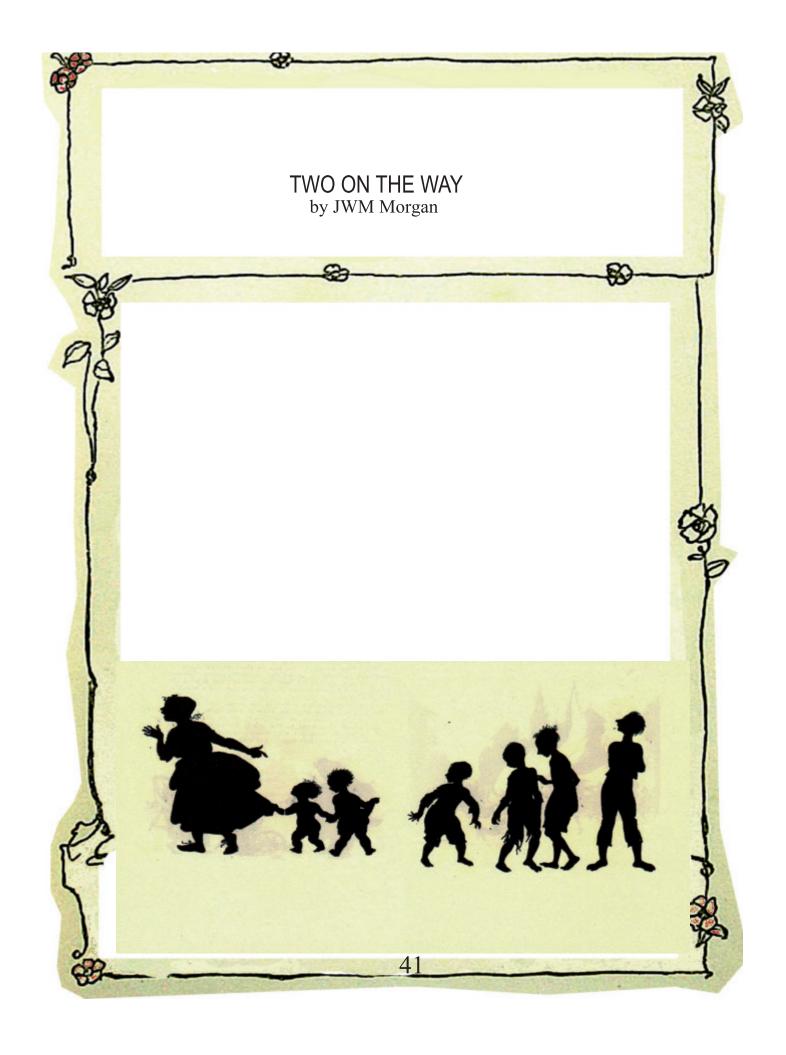
These bird parasites, minuscule in their usual habitat, can acquire under certain circumstances enormous proportions. Human blood seems to suit them particularly, and it's not unusual to find them in feather pillows.

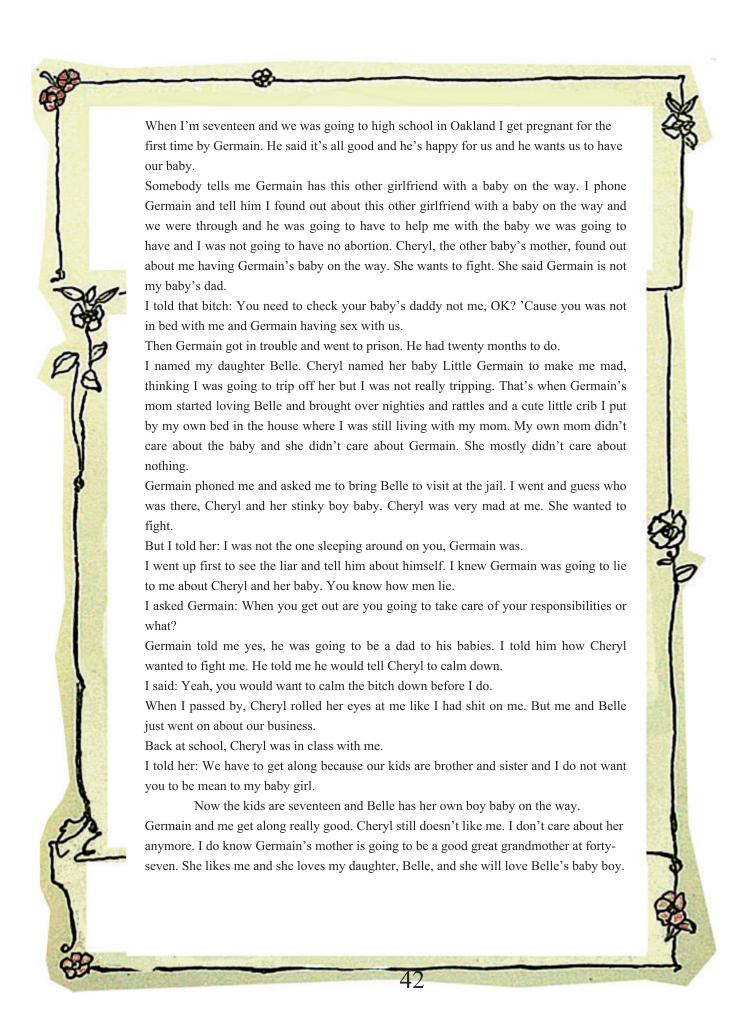
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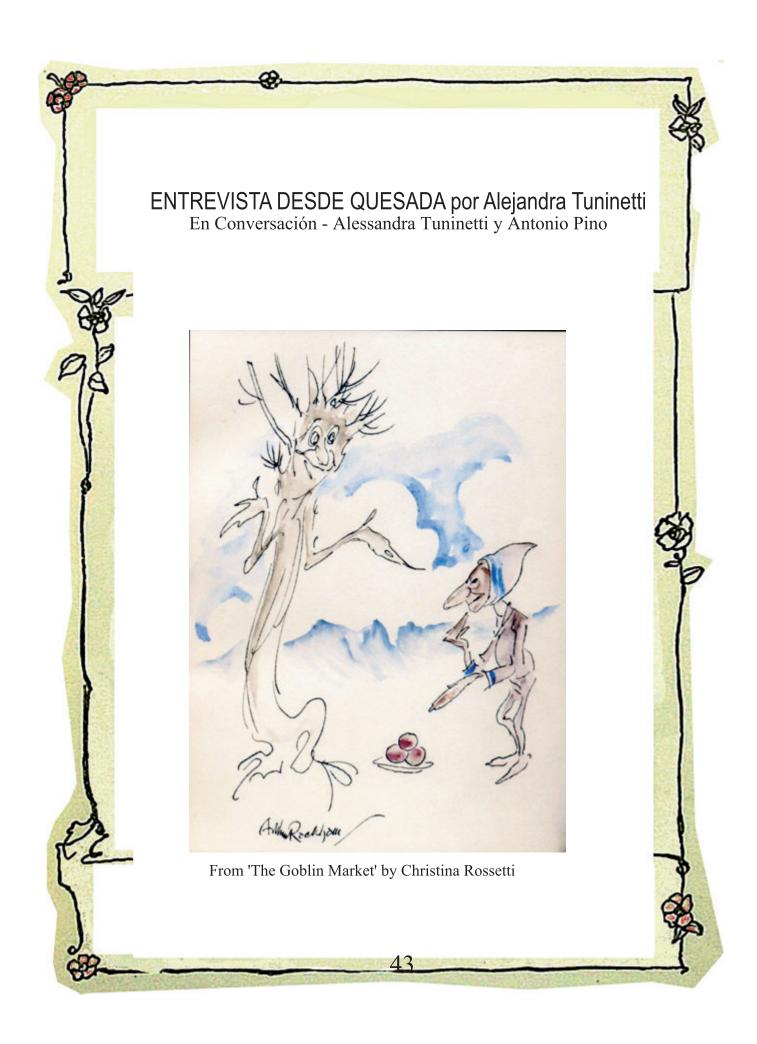












Alejandra.: Hola Antonio, me produjo mucha ternura ver un espectáculo que creía desaparecido. Sé que Peneque era vuestro padre y que vosotros seguís con la tradición familiar, es algo que viene de lejos puesto que en la plaza principal de Quesada está ese pequeño y emotivo tributo que los quesadeños han regalado a vuestro padre.

Dónde y cuándo nació Peneque? Por qué se llamo así? Como en los pequeños circos actuales supongo que será difícil vivir del arte de ser titiritero ...

Antonio.:Todo empezó con unos personajes y un poco de magia cuando, en 1959 Miguel Pino Sánchez combino una bonita historia con un teatro de títeres.

Un coche una maleta y mucha ilusión le convirtieron en uno de los pioneros del teatro de títeres, a lo largo de 53 años la compañía a actuado en los principales escenarios de España, Europa y America realizando en televisión y radio programas propios con un gran éxito.

Varias son las autoridades que felicitan y reconocen la trayectoria de esta compañía que cumplió 50 años 1959-2009. Miguel Pino es una leyenda del teatro de títeres, creador del personaje Peneque el Valiente que a lo largo de los años se a convertido en todo un clásico, reconocido en 11 ciudades con monumentos del títere Peneque en parques, colegios y bibliotecas.

Alejandra.: Este trabajo lo haceis como hobby? Cuántas personas de la familia trabajan además de los dos hijos? He observado que los niños, especialmente los muy pequeños, miran con gran atención el espectáculo y se implican mucho con las historias, pero también he visto a los "adultos" ser como niños y mirar con un poco de nostalgia ...

Antonio.:Son varias generaciones las que han gritado la frase mítica de "Peneque dónde te metes" a la que el pequeño héroe acudía rápidamente.

Alejandra.: Cuál es la mayor satisfacción que os proporcionan vuestras actuaciones? Y cómo se elige la historia que se va a teatralizar? Comentamos que la familia de titiriteros viene de Málaga, pero que ha recorrido toda España.

Antonio.:

Peneque ¿Dónde te metes...?.

Conozcamos un poco la biografía y vida de la persona que creo a Peneque. Villanueva de Serena (Badajoz) 1923, Málaga 2010. Comienza su carrera profesional como agente de Pepe Marchena (mítica Figura del Flamenco), desgrana los entramados del sector teatral y los asimila, para más adelante utilizarlos de sólida base en otros proyectos. De vuelta en su ciudad

natal monta una emisora de radio local, una tecnología incipiente con que retransmitía los deportes, las noticias y programas de entretenimiento. Hoy de plena actualidad llenan las parrillas de radios y T.V. programas con el mismo contenido que Miguel presentó en aquella emisora.

"Conozca usted a sus vecinos" espacio de radio en directo en el que los participantes hacían gala de sus habilidades artísticas, cantar, interpretar, recitar, y tocar instrumentos musicales. La emisora se clausuró por la autoridad de la época. Recibe una oferta para integrarse en "Movierecord" se traslada a Salamanca con su recién estrenada familia, Maruja su esposa y Manuel Miguel su primer hijo. Una habilidad comercial innata y la experiencia acumulada hacen de su zona la mas productiva lo que le lleva hasta Valladolid como delegado provincial.

El espíritu creativo de Miguel imparable, y el encorsetado sistema de la multinacional de publicidad no encaja en su línea de trabajo. Con un socio monta la primera "Exposición Industrial", Badajoz acogió aquella feria de muestras con un éxito rotundo, tanto en la parte comercial como en la asistencia de público, impresionados con aquellas maquinarias que podían ver y tocar por primera vez.

De regreso a Valladolid comienza a darle forma a lo que será su gran proyecto. Miguel crea un personaje Peneque el Valiente y toda una compañía de títeres.

De gira por España los teatros y auditorios, el reconocimiento de "la grey infantil," ...

Miguel Pino introduce los títeres en los teatros cuando estos era algo reservado solo para la calle, siendo de los primeros en elevarlos a la misma categoría que las demás disciplinas escénicas dignificando el genero del títere. Para potenciar su poder de comunicación y gracias a su experiencia pide colaboración a diversas marcas comerciales, las cuales ven en sus proyectos el éxito y la convocatoria que tiene sus pequeños muñecos. Colacao, Pepsi, Caserío, Frigo ... Son varias generaciones las que participan en sus concursos de dibujos.

La saga continua con sus hijos Miguel, Antonio y Tina Madrina que mantienen el espíritu de Peneque, y que cada año hacen disfrutar a grandes y pequeños de todo el mundo.

La relación con Quesada es muy especial, son tres generaciones las que han disfrutado de las aventuras de Peneque, le tenemos mucho cariño a este pueblo.

Un día Miguel Pino fue a pedir el teatro de la localidad de Fortuna en Murcia, el empresario le insistía que nadie iría a la representación que la coso estaba muy mal en el pueblo, pero Miguel insistió, ese día toco la lotería en el pueblo y tubo que dar cuatro

funciones.

