

how not to dress by florine melnyk

an ink publications broadside

suspended imagination

Gin and Tonic at 9:30 a.m. Don't have Spanish eyes, but green or blue or whatever you want them to be. My heroes write poetry. Words put together in magical order. How should one go on a highway to find a cactus? A cactus bereft of memory? meaning? to complement my non-person status, pencil strokes, soft, gliding toward irrelevance. Heroes are hard to come by. Paris zero star hotels have lousy service. Walking the streets paints a better picture of the artists' soul. If you stand on the Seine looking for that perfect ripple, at sunset or at 3 a.m., you may see infinity. Lifetimes of dreams and wishes surfacing. Calling Out! Answer to the color green, or blue or whatever suits the fancy. Glass fissures proclaim truth on Tuesdays only. Never on holidays, or defining crazy, what's normal? Beings collide on the fairway. Life's not fair. Only rain falls in perfect rhythm on windows of sadness. Coming to the rescue of women. Lonely on the Brooklyn Ferry, leading to sense. Accumulating said meaning like paper cups at Birthday Parties. Reveling in chaos. Jesters and clowns meeting, having the last laugh. Floating on seas, suspended in imagination. Is that you. Walt Whitman?

jack stood here

brooding Lowell-ness
mirrored by Merrimack
rages restlessly in
the soul of red-brick
mills echo
euphoric new Americans
worn by
weariness
weaving
textiles

how not to dress

S. and A. always changed their socks twice in June looking down at naked feet caused daily stress when all the purple disappeared A. looked to the moon the colors were just not right and he began to obsess twisting hands and fingers thoughts a writhing snake each scenario swirling in mind until becoming moot threads of arguments, strings, candles on frosted cake lips and ideas of lovers flowing down the River Beaut who was *the mysterious lady* in 5B looking like Garbo shadows from street lamps by the bookshop in that play curtains knew S. had waited her whole life to be a hobo hands were frozen despite the fire of the orange-blue day searching winding streets only to find a small rhinestone rounding the seventh corner a waft of familiar cologne

lime and reason

i found my watch
under the dresser

when i ran out of

Time

looking for a reason

to remain

wishing for green

limes

in a glass over-flowing

with reasons

dusk in costa rica: punto guanacastero

We beat out the lost rhythm of our days,
this stoop knows the familiar shape of our stories.
Remember when we first saw each other?
When we *could* see, before we could see nothing
but everything, like now.
We were young dancers that day I picked you upon this
very stoop.
You had on that red dress and your long dark hair—
laughing.

When the last strand of sun disappears,
we feel the night across our shoulders.
We will turn and make our way
back to our dark inner world
for the night of *our* familiar music.

"How not to dress", "Jack Stood Here"
and "Lime and Reason" first appeared
in the book *Suspended Imagination*
(BlazeVOX [books])

Tree images: Geoffrey Gatza

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author bio

Florine Melnyk was born and raised in Buffalo, New York. She earned an MFA from the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast program. She has traveled to and studied in Ireland, where she drank several pints of Guinness and saw a leprechaun (not necessarily in that order). She currently lives in Buffalo, with her two daughters Siobhan and Shannon, and several lovable pets.

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