Anatomy

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Abstract

"Umm... but yet now, at nearly six, I must trudge that mile pilgrimage Ames-ward.” So I disembarked from my train of thought of the time and quit the beaker of boiling water babbling incoherently of escaping vapor and from the belching fumes that had been attempting to sky-hook my skull...
“Umm . . . but yet now, at nearly six, I must trudge that mile pilgrimage Ames-ward.” So I disembarked from my train of thought of the time and quit the beaker of boiling water babbling incoherently of escaping vapor and from the belching fumes that had been attempting to sky-hook my skull. Outside the chem. lab. the air began.

//Curious . . . again that memory that fade.//

The Chemistry Building, held fast in the blibbering, black air by squares of light from within, was soon lost behind the library. As I passed, dust-crowned books on their tiers of shelves cried to me and quarreled for places in line. I answered that I hadn’t time and went on.

//The tears that through training would not come.//

I entered into the bowels of Beardshear and was digested; bodiless, thoughtless, in the blare of light; blank acid stare. Its pseudo-marble guts murmured gibberish of restless floors above . . . and somewhere overhead is peered dispassionately over rails as I passed beneath. The riddled corpses slobbered down the Bulletin Board of World-Wide Screams, their war cry gurgling under terror: Star-eyed Uncle Sam tranced off in politic rock ’n roll . . . as Hungary lost its vision under the falling heel. The cartoons down in a corner chuckled amongst themselves. The white light jostled me through the door . . . and was black sighing through the trees.

//The funeral room, the flowers rotting in death stillness.//
Over the horizon of stark, tree-raked dark strode the Union, open-armed giant with running, sniveling nose and pigeon-festered eyes. I entered, forcing the incredibly obstinate revolving door, amid a welter of the chisled wisdom of men in stone and the wind of flying students. From darkness the campanile tolled the hour, reminding me with all the resonance of its autographed stone innards of something my stomach had been grumbling about for some time.

"It was too damn bad." They spit out the unthought cliches. "And so young."

A glance at the line of weight-shifting individuals stretching down the corridor, bending around into the cafeteria, and the revolving door and I were at it again. I paused briefly outside it, then headed resolutely in the direction of what "those who know" call dog town, head down, purposely noticing no one. (I've observed that it's sophisticated to ignore people).

"She looks so peaceful," they had said.

After nearly falling into Lake La Verne while crossing the step-like rocks at the end where it trickles away under Lincoln Way, I flagged before a disgusting little cafe with a name that was obviously the product of some dullard's fumbling attempt at originality. It slouched, but the near fall had gotten the better of my sophistication. Besides. . . .

"So peaceful, the cosmetic face . . ."

So . . . I went in and threaded my way toward the hindmost booth in the series along the chintz-hung windows. Overlording the student din, Bill Haley and his not-too-bright Comets shook the grimy ceiling and thundered on the air.

"Not Linda: the cosmetic mask the undertaker smeared over the bruised, torn face . . . not Linda."

The boy and the girl in the booth up by the door were laughing. She tilted her head back and her auburn hair brushed lightly against the edge of the high-back seat . . . a keen, almost shrill, half-hysterical laughter. I knew that laughter, I knew it . . . and stared, frightened, at the raving hair. I closed my eyes tightly, made a face. Linda is dead.
I was drawn back to the summer, fascinated, unable to resist. The air was sticky and hazy with dust that night. It was difficult to remain still. People chased breezes about the town and out into the country. Those who remained at home, bound by the job tomorrow at seven, dozed fitfully in musty bed.

All four had graduated that spring. Linda had a car of her own. She was not to drive it while her mother and father were away on vacation. But they would never know and she hadn't seen Donna, Jan or Janice for some time now. And it was so hot anyway.

It is great to go fast, so much like flying. It is exciting to have complete command of life. No one saw the other car approaching from the side street until the command was no longer Linda's.

The newspaper faithfully blurted out the next day the anatomical account of Linda's mutilation and set the musty people talking about "those crazy kids." "But isn't the humidity high, though?"

The girl in the booth laughed through lips that shriveled in my brain... smiling, alive... closed like a book.

—Dennis Ruffcorn, Ch. T., Fr.

Morning

Drops of dreams have almost dried out.
All have been counted and counted
In foggy waitings with benumbed limbs,
In tilt of dreams heaped up
Between ear-laps and black sockets.
The day has just risen on briars tips.
I am the sleepy ant which descends
In sinking sands toward the myrmeleon's mouth.

—Michele DeBenedictis, Econ.