Antes las vacunas se ponían en los colegios, coincidió con una de sus actuaciones, los niños lloraban y se le ocurrió que uno de sus personajes es un doctor, el doctor Perilla, en ese momento Peneque apareció y le dijo al doctor ponme la vacuna que no duele nada, todos los niños dejaron de llorar y ponían el brazo solos diciendo "me la pones como a Peneque".

Nunca supimos el por que del nombre de Peneque, lo que si nos dijo que se le ocurrió enseguida lo de "Peneque donde te metes".

Miguel Pino nos dijo:

El motivo de una representación visual, mediante pequeños muñecos que nos evoquen una realidad particular como es la creada para los niños. Nos supone el adentrarse en una manera muy peculiar en un mundo de fantasías, donde los sentidos actúan de una forma instantánea al relacionar rápidamente los objetos, formas y argumentos, alcanzando las sonrisas eternas de grandes y pequeños.

###

Interview translated by Marie Fitzpatrick

Alexandra.: Hello Antonio, I felt much tenderness when I saw your show, it was a spectacle that I thought had disappeared. I know that Peneque was your father and you follow in the family tradition, it is something that goes far back with you for in Quesada's main square the Quesadeños gave Peneque and your father such an emotional tribute.

Where and When was Peneque born? Why was he called so? I guess it's difficult to live on the art of puppeteering like with all small circuses.

Antonio: Everything began with a few characters and a bit of magic when in 1959 Miguel Pino Sánchez combined a beautiful story with a puppet theatre.

A car, a suitcase and great enthusiasm made him one of the pioneers of puppetry and for over 53 years the company appeared on the main stages of Spain, Europe and America performing on television and radio programs with great success. There are several authorities who congratulated and recognized the trajectory of this company that turned 50 y in 2009: 1959 - 2009.

Miguel Pino is a legend of puppet theatre, the creator of the character *Peneque the Brave* who became a classic and is recognized in 11 cities, with monuments of the *Peneque*

Puppet, in parks, schools and libraries.

Alexandra.: This work that you do is a hobby? How many of your family work with you, in addition to your two children? I have observed that children, especially the very young, look with great attention at the show and become very involved with the stories. But I've also seen nostalgic 'adults' react like children ...

Antonio.: There are several generations who have shouted the mythical phrase of *Peneque ¿Dónde te metes...?* to which the small hero quickly replies.

Alejandra.: What is the greatest satisfaction that you take from your performances? And how do you choose the stories that you dramatise? We've said that your family of puppeteers comes from Malaga, but that it has travelled all over Spain!

Antonio.:

Peneque ¿Where are you ...?.

We know the biography and life of the person who created Peneque. Villanueva of Serenade (Badajoz) 1923, Malaga 2010. He began his career as an agent of Pepe Marchena -- mythical figure of the Flamenco --, here he developed and assimilated the theatrical skills that he used as a solid foundation in other projects. Back in his native city he launched a local radio station; then an emerging technology that retransmitted, sports, news and entertainment programs.

Today's TV and radio programmes are full of the same content that Miguel presented at that station. For example 'The Meet your Neighbours' space of live radio in which participants show their artistic abilities: singing; interpreting; recitation and playing musical instruments. But his station was closed by the authority of the time.

He then received an offer to join "Movierecord" and he with his new family moved to Salamanca; Maruja Manuel Miguel , his wife and their first child. With innate skill and his commercial experience he made his area the most productive and this took him to Valladolid as provincial delegate. However the creative spirit of the unstoppable Miguel, and the corseted system of the multinational did not fit his vision. With an associate he launched the first "Industrial Exhibition." It was well received; the trade fair was a big success , both from a commercial point of view and for the public who were impressed with the machines that they could see and touch for the first time.

On returning to Valladolid he began to give form to what was to be his biggest project. Miguel created a personage *Peneque Brave* and the whole company of marionettes. And he toured Spanish theaters and auditoriam in recognition of ""la grey infantil ...," **Miguel Pino** introduced the marionettes to the theaters when they were only

available for viewing in a private room or on the street. He dignified the marionette genre being of one the first people to raise them up to the same categorry as other theatrical disciplines. To promote his show he used his power of communication and thanks to his experience he asked and received collaboration from diverse commetcial trademarks, which saw the success of his projects and his dolls became know as: Colacao, Pepsi, Hamlet, Fridge ... There were also several generations who took part in drawing competitions etc.

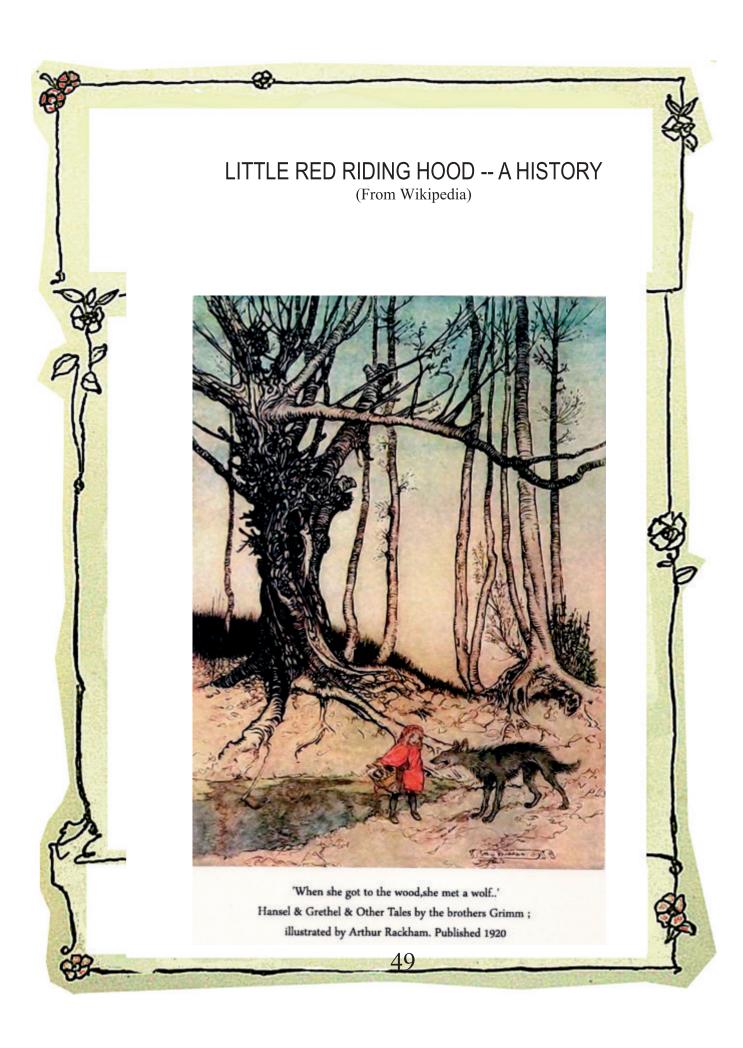
The saga today, continues with its children Miguel, Antonio and Tina Madrina who maintain the Peneque spirit, and who every year make it enjoyable for big and little children around the world. Our relationship with Quesada is very special, there are three generations who have enjoyed the adventures of Peneque, and we have great affection for the town.

Once Miguel Pino, while in the town of Fortuna in Murcia asked a theatre to host his show. The manager wasn't interested and insisted that nobody would go to see it, that it was very wrong type of show for their village. But Miguel insisted and took a chance and proceed to give four showings to the public. Vaccines being introduced to schools coincided with one of his performances. The children scared of the needle cried. So Miguel introduced a doctor character, Doctor Knob, Peneque then appeared and asked the doctor to give him the vaccine and proclained that it did not hurt at all; the children stopped crying and put their arms out for their injection saying: put it in me, like you did with Peneque.

Miguel Pino told us:

The reason that this visual representation through small dolls envokes in us a particular reality is that it is created for children. Where in a peculiar way we enter a world of fantasy, where the senses act instantly to intersect with objects, forms and arguments, reaching out for eternal large and small smiles.

###



Little Red Riding Hood, also known as *Little Red Cap*, is a French fairy tale about a young girl and a big bad wolf. The story has been changed considerably in its history and subject to numerous modern adaptations and readings. The story was first published by **Charles Perraul**t in *Histoires ou contes du temps passé in 1697*

The theme of the ravening wolf and of the creature released unharmed from its belly is also reflected in the Russian tale **Peter and the Wolf**, and the other Grimm tale *The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids*, but its general theme of restoration is at least as old as *Jonah and the Whale*. The theme also appears in the story of the life of *Saint Margaret*, where the saint emerges unharmed from the belly of a dragon.

The dialog between the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood has its analogies to the *Norse Prymskviða* from the Elder Edda; the giant Þrymr had stolen Mjölner, Thor's hammer, and demanded Freyja as his bride for its return. Instead, the gods dressed Thor as a bride and sent him. When the giants note Thor's unladylike eyes, eating, and drinking, Loki explains them as Freyja not having slept, or eaten, or drunk, out of longing for the wedding.

EARLIEST VERSIONS

The origins of the Little Red Riding Hood story can be traced to versions from various European countries and more than likely preceding the 17th century, of which several exist, some significantly different from the currently known, Grimms-inspired version. It was told by French peasants in the 14th century as well as in Italy, where a number of versions exist, including La finta nonna (The False Grandmother). It has also been called "The Story of Grandmother". It is also possible that this early tale has roots in very similar Oriental tales (e.g. "Grandaunt Tiger").

These early variations of the tale differ from the currently known version in several ways. The antagonist is not always a wolf, but sometimes an ogre or a 'bzou' (werewolf), making these tales relevant to the werewolf-trials (similar to witch trials) of the time (e.g. the trial of Peter Stumpp). The wolf usually leaves the grandmother's blood and meat for the girl to eat, who then unwittingly cannibalizes her own grandmother. Furthermore, the wolf was also known to ask her to remove her clothing and toss it into the fire. In some versions, the wolf eats the girl after she gets into bed with him, and the story ends there. In others, she sees through his disguise and tries to escape, complaining to her "grandmother" that she needs to defecate and would not wish to do so in the bed. The wolf reluctantly lets her go, tied to a piece of string so she does not get away. However, the girl slips the string over something else and runs off.

In these stories she escapes with no help from any male or older female figure, instead using her own cunning. Sometimes, though more rarely, the red hood is even non-

existent.

CHARLES PERRAULT

The earliest known printed version was known as Le Petit Chaperon Rouge and had its origins in 17th century French folklore. It was included in the collection Tales and Stories of the Past with Morals. Tales of Mother Goose (Histoires et contes du temps passé, avec des moralités. Contes de ma mère l'Oye), in 1697, by Charles Perrault. As the title implies, this version is both more sinister and more overtly moralized than the later ones. The redness of the hood, which has been given symbolic significance in many interpretations of the tale, was a detail introduced by Perrault.

The story had as its subject an "attractive, well-bred young lady", a village girl of the country being deceived into giving a wolf she encountered the information he needed to find her grandmother's house successfully and eat the old woman while at the same time avoiding being noticed by woodcutters working in the nearby forest. Then he proceeded to lay a trap for the Red Riding Hood. The latter ends up being asked to climb into the bed before being eaten by the wolf, where the story ends. The wolf emerges the victor of the encounter and there is no happy ending.

Charles Perrault explained the 'moral' at the end so that no doubt is left to his intended meaning:

From this story one learns that children, especially young lasses, pretty, courteous and well-bred, do very wrong to listen to strangers and it is not an unheard thing if the Wolf is thereby provided with his dinner. I say Wolf, for all wolves are not of the same sort; there is one kind with an amenable disposition – neither noisy, nor hateful, nor angry, but tame, obliging and gentle, following the young maids in the streets, even into their homes. Alas! Who does not know that these gentle wolves are of all such creatures the most dangerous!

This, the presumed original, version of the tale was written for late 17th century French court of King Louis XIV. This audience, whom the King entertained with extravagant parties and prostitutes, presumably would take from the story the intended meaning.

THE BROTHERS GRIMM

In the 19th century two separate German versions were retold to Jacob Grimm and his younger brother Wilhelm Grimm, known as the Brothers Grimm, the first by Jeanette Hassenpflug (1791–1860) and the second by Marie Hassenpflug (1788–1856). The brothers turned the first version to the main body of the story and the second into a sequel of it. The story as Rotkäppchen was included in the first edition of their collection Kinder- und

Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales (1812)).

The earlier parts of the tale agree so closely with Perrault's variant that it is almost certainly the source of the tale. However, they modified the ending; this version had the little girl and her grandmother saved by a huntsman who was after the wolf's skin; this ending is identical to that in the tale The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids, which appears to be the source.

The second part featured the girl and her grandmother trapping and killing another wolf, this time anticipating his moves based on their experience with the previous one. The girl did not leave the path when the wolf spoke to her, her grandmother locked the door to keep it out, and when the wolf lurked, the grandmother had Little Red Riding Hood put a trough under the chimney and fill it with water that sausages had been cooked in; the smell lured the wolf down, and it drowned.

The Brothers further revised the story in later editions and it reached the above mentioned final and better known version in the 1857 edition of their work.[It is notably tamer than the older stories which contained darker themes.

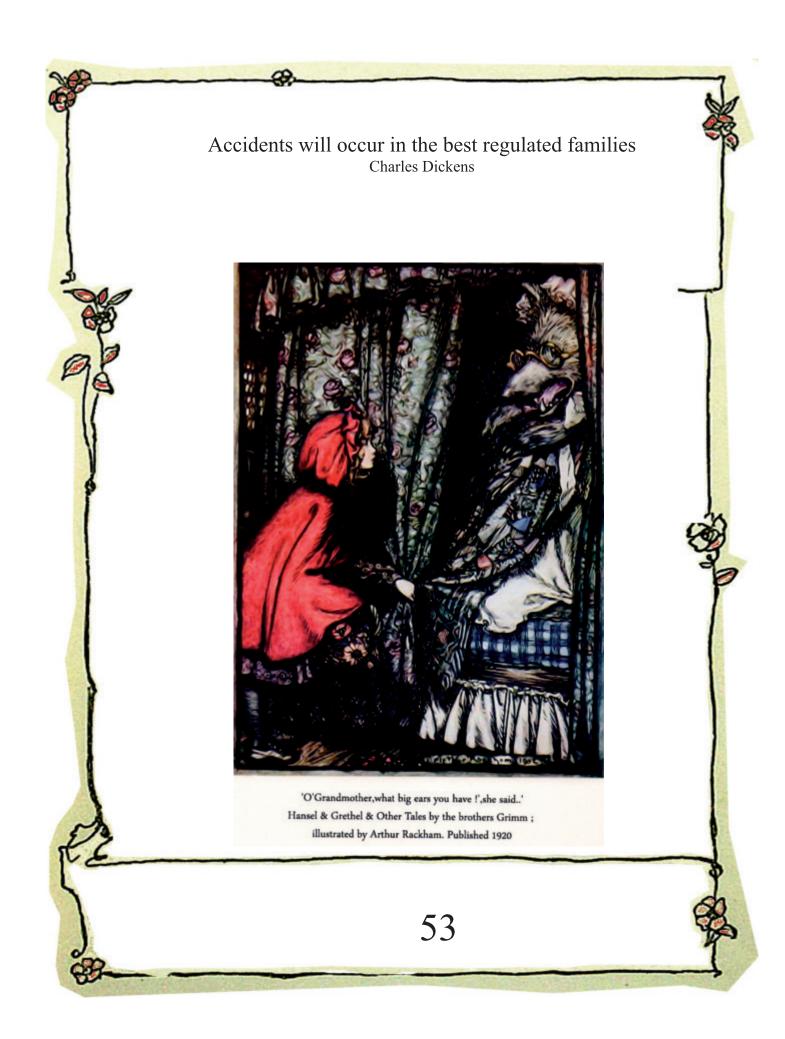
AFTER THE GRIMMS

Andrew Lang included a variant called "The True History of Little Goldenhood" in The Red Fairy Book (1890). He derived it from the works of Charles Marelles, in Contes of Charles Marelles. This version explicitly states that the story had been mistold earlier. The girl is saved, but not by the huntsman; when the wolf tries to eat her, its mouth is burned by the golden hood she wears, which is enchanted.

James N. Barker wrote a variation of Little Red Riding Hood in 1827 as an approximately 1000-word story. It was later reprinted in 1858 in a book of collected stories edited by William E Burton, called the Cyclopedia of Wit and Humor. The reprint also features a wood engraving of a clothed wolf on bended knee holding Little Red Riding Hood's hand.

In the 20th century, the popularity of the tale appeared to snowball, with many new versions being written and produced, especially in the wake of Freudian analysis, deconstruction and feminist critical theory. This trend has also led to a number of academic texts being written that focus on Little Red Riding Hood, including works by Alan Dundes and Jack Zipes.

Besides the overt warning about talking to strangers, there are many interpretations of the classic fairy tale, many of them sexual.



WOLF ATTACKS

The wolf in the fable was likely fabricated out of an inherent fear of the unknown, not on the genuine threat of wolf attacks. While wolves are in fact predators, fables like this have led to the gross misrepresentation of this keystone predator. Both wolves and wilderness were treated as enemies of humanity in that region and time. Sadly, these types of stories continue to misrepresent true patterns of wolf behavior (i.e., fearful of humans) and they perpetuate the false notion that wolves are a threat to humans (all historical evidence shows that it's actually the other way around).

NATURAL CYCLES

Folklorists and cultural anthropologists such as P. Saintyves and Edward Burnett Tylor saw Little Red Riding Hood in terms of solar myths and other naturally-occurring cycles. Her red hood could represent the bright sun which is ultimately swallowed by the terrible night (the wolf), and the variations in which she is cut out of the wolf's belly represent by it the dawn. In this interpretation, there is a connection between the wolf of this tale and Sköll, the wolf in Norse myth that will swallow the personified Sun at Ragnarök, or Fenrir. Alternatively, the tale could be about the season of spring, or the month of May, escaping the winter.

RITUAL

The tale has been interpreted as a puberty ritual, stemming from a prehistorical origin (sometimes an origin stemming from a previous matriarchal era). The girl, leaving home, enters a liminal state and by going through the acts of the tale, is transformed into an adult woman by the act of coming out of the wolf's belly.

REBIRTH

Bruno Bettelheim, in The Uses of Enchantment, recast the Little Red Riding Hood motif in terms of classic Freudian analysis, that shows how fairy tales educate, support, and liberate the emotions of children. The motif of the huntsman cutting open the wolf, he interpreted as a "rebirth"; the girl who foolishly listened to the wolf has been reborn as a new person.

SEXUAL AWAKENING

Red Riding Hood has also been seen as a parable of sexual maturity. In this interpretation, the red cloak symbolizes the blood of menstruation, braving the "dark forest" of womanhood. Or the cloak could symbolize the hymen (earlier versions of the tale generally do not state that the cloak is red). In this case, the wolf threatens the girl's virginity. The anthropomorphic wolf symbolizes a man, who could be a lover, seducer or sexual predator. This differs from the ritual explanation in that the entry into adulthood is biologically, not socially, determined.



The poem Prymskviða from the Poetic Edda mirrors some elements of Red Riding Hood. Loki's explanations for "Freyja's" (actually Thor disguised as Freya) strange behavior mirror the wolf's explanations for his strange appearance.

The red hood has often been given great importance in many interpretations, with a significance from the dawn to blood.

MODERN USES and ADAPTATIONS

There have been many modern uses and adaptations of Little Red Riding Hood, generally with a mock-serious reversal of Red Riding Hood's naïveté or some twist of social satire; they range across a number of different media and styles. Multiple variations have been written in the past century, in which authors adapt the Grimms' tale to their own interests.

The tale can be told in terms of Little Red Riding Hood's sexual attractiveness. The song How Could Red Riding Hood (Have Been So Very Good)? by A.P. Randolph in 1925 was the first song known to be banned from radio because of its sexual suggestiveness. The 1966 hit song Lil' Red Riding Hood by Sam the Sham & the Pharaohs takes the Wolf's point of view, implying that he wants love rather than blood. In the short animated cartoon Red Hot Riding Hood by Tex Avery, the story is recast in an adult-oriented urban setting, with the suave, sharp-dressed Wolf howling after the nightclub singer Red. Avery used the same cast and themes in a subsequent series of cartoons. Allusions to the tale can be more or less overtly sexual, as when the color of a lipstick is advertised as "Riding Hood Red".

This sexual analysis may take the form of rape. In Against Our Will, Susan Brownmiller described the fairy tale as a description of rape. Many revisionist retellings depict Little Red Riding Hood or the grandmother successfully defending herself against the wolf.

The story may also serve as a metaphor for a sexual awakening, as in Angela Carter's story "The Company of Wolves", published in her collection The Bloody Chamber (1979). (Carter's story was adapted into a film by Neil Jordan in 1984.) In the story, the wolf is in fact a werewolf, and comes to newly-menstruating Red Riding Hood in the forest in the form of a charming hunter. He turns into a wolf and eats her grandmother, and is about to devour her as well, when she is equally seductive and ends up lying with the wolf man, her sexual awakening. Such tellings bear some similarity to the "animal bridegroom" tales, such as Beauty and the Beast or The Frog Prince, but where the heroines of those tales transform the hero into a prince, these tellings of Little Red Riding Hood reveal to the heroine that she has a wild nature like the hero's.

Little Red Riding Hood is also one of the central characters in the 1987 Broadway musical Into the Woods by Steven Sondheim and James Lapine. In the song, "I Know Things Now" she speaks of how he made her feel "excited, well, excited and scared," in a reference to

the sexual undertones of their relationship. Red Riding Hood's cape is also one of the musical's four quest items that are emblematic of fairy tales.

Publishers like BeeGang and So Out maintained unaltered the original story written by Charles Perrault mainly adding interactivity or educational content to their book apps; Other publishers like BlueQuoll, an Australian publishing group, have pushed further the boundaries of the narration and re-invented the story even in the title, Mr. Wolf and the Ginger Cupcakes that puts the wolf at the center of the narration. In their version the element of good vs evil is removed from the story and the wolf is not portraited as a negative character that deserves to die miserably at the end of the story.

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FLEAS, FLIES, and FRIARS

The only letters I have ever had attached to my name are the ones that make up the word Mrs. These letters were applied by the Irish state in 1979 when I married and they have since begat the words Mum and Gran. Now these are two of my favourite words. Ever. Because, for me, they bred other words: ones of love, trust, kindness, beauty.

We're careful wordsmiths at 'The Linnet's Wings.' We look for value, in a sentence, for it has a job and it must function in an efficient manner. We like creativity, as well as, metaphor, assonance, heart. Much like the old sonnateers and writers did, and the poets before them who wrote sentences like 'Flen Flyys and Freris' sometime before the 1500s -- a while before America was founded.

Now 'Flen Flyys and Freris' is a poem, which satirizes the *Carmelite friars of Cambridge*, *England*, and it takes its title, *Flen flyys*, from the first words of its opening line, Flen, flyys, and freris -- Fleas, flies, and friars. Heck of an image. Isn't it!

However, this poem is infamous for a different reason: the line *Non sunt in coeli, quia gxddbov xxkxzt pg ifmk* describes the following; "They are not in heaven because they fuck wives of Ely". Wow!! And this, before we were a tear in our mother's eye -- a reference to one of the most overworked words in history; a word coined to frame an action carried out by the clergy! Man. The Catholic Church has a long traceable history, and I'm sure that this is a word they would prefer to disown. Wouldn't you if it was written about your family! But in its defence, it is an adjective that has some other fine uses, as anyone who has accidently hit themselves on the head with a hammer will tell you.

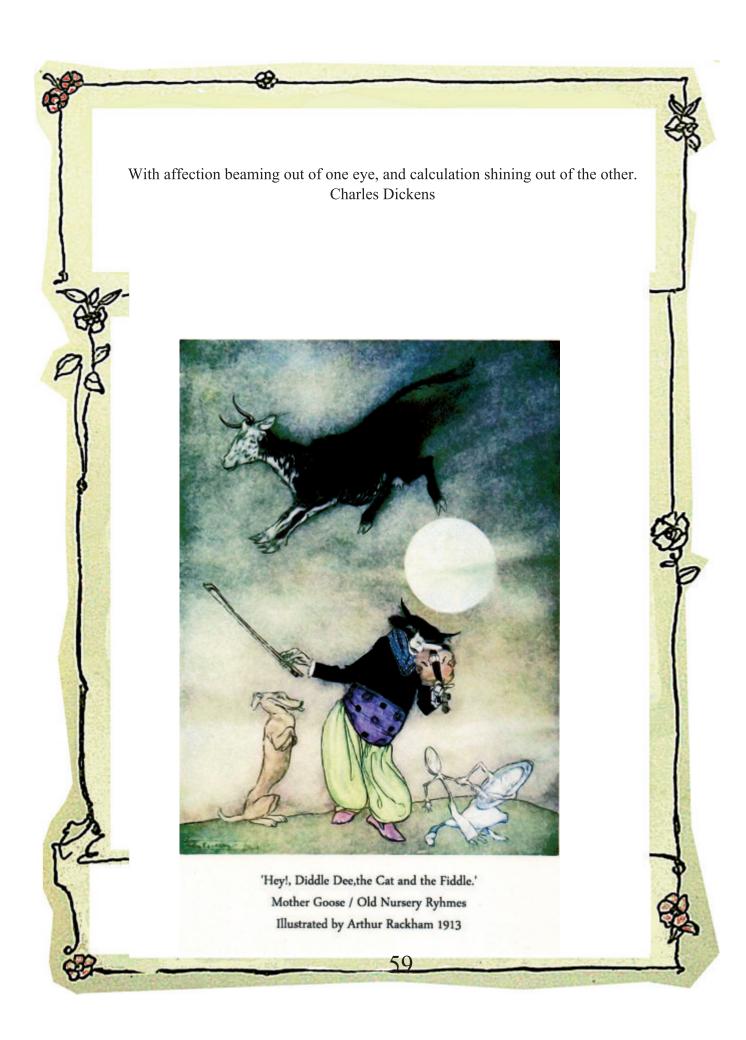
But now that I'm talking about adult nursery rhymes or should I say, *adult picture books*, what about the children's story that cost 300 quid to buy? Joyce, bless him, must be turning in his grave. But then maybe his reasons for abandoning the state he grew up in, have been validated. What were they again? By the way, keep an eye out for our new weekly blurb called Grannys-on-Skates, which is starting shortly and of course our new Audio competition.

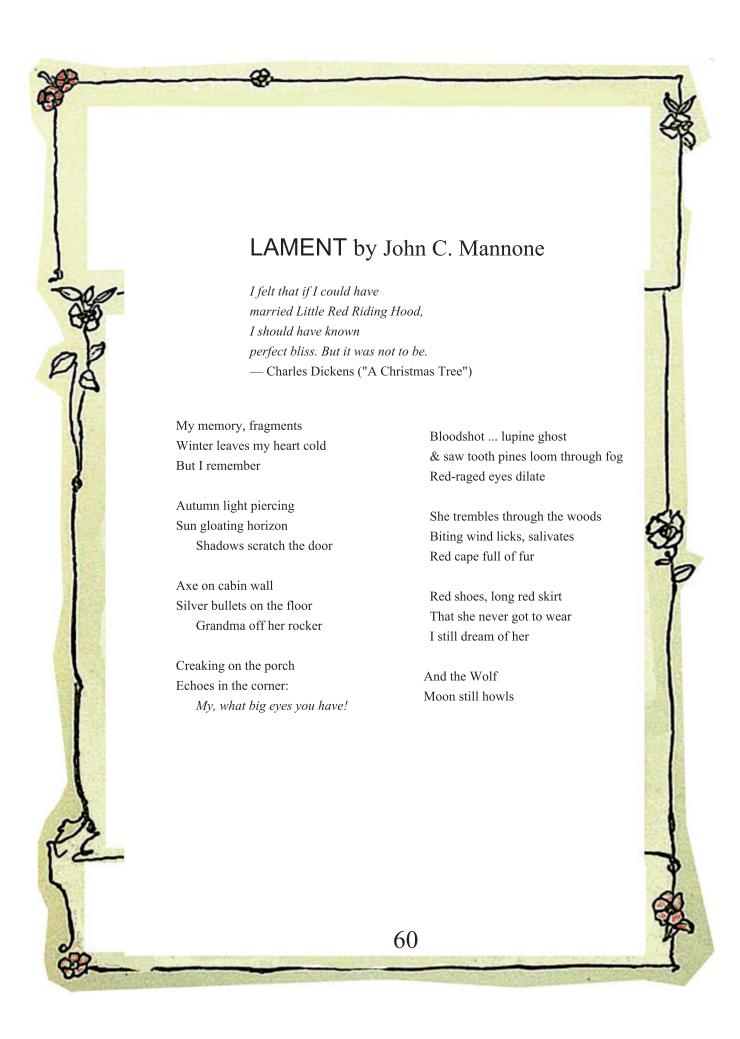
The winners will have the salutary pleasure of receiving a copy of 'The Linnet's Wings' and publication to our quarterly magazine and zine. Also this quarter we welcome Diana Ferraro, and Alejandra Tuninetti to the team. We all looking forward to working with the ladies and reading more of their fine work. Diana is based in Buenas Aires and Alejandra in Andalucia.

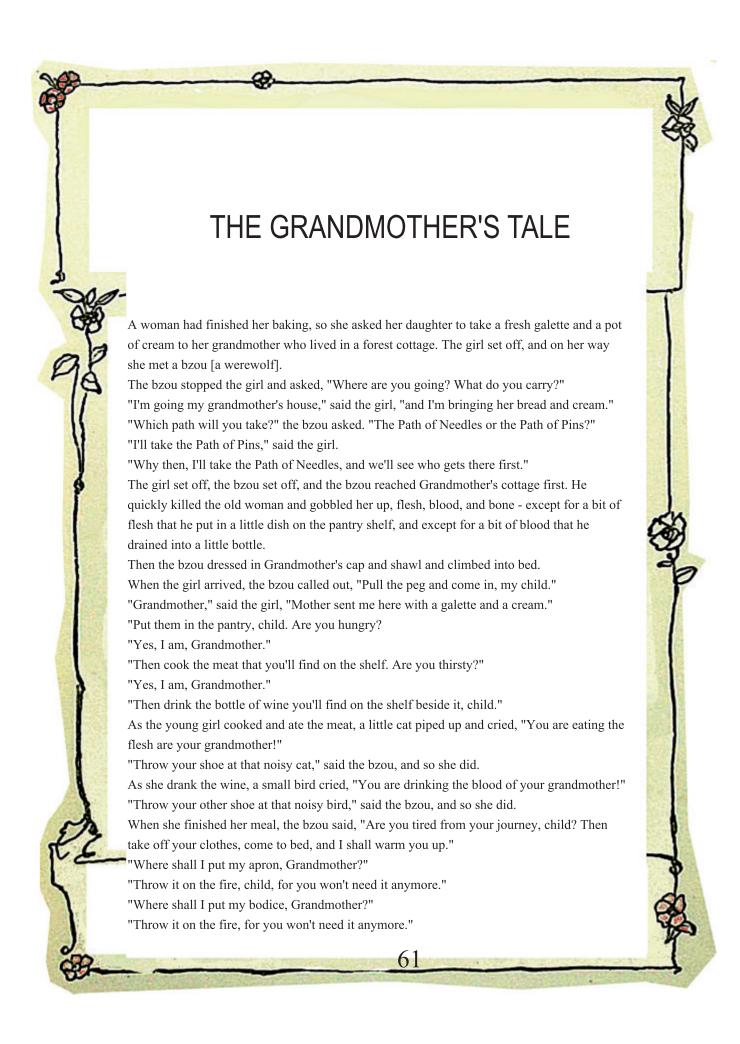
Marie Fitzpatrick -- March 2012

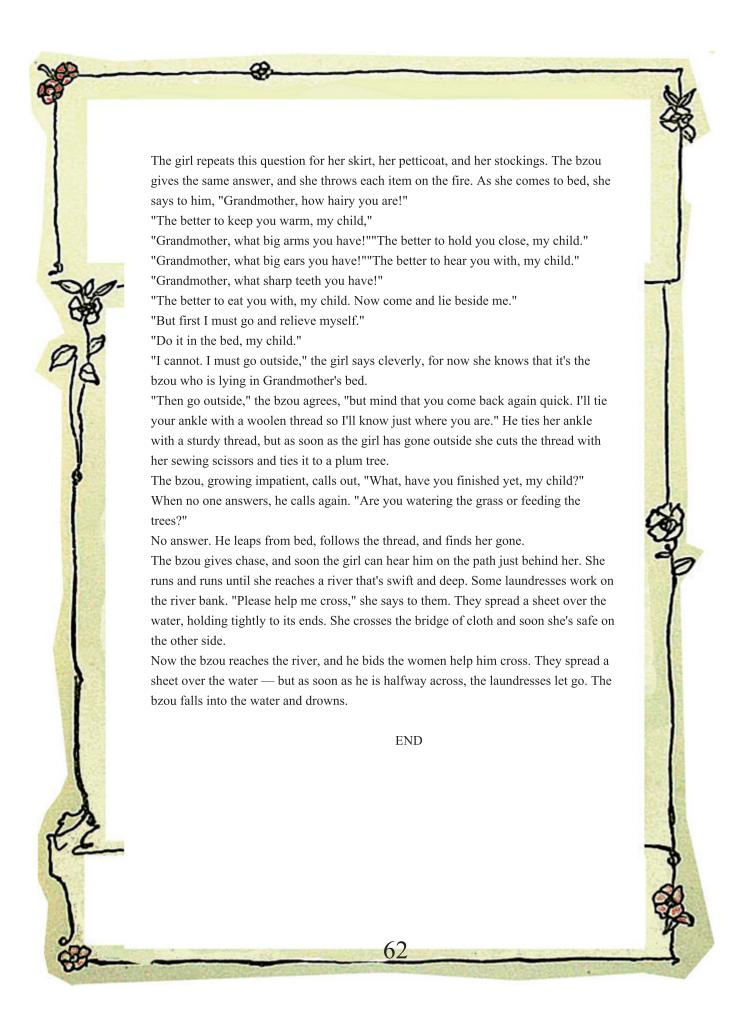
BIRTHDAY TALES FOR DICKENS

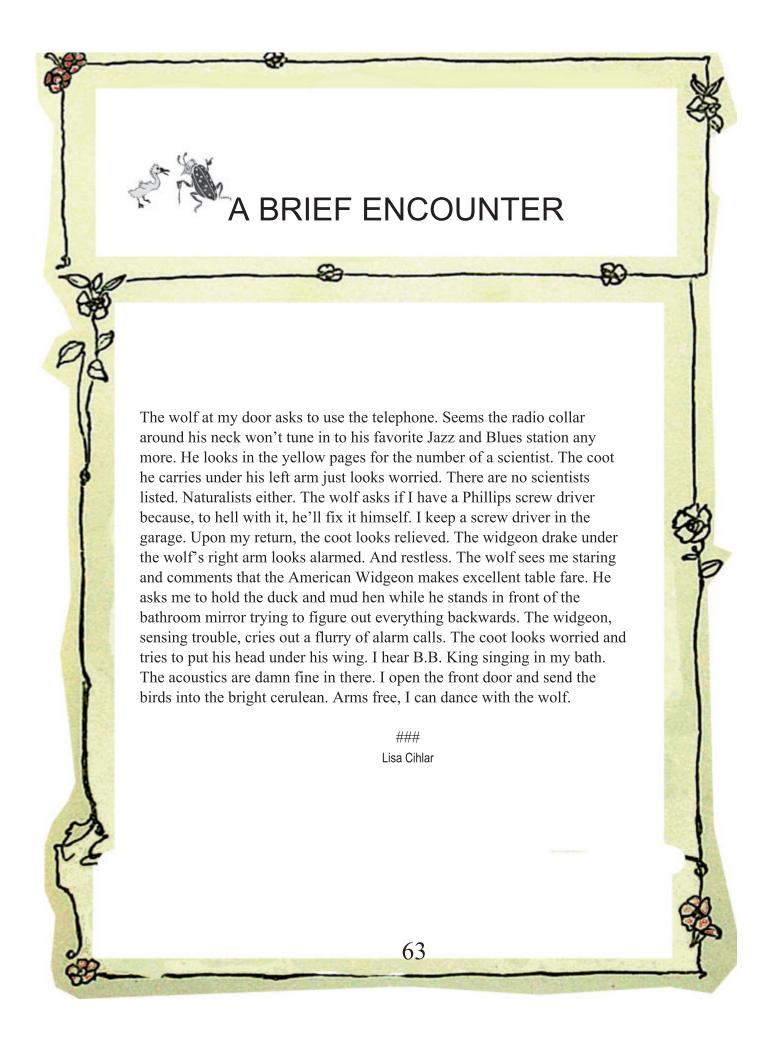


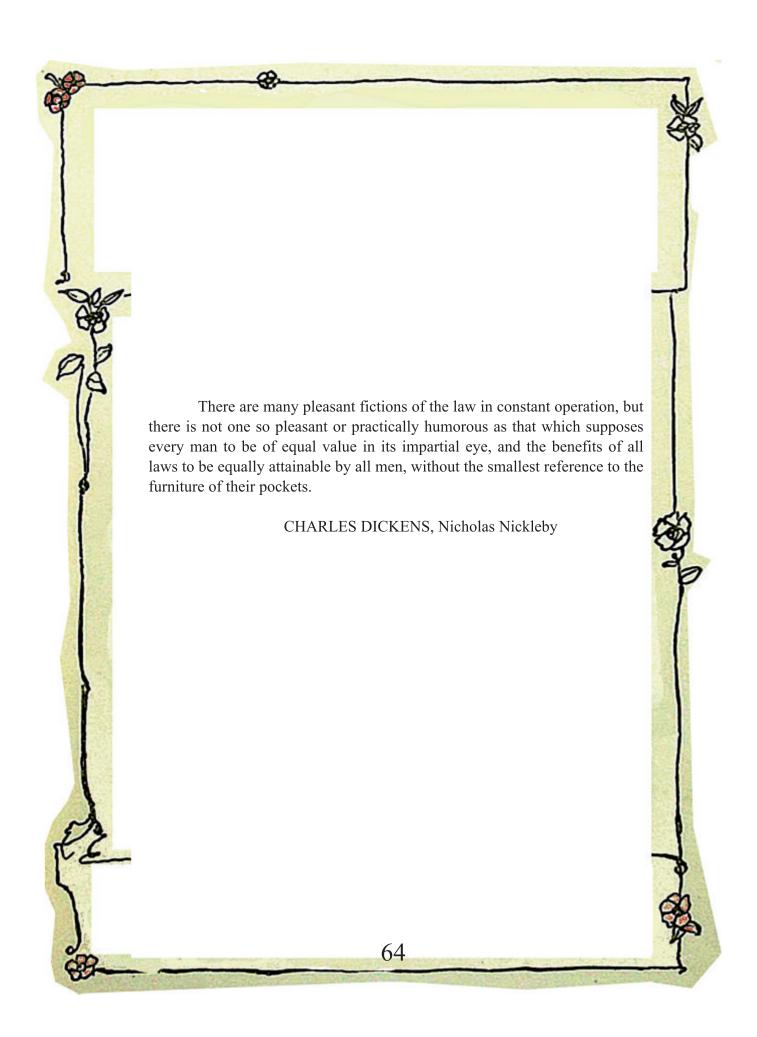


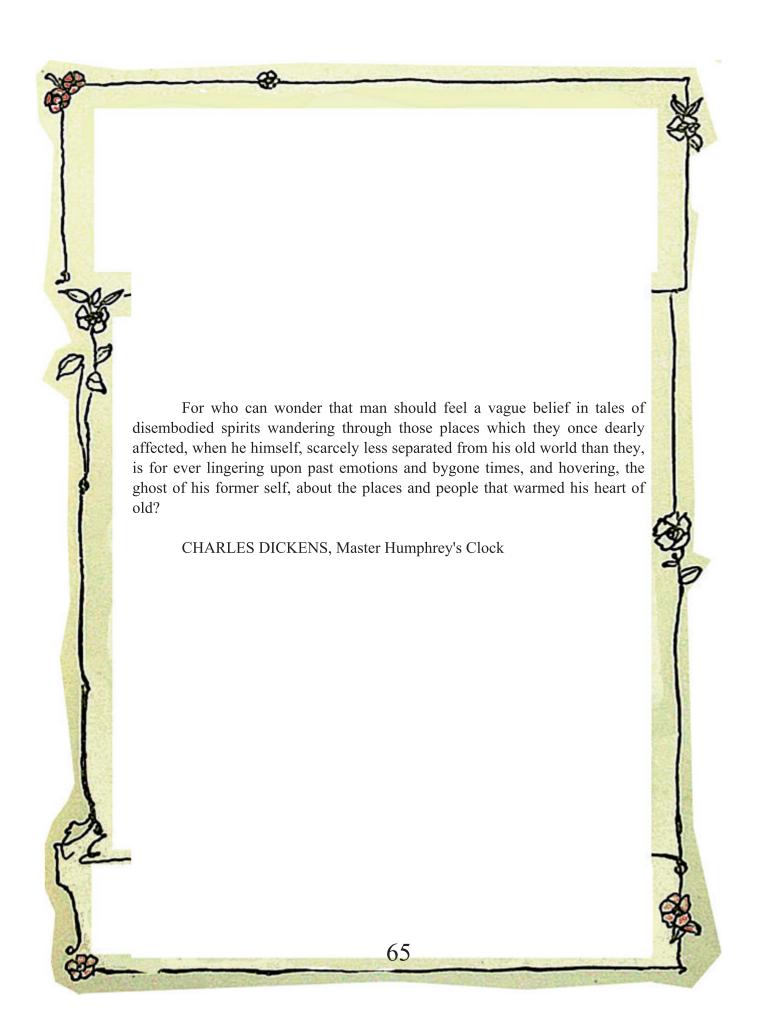


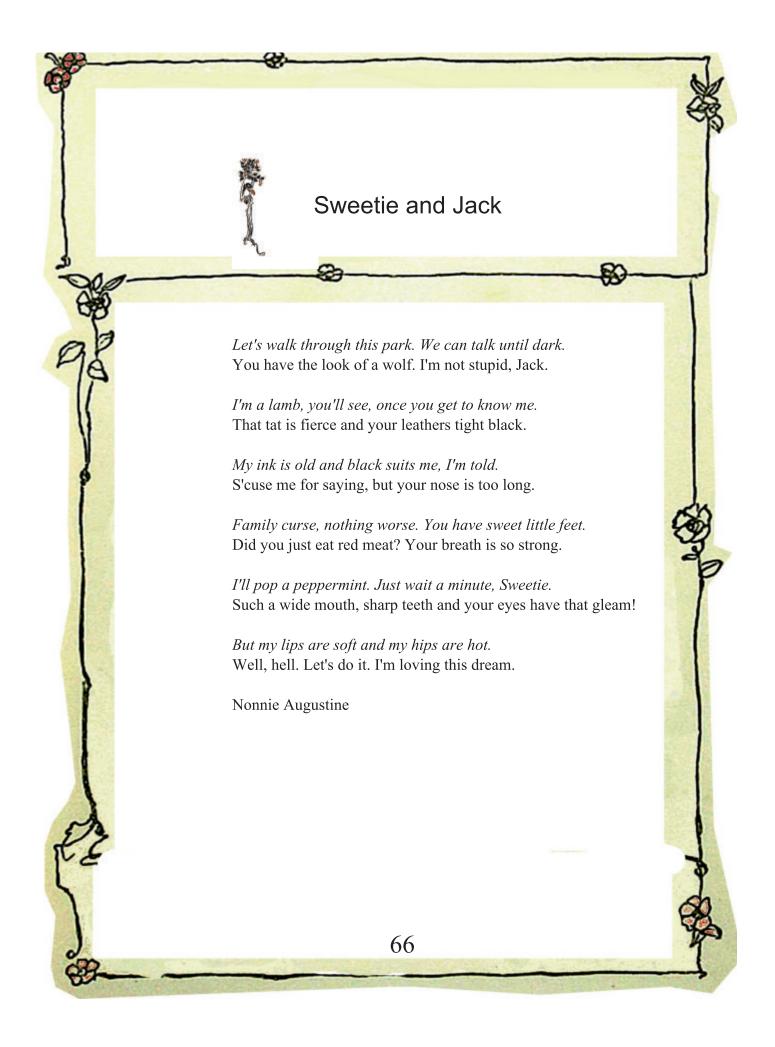












DA FRIDAY NITE PARTY

by GC Smith



Da Friday nite party down to Dupree's went good fo' da mos' part. Lotsa col' ones settin' on ice. Renee had a buncha cooker full wit dat scrumptious coon stew. Dere was boil shrimp an' crawfish. Lotsa boudin. Da ladies brung dirty rice an tater salad an cole slaw an' stuff. Dupree even made sure da hounds got some o' dat coon stew an fresh, warm hush puppies.

Woulda been a perfec' nite 'cept for da mistake by me. I brung my book wit me, a paperback copy o' How The Irish Saved Civilization. Dat's an' interestin' story 'bout dem monks in Ireland' copyin' all da great works o' lit-rat-chur. TT saw dat book in my back pocket an' started da raggin' 'bout me knowin' da readhead librarian was comin' an' how I was tryin' to 'press her. Pretty soon da whole gang chimed in. Dey worked me ova good.

Den da big guy an' da readhead gal show up. Afta a while da readhead take to dancin' to da music from Jacques Chenier's Cajun band. She shakin' her booty good an' da town womenfolk now get dey backs up. Dey was usin' words like tramp an' hussy. Finally da readhead got piss off an' tole da big guy she want to leave. Da big guy, who by now was buddyin' up wit all o' da Pigeonairre folk, just laugh an' tole da readhead to cool her jets. Den he say to Dupree dat he gonna dump dat gal.

Afta a bit I see da readhead down by da bayou sulkin'. I talk to her for a bit an' afta a while she perk up some. So, bein' da gentleman dat my momma brung me up to be I give her a ride in my pickup back to her home in Plaquemines. Was late when we got dere an' she invite me in to her 'partment.

Da raggin' I'm gonna get when I get back to Pigeonairre in da mornin' gonna be somtin' awful. But dat won't botha me none. No siree, ain' gonna botha me.

Dat Readhead

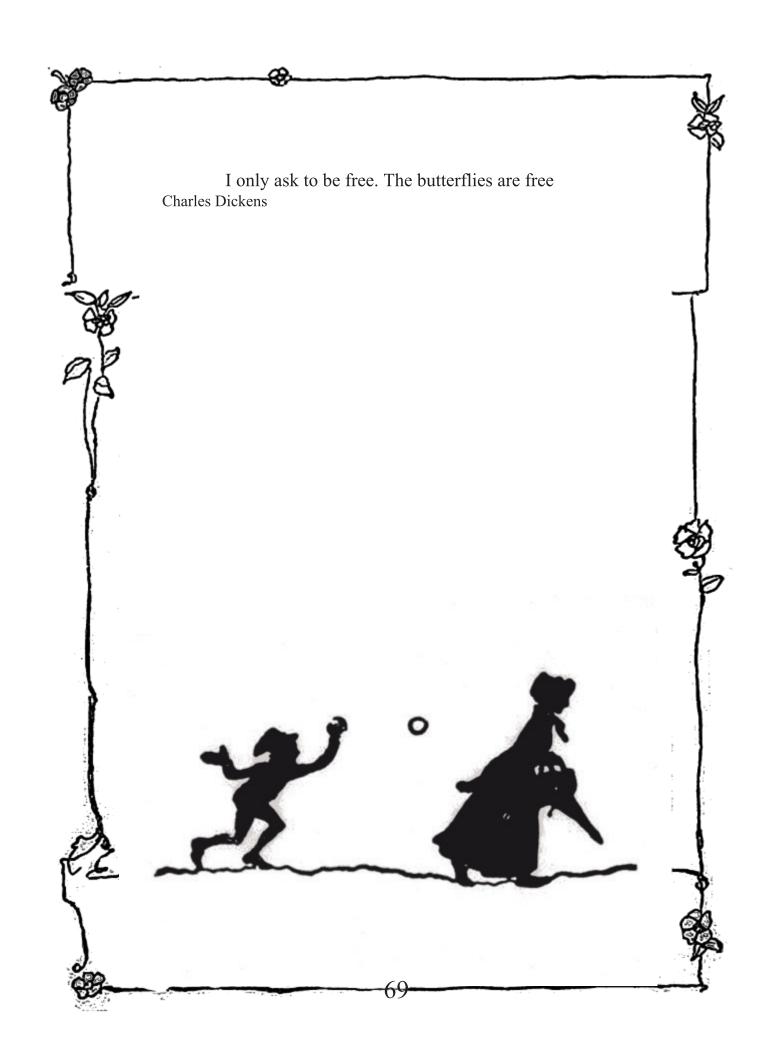
If you're wonnerin' 'bout dat readhead librarian from Plaquemines her name is Coleen Thibodaux. We talk an' talk las' nite an' get to know each odder some.

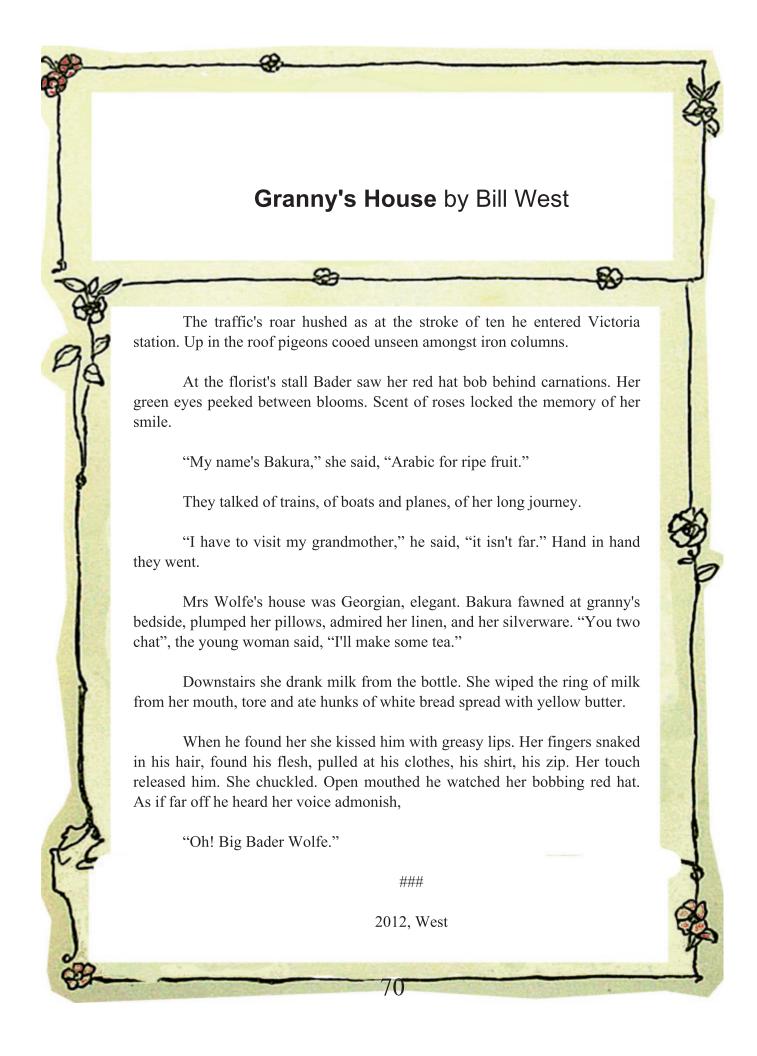
Coleen tole me her granpere an' her granmere O'Donnell was from a shotgun shack in da Irish Channel in N'Awlins where dey raise a buncha kids. Da oldest o' dere offspring, Coleen's maman Bridget, hooked up wit' Hugo Thibodaux a shrimper who sold his catch at da city wharf. Bridget an' Hugo married an' da beauteous Irish-Cajun Colleen came o' dat union.

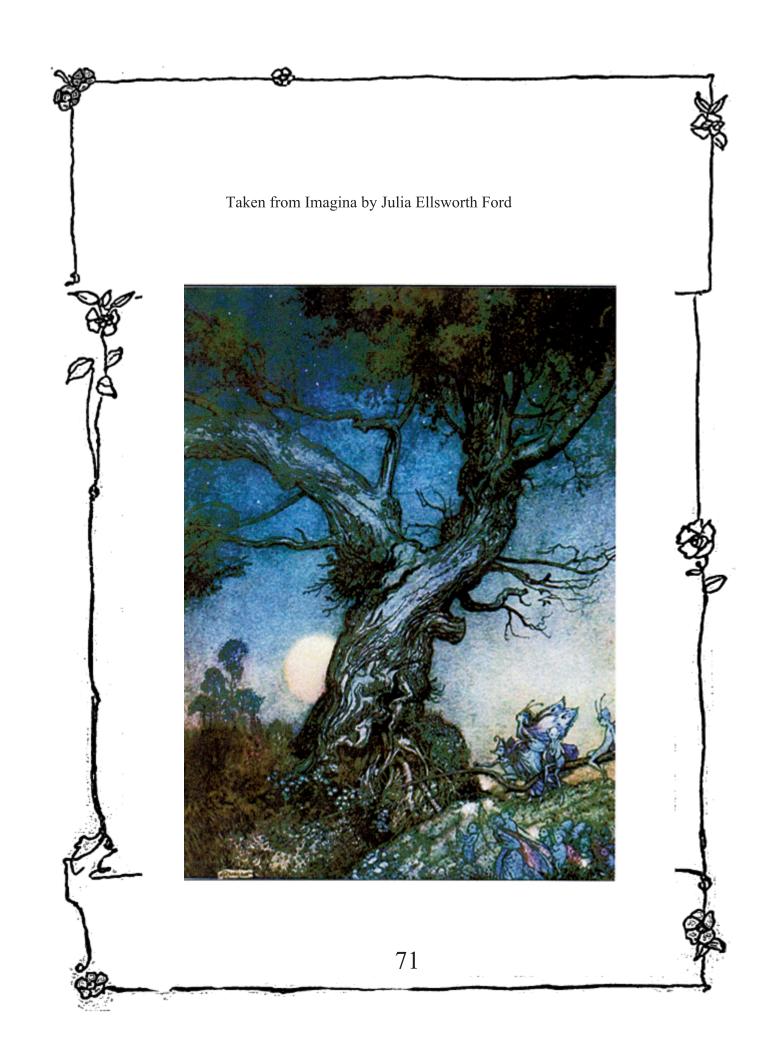
Dat Colleen, she got a smile melt a' iceberg an' da prettiest freckles to go wit dat smile. Dat's da sweetie I took home las' nite. Her gettin' away from da big guy is a good ting, like 'scapin' from da wolf.

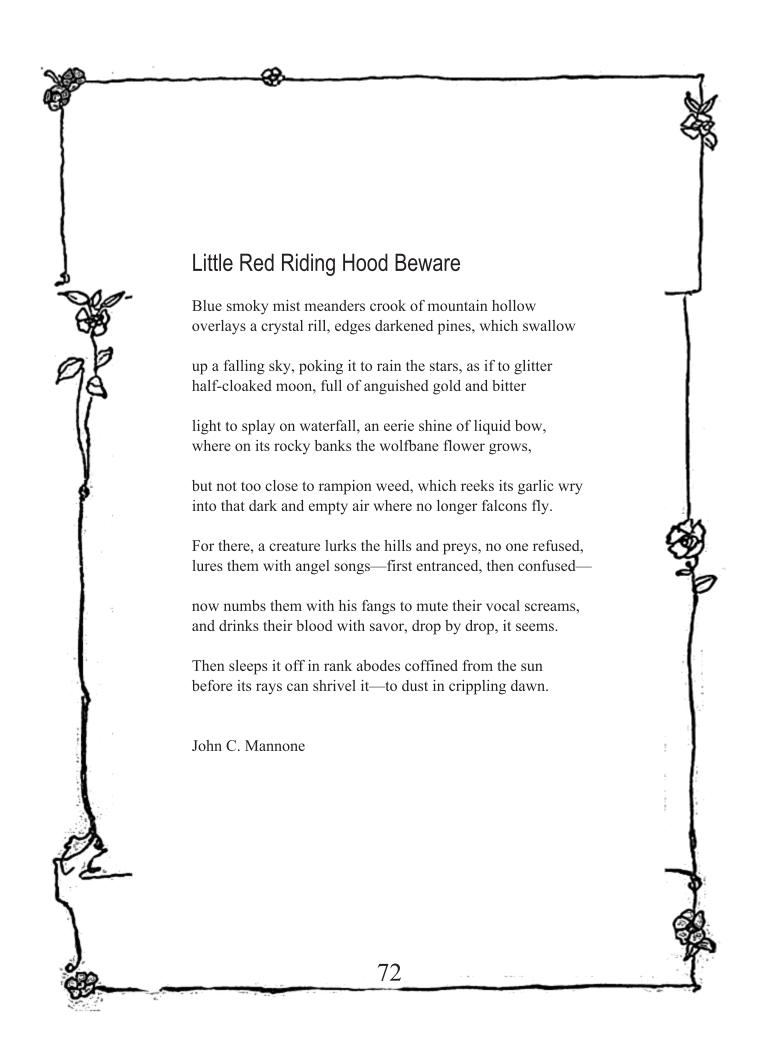
Looks like I jess might be goin' to Plaquemines a lot dis year.

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THE AUNT AND THE GRASSHOPPER by Randall Brown

After each meal at the villa, Aunt Lucille drank a large grasshopper. She said it was the drink of the French Quarter—and who knew Oklahoma had one. While the rest of the family tried to get work done—college papers, end-of-year reports, newsletters, and the like—she sat at the piano playing and singing her self-composed songs.

"I think these strings are made of aluminum," she said of the piano.

No one could follow her logic. There were quotes to cite, percentages to calculate, township commissioners to dissuade.

Other times, she looked through magazines, cutting out words from headlines, articles, and ads to create collages she placed around the piano for inspiration. At some point, someone would have enough, take off the headphones, and say, "Don't you have anything to do?"

"I am doing something," she'd say.

Everyone wondered how she managed.

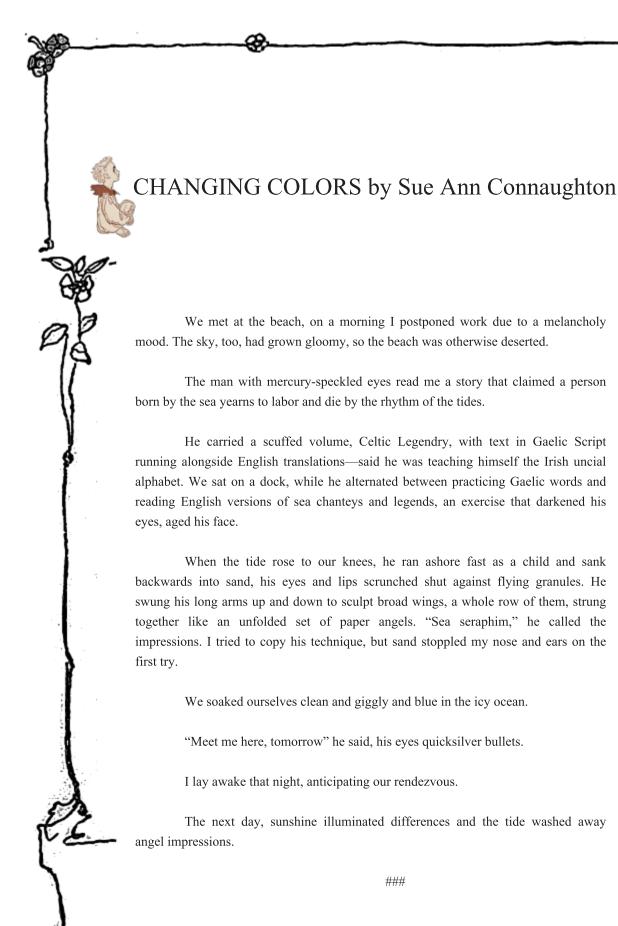
A few months later, everyone received one of her collages in the mail and a CD of her songs. The note attached to the collage asked, "Where are your reports now?"

And a self-addressed envelope with a slip of paper that said, "Pay what you wish."

The family thought they weren't the only ones to receive a collage, a disk, the note and envelope. They thought there was a lesson to learn somewhere. They sent the envelopes back, empty.

The next trip, in the silent villa, they now and then imagined that grasshopper, the piano, the Aunt's song cycle. As soon as they found themselves humming, they stopped. They turned this way and that to see if anyone had heard them, wondering what it might mean.

###



THE DUMPMASTER'S BOY

by Tom Sheehan

Ears I had, and eyes, and I used them well. Before I walked by the group of men on the corner, bringing my grandfather's lunch to the city dump where he worked, I knew they'd be talking about me. Even at six years of age, in 1934, there were certainties. It was the time of day, before the sun was up straight. The way they lounged. Who they were. How their clothes hung on them the way visitors come from out of town or right from ships. It was the clatter of their voices, snappy as a swung bag of clothespins.

At times their teeth clicked a harmony. It could be measured. Ancient Irish men made noises that were music to my ears. My grandfather made music. He was Irish. One of them said one day, in a whisper I could hear, that my grandfather was sick. That's when I got the worry. Even at six years of age, there were certainties, and uncertainties, and the unknown. I had become a worrier.

"Oosh," or "Ach," they'd say as I walked by, or "Arrah" in the old tongue, their teeth clicking on briars, the old Irishmen gathered outside Clougherty's bar in the west end of Malden, Massachusetts. It was 1934, the Depression a living taste about us, Prohibition afoot, the things that rose with us at breakfast, what there was of it, and set with the absence of a late snack.

Clicking still, the men were as dark as the insides of that holy place behind them I hadn't been inside of yet, with jackets and pants that were harsh to the touch, and their dark gray caps sitting jaunty on their heads.

Squat pipes twirled smoke up under the brims, teeth-bitten, jaws set like anchors for those who were shaven, white-forested for those not. Any other place in the world they'd be sitting out front of a mine shaft or a gas works, far from home, "Ochone" keening from their lips, the grief. They'd be sitting on wooden boxes, milk crates, odd scrounged chairs, and Clougherty's a temple of mystery behind them, behind a dark, dark door.

Even short of my seventh birthday, I'd know the air around them even before I saw them. My nose would be up proper, testing. The coal-cut of gas slid over on its covering wing from the gas works back of Commercial Street. It is a smell lingering to this day, a smell that comes back, as though it's on reminder visits. I know it whenever gasoline is being pumped at a station or being spouted into a lawn mower. I know it when I see an old and odd coal car now and then sitting like a fossil along little-used railroad tracks. I know it in the depths of an old cellar when coal dust, fine as crushed days telling of fieldstone and time, waits to be found by a nose like

mine.

The smell was so strong it allowed the creation of games when I'd hold my breath, pretending the Kaiser's freeking men were after me with their bags of green-awful gas. I'd puff my cheeks, waiting for G-8 or Nippy or Bull Martin, my pulp heroes, to come to my rescue. My face would get brick red and my chest would heave against itself and behind my eyes I'd see the rotters with their gas bags knocking down the way from Highland Avenue or The Fellsway, coming at me. There were times when I could let Hell break loose.

The old Irishers' voices would bring me back, voices that later I would stamp as high-pitched Yeatsian tongue in poetic treble, bringing me a new music, hearing The Man on record, hearing it "in the deep heart's core," knowing the haunt of it forever.

"That's for sure Johnny Igoe's boy acarryin' his lunch to the dump. Now that's a good lad for his grandfather altogether, won't you know." Pipe smoke would rise, a hand held in half salute.

They were not knocking the dump. For too many of us at that time it was hardware store and haberdashery, all-around supplier of used goods. It had endless yield and my grandfather, dumpmaster, city employee, was the head picker. Johnny Igoe had first call, first dibs. All he had to do was point at something and it was his, the chair with only one leg missing, a still-shiny pot, a book with its cover nearly gone asunder, an iron fire engine or tin plane, the kind to keep.

As I passed the men, they'd be quiet a bit and let the smoke twirl up under their caps and their feet go still on the walkway. Amaze you they could, some of the older ones, who often played their shoes on the pavement like a soft shoe set, or a tambourine shushed and low. Some would nod their heads the way priests do when they look in your eye, heads cocked, or teachers my brother had at the school up on Pleasant Street; noses cocked, as if they knew everything there was to know on the face of the Earth.

I watched their eyes, their hands, their feet, when I went by them on my errand. So many messages could be picked out of the air, so much understood about the long stretch of time. Gold chains across their vests, anchored to hidden watches, clutched inward a dazzle of daylight or sunlight. Occasionally one of them would work the shiny chain in his fingers, twirling it, cutting the air in little loops, catching light rays, spilling seconds out of hours. Now and then a watch went into that small circle, in disdain of the flight or the compound of hours, but noiseless, a sun around a fist, and, like the sun, silent in journey.

Someday I'd swing a watch or chain like that in small mechanics, the wrist pure and musical, time on the fly, sunlight all mine, or on its journey.

But then, entrusted to my hands, was the great sandwich in a line of great sandwiches, my grandfather Johnny Igoe's lunch of a day, two good fingers thick, and the bread crusty and thick, too. It was wrapped in brown paper and tied up in white string by my grandmother. Out of her oven that very morning the bread had come, six loaves so golden and gleaming a mouth'd water for an hour or more. Sometimes a whole day if she ever got cross with you for a poor deed, poor deed indeed. You could be begging for a block of butter to drop into the hot wrap of it.

Her black stove flung itself across the kitchen back wall. It snapped noises only chimneys could catch hold of, mysterious crackling noises, and an ultimate power that drove every one of us out of that room but her on any July or August day. She had her colors; the stains under her arms

turned as dark as lakes, her hair white, the blue eyes deep as the ovens themselves. Only the back of her wrist would touch her brow, the gesture of relief that only comes to women, especially those who warm by the oven, their eyes closed in tiny relief, a look off into the distance before going back about their business.

Bake she was born for and bake she did, and having kids in her days, and giving off tarts and slabs of pies and tasty things thick and chewy with gobs of cinnamon in them. Sugar trailed in every corner of the house and a wonder the little things didn't carry off the whole house of it.

"Suck on your tooth when you're done, Thomas. You might get another day out of it," the laugh in her throat like the bells at Mass in the right hands.

She was different from my father's mother, Mary Elizabeth King Sheehan right out of Cork. There was an elegant thirty-year widow for you, tall and gracious, precise of language, with her little black widow's hat on her head and the shiny glasses on her nose and a bread roll or two in her pocketbook whenever she supped outside her Somerville home. Her pocketbook was always black. It always shone the light around it. A touch of new leather at her hands as if a bargain had just been made. At Ginn and Co. in Cambridge, she was a bookbinder, for more than sixty years eventually, and never baked a pie in her life it seems. Or baked bread. But she could wash your feet and scrub your back on a visit with her slender fingers and make you feel new all over. And she knew history and got books with broken covers or those which were not yet bound, geographies and histories and once in a great while there'd be poems of Amergin or Columcille or Donnchadh Mor O'Dala or Dallan MacMore or Saint Ita or Saint Colman, about Saint Patrick and Eileen Aroon and Fionn and Saint Brendan and Diarmaid and Grainne and a host of kings afoot on the very land itself. Much of it told to me, of course, though I was a reader, according to my grandfather, long before some of his own children brought the pages home to comfort.

Grandma Igoe would stand beside that great stove or by the buffet in the front room where she stored her finished goods, the pies and tarts and cakes and cream puffs so elegant you could steal but for the threat of the Lord hanging in the air over you. Her jelly rolls were historic, mounded and rolled and sugared, the sweet red line twisting its marble pattern you could only see from the end view, gathering inward until it disappeared, the way it could disappear sure down that b'y's t'roat.

Buffet drawers were crammed with her baked goods, the big ones at the bottom and the small ones at the top, and the cubbyholes behind doors at each end. My grandfather said she baked every day of her last thirty years, the memory of hunger in the old country hanging its dark face at the head of the stairs, waiting to visit again.

"Jayzuz, bless the memory," he would say.

And I could hear her say, "Hunger," in that musical voice of hers, "'twill be a guest here if I ever once t'turn my back t'him."

Flour clung about her like weeds against a fence. It might have been atomized on her before the atomizer was thought of. Her arms were white with it, and her apron and the neck of her dress where her hands were always at work fixing herself as if something wasn't set right or she had an itch waiting on her. White was her hair, too, like snow left over from late March and April in the back yard. Yet patches of sweat, dark as plaster in a leaky ceiling, were squeezed under her arms and moved perilously on her large breasts. Sometimes, though I dared never tell her, but especially when she wore her blue dress, I'd pretend the patches of sweat were maps of parts of the world I wanted to visit, maps I'd seen in the Atlas at the library with my grandfather.

All of Russia came up, dark with its lakes and seas and strange names at the edges of oceans. The steamy Congo he told me about came also, plunked in the middle of Africa, with rivers and hidden lakes, and creatures that ate up little people in a single bite. Once, from the first moment, a deep stain was Brazil, down there under my feet. The country kept growing and growing. It grew with the pies and the cakes and the six loaves of bread. All morning it grew and she never knew how big that country got, that it might grow so ponderous geography books would have to be done over and the globe itself would tip on its side and bring her down.

In the lunch package I carried was also a pint whiskey bottle, filled with coffee, dark and shoe-colored, crammed against the sandwich. The top of the bottle would be plugged with an old cork or a twist of paper grandma worked down in as she turned the bottle in her floury hands. Sometimes it was from an old Globe or Traveler or Transcript, or a page out of the Saturday Evening Post or from a copy of G-8 and His Battle Aces I'd already read, Nippy and Bull Martin done for that issue.

She always left a loop in the package's string so when my hand got tired of the lugging the package near all the way to the dump, I could slip a finger in the loop and swing it along with me, still safe for delivery.

Off to the Malden City Dump was I, not yet seven years old, the little caterer my grandfather would say, carrying his lunch. "As long as the weather is dacent," his only rule, and he'd raise one pointed finger over his head, taking the deep blessing of the Lord on its tip for all that were bound by such high appointment. That was as much anointment as ever I understood.

And my reward would come, once I got there. Once I got past Commercial Street and Medford Street and the factories that could spill people out of them some hours the way Fenway Park did at game's end.

Once I got past Mulcahy's Bar and my Uncle Johnny squinting out the back window at me with his burning eyes on the sandwich pack. Sticks they called him ever since he came back from France and The Big Stink as he called World War One. His legs still brought him a pain only the pint could cure. Crutches, more likely than not swiped from the Malden Hospital, were jammed up under his armpit. Foul air still held out in his chest from the freekin' Kaiser's gas. And his mouth always watering for one of grandma's sandwiches she only made for those in the work.

Once I got past the pub with no name out front but which I called Uncle Dermott's Place because he could be found there of an evening. Or a morning. Or an afternoon, with the sun out over Medford and still in the trees or splashing like ducks in the Mystic River. Or when his last job was into its second or third day and his pain became too real to ignore.

A pair of uncles I had in them! War heroes from The Big Stink, carrying the pain yet. France and Germany never far away from them, their eyes dark, their cheeks high and thin, their wrists coming out of jacket sleeves thin as morning gruel.

Once I got past Dinty Mulligan's house with his white Chow bigger than his bark and mean as nails. Once past there, and all the other obstacles a boy had, I'd get my reward. I never thought that

anyone would trouble me on my errand, like kidnapping or knocking me down and stealing the lunch, not Johnny Igoe's boy, not the dumpmaster's boy, not the boy with two uncles for heroes. Nobody would bother an Irish lad bringing lunch to the dumpmaster who never ate it, who gave it off to the drunks who crowded around him. They were the drunks who came every night to prop their cold feet up on the ring of his great monger's stove. They were the drunks whose hands went fishing in that brown package like birds' beaks did to suet in the backyard feeder, their skinny little hands with nails for fingers and wrists thin as death itself, and their eyes almost gone over. Some of them for sure also carried the pain of all of France as baggage.

Nobody in the world would hurt Johnny Igoe's boy. "A sharp eye, lad, a sharp eye is all you'll need, and a brain to match the work of it."

At the last, I'd hurry to see if he was still there, waiting for me as I crossed the railroad tracks after looking and listening both ways; to see if he was still sitting on his bench, alive, his pipe lit and smoking up under his gray cap, his back against the little house he made out of scraps. It was an elegant little house that could have saved lives in the old country, with a lean tin chimney sprouting out of the top like a Jack o' the Beanstalk thing. Now he leaned on it, waiting.

I'd catch the rich, ripe smell of the dump, dense as a bag over my head. Foul old stuff. Damp. Liquid stuff. Food gone bad. Old wet blankets falling apart. Horses in there someplace, perhaps pieces of them, their shit anyway from the milk barns and the milk companies, the manure coming to life again from Hood's and Whiting's delivery barns. Cluttered newspapers came thicker with water, ink blobbing in clumps, words going downhill like sundown. Squashes rotted to the last seed of hope. Plaster dust drowned in puddles, houses going away. Wood going so sour it would melt in your hands. Once a week, it seemed, a cat or dog was caught on the wrong side of life.

Proof of the senses were shared with my street comrades then, my friends who roamed alleys with me, who blindfolded could tell where they were if they had been there before. We knew alleys that could run right out from under our feet and go down a drain, alleys that wore continuous walls of sweat, even in winter, alleys that taught us what veneer meant even before the word came into our vocabulary. We knew family backyards because of their discards, what they threw out, in what quantity, in what kind of container. What was one family's poison, was the same to another family. And that was rot within the hour of being tossed out onto a pile of yesterday's leavings.

Smells, like those of the dump, were living things, were markers, were signposts. Paying attention was necessary, for we were survivors as well as scavengers.

The dump smell itself was a livable smell. It was compost. Things could grow in it, get green again. Not like the coal gas smell that cut down into you sharp as a knife in the hands of a wacky doctor or a charlatan. Not at all like the gas works, the way its smell penetrated everything, wall and roof and window, the church even and you on your knees and trying to get away from it, so that you swore black dust was sprouting things on you, and growing its own little meanness.

He'd be there, my grandfather, at last, not gone anywhere, not undone, waving across the dump. Here was the little man whose magical voice rang down the days, that leaped alleys and lanes and railroad tracks that came across the centuries from Italy and Greece and Denmark and other dark places. Those were the places he swore the horsemen of the Central Plains of Europe

rode through on their long route to Ireland, to the last end of Europe itself.

And even from England, for all of the stories.

Whole poems came out of that man's mouth. Whole poems! Whole poems without a stumbling pause and never repeated until I might ask for one. That so many poems fit in such a small man was the end of amazement. He must have filled his arms and legs and the whole of his chest besides his white-haired head, with the poems. On he'd go, on and on, magic on top of magic, the Argo watery and wind-driven, the waves crashing on rocks, perhaps Beowulf about in the land, or Grendel, or The Red King or Righ Seamus (King James), or, all of a Saturday afternoon he'd give off Brian Merriman's The Midnight Court at the Feekle*, without a stop unless your eye began to blink and head nod and the fill coming on you sooner than counted on. (*Where fifty years later my mother and four of her daughters would stay over on their visit with Mrs. Smith).

Oh, sometimes he was daft with a poem that took a long time to learn, and so easy with others that came with music right into them, like

The pale moon was rising above the green mountains,
The sun was declining beneath the blue sea,
When I stray'd with my love to the pure crystal fountain
That stands in the beautiful vale of Tralee.
She was lovely and fair as the rose of the summer,
Yet 'twas not her beauty alone that won me,
Oh, no, 'twas the truth in her eyes ever beaming
That made me love Mary, the Rose of Tralee.

About his eyes the crinkles would fair light up with Billy Mulchinock's poem, and he'd push me with his roughed hand as though words were being pressed into place for ever, his pipe chomped in his teeth. But then, when his eyes darkened, when his lips set like steel as though a curse was about to set out from them, I'd know a change was coming, as when he started Lament for the Death of Owen Roe O'Neill:

"Did they dare, did they dare, to slay Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill?"

"Yes, they slew with poison him they feared to meet with steel."

"May god wither up their hearts! May their blood cease to flow!

May they walk in living death, who poisoned Eoghan Ruadh!"

"Though it break my heart to hear, say again the bitter words."

"From Derry, against Cromwell, he marched to measure swords:

But weapon of the Sacsanach met him on his way,

And he died at Cloch Uachtar, upon Saint Leonard's day."

I never knew, of course, from one day to the next, who last had his ear, what sword struck him, what knife still at stab from Roscommon, with its grief calling, whose words he last sang. Or if the words, the weight of the words, had brought him down. It was not the same game that came with the sweaty maps of my grandmother's blue dress. It was the worry of the little caterer.

Nearing him across the dump, I'd wave to him my joy. His cap would signal back a joy. Before I ran the last yards I'd look for the day's pickings, to pray for his little successes. And for the whole family. They'd be stacked at the near end of the dump where Goldberg's junk wagon could come in from the lane for the pick-up.

Iron and tin and pipes of all classes in one pile, pieces of stoves and car parts and unknown black objects as much mystery as Russia and all its lakes and rivers. Pots and pans came another mound of salvage, silvery and coppery and throwing off pieces of the sun on good days.

There'd be doubled-over and tripled-over sheets of lead from wrecks of houses and roofs and downed chimneys, roofing tar black as ever still clutching at edges old as scabs, thick now in their pressings as slabs from a pine. I'd think about grabbing off a few sheets and melting them and pouring the melt into the casting molds to make more lead soldiers. My lead soldiers stood as an army at home, by the hundreds, Kaiser's men and Doughboys and Tommies and Washington's sore troopers and some from a place called Balaclava in their giddy uniforms.

The army of soldiers was in the cellar near the coal bin where Uncle Lew's beer can hung on a nail because grandma wouldn't let him drink upstairs in the house proper.

My grandmother would say, "You'll not drink up here, Lewis, the day of any day, and the b'y needs more sojers like I need a hole in me head," but grandfather would smile and wink a soft wink she daren't see even if she did, and we'd have more soldiers coming from clumps of lead he'd bring home another day.

Sojers. But not Lewis drinking in the house proper. Or Uncle Johnny or Uncle Dermott or Uncle Tim or Uncle Tom.

Alongside the pile of pots and things tin and iron, and brassy bits, shining like bits of gold, knockers and hinges and old bells with a dacent sound still lodged in them, would be a pile of rags he'd already have been through searching for sweaters and jackets and pants and towels and dresses and things worn whose names I didn't know.

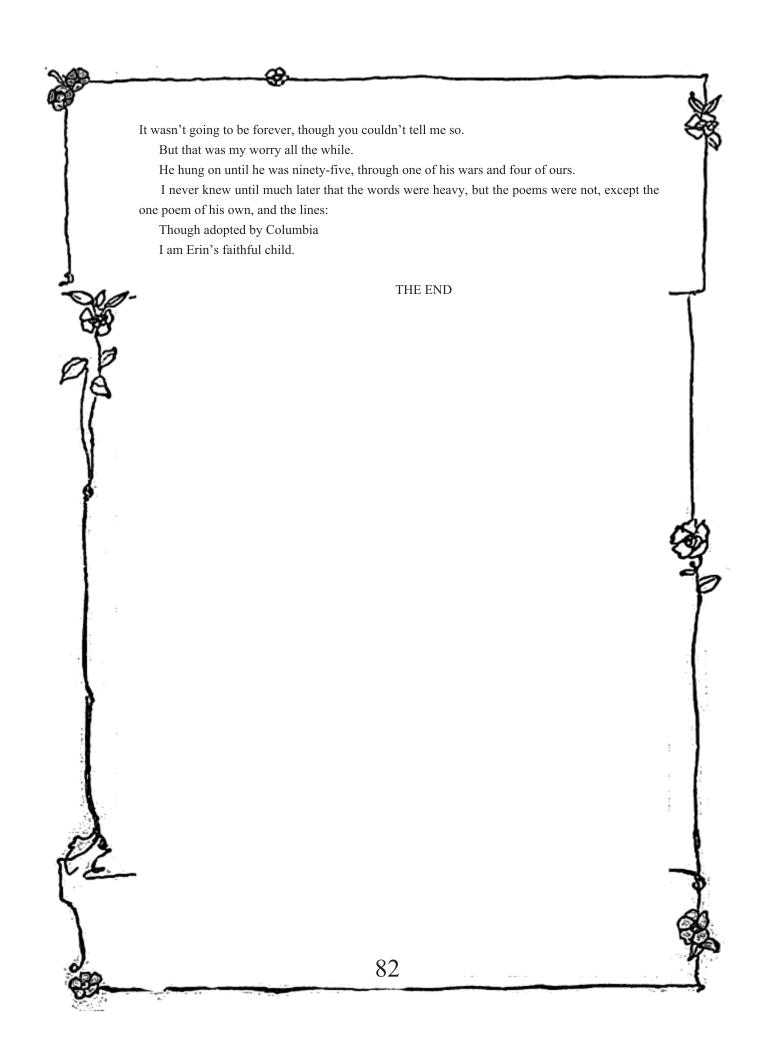
The good things!

The good things would be set aside again, and I'd get my choice of a pair of pants or a shirt or a sweater or a belt I'd have to cut down to my size and use a nail to drive new holes in. And now and then, like a family store, there'd be a pair of boots for me. Once I found a new jackknife still in the boot pocket, the little leather scabbard my right hand could drop to and touch, the laces of real rawhide and near to the knee. His eyes twinkled and he nodded and said, "For me little caterer."

The good things would be brought home and doled out, the dole coming over on the ship I understood, sometimes to family and sometimes to neighbors, and not a sneer or a twisted head or a frown, and a proud boy or girl would look lovely in a new dress or a jacket or a pair of pants that Johnny Igoe had rescued from oblivion. A boy in an old worn green shirt forever would be one day in a blue or red one and which had come from the Malden City Dump at the hands of Johnny Igoe who'd not let the world go to waste or anything in it.

The Dumpmaster. My grandfather.

I wondered then, more often than not, how long would such a man live, carrying the weight of all his words.



"My meaning simply is, that whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; that whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; that in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest."

— Charles Dickens, David Copperfield

Happy Birthday Mr. Dickens from all of us at The Linnet's Wings



Index of Illustrations

RACKHAM ILLUSTRATIONS

From Hans Christian Anderson -- Fairytales

from: Little Ida's Flowers 5

From Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti 7

Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens 10

From Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving

'They were ruled by an old squaw spirit'15

From Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens

'These tricky fairies sometimes change the board' 19

From Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving

"A curtain-lecture is worth all the sermons in the world

for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering," 21

From Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens

When he heard Peter's voice' 25

From Ipsen's Peer Gynt, 27

From some British Ballads

Earl Mar's Daughter 33

From Undine

Undine outside the window 36

From Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens

Building the house for Mamie 39

From The Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti 44

From Hansel and Grethel and Other Stories -- Grimm

Little Red Riding Hood, 49 & 53

Mother Goose, Old Nursery Rhymes 59

Mother Goose, Old Nursery Rhymes 67

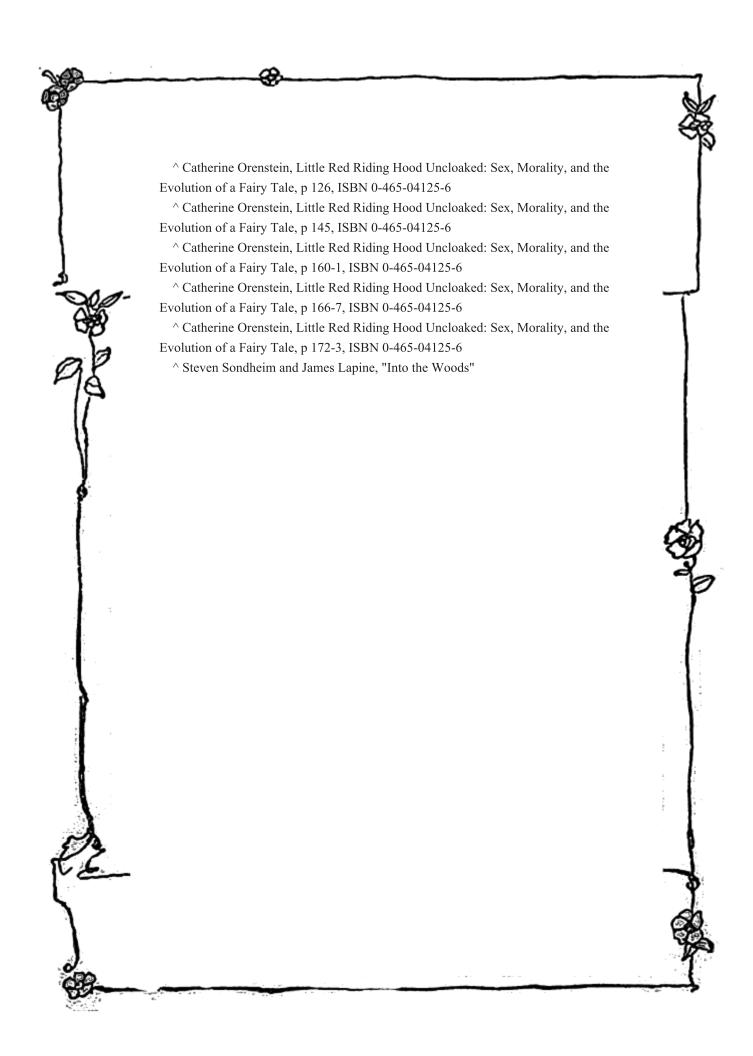
From Imagina, 72

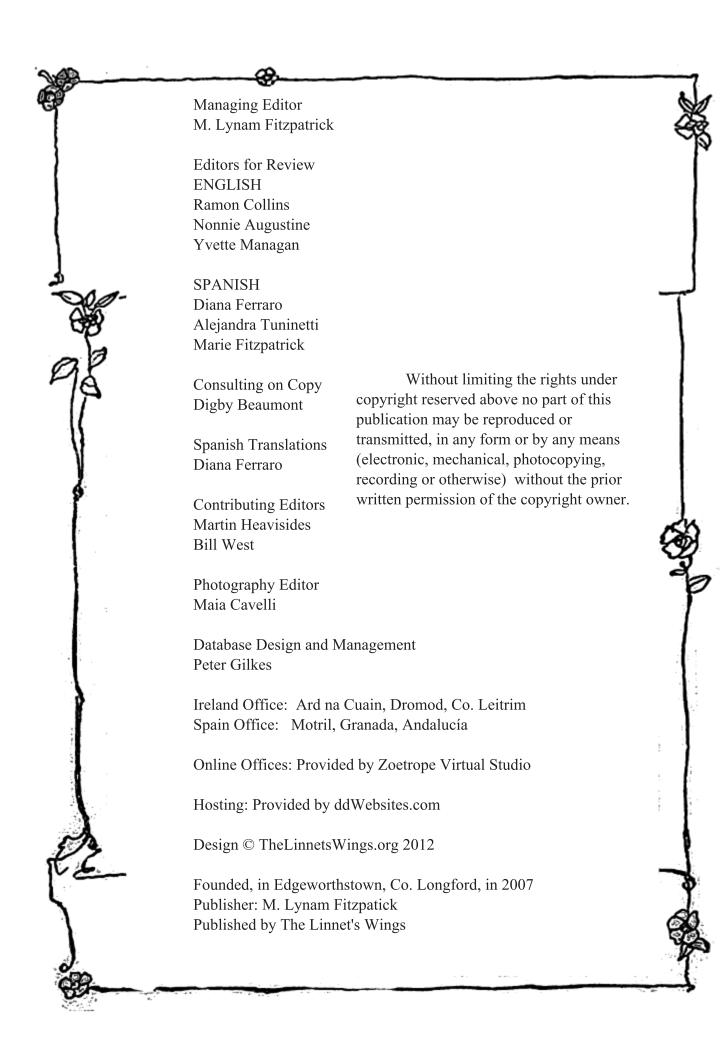
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William Butler Yeats: How can we know the dancer from the dance?

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