

children CHURCHES & daddies

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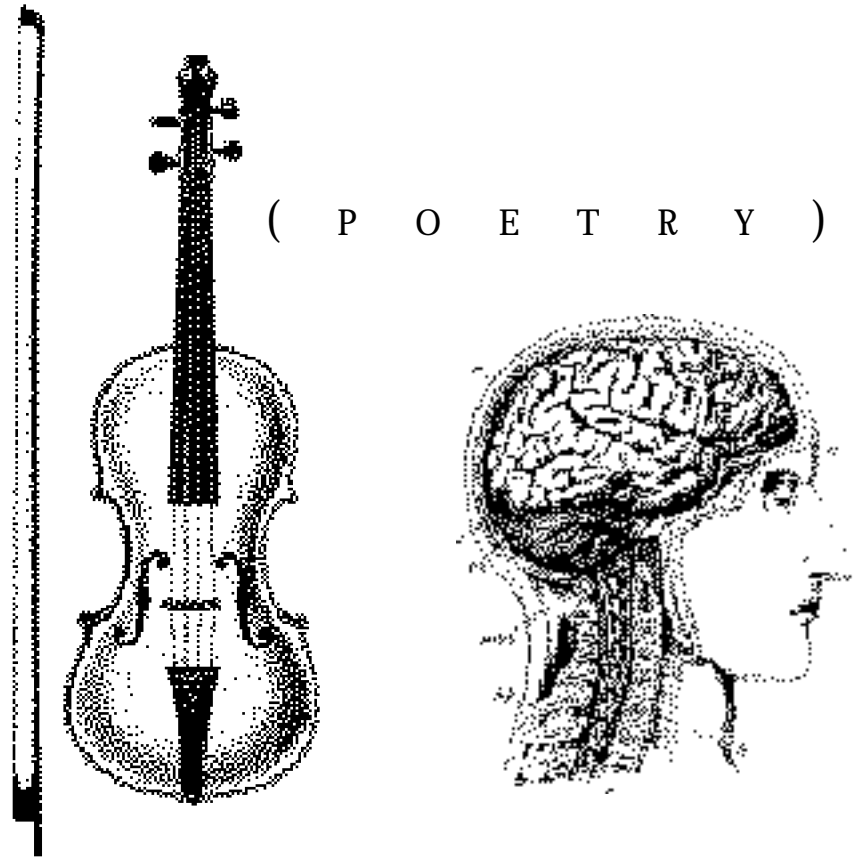
THE NON-RELIGIOUS, NON-FAMILY ORIENTED LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE

Children, Churches and Daddies is a magazine published as often as we have enough material, so submit early and submit often. The current rate of printing is one every three weeks to a month. • While no racist or sexist material is allowed, we do accept work of almost any genre of poetry, prose or artwork. • Do not send originals; include a SASE and bio with each submission. • There are no restrictions as to how many pieces you may submit at a time or whether or not the work can be previously published. In fact, if the work has been previously published, let us know where, and we'll give it credit in the issue the work is printed in. • All material submitted is eligible for printing not only in Children, Churches and Daddies issues, but also in "the burning" poetry mini-books, collection volumes, or in our year-end poetry datebook and wall calendar. • Send all submissions, praises, questions and comments to:

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(P O E T R Y)



VOLUME 15: INFLUX

CALL FOR ENTRIES!

We're rapidly approaching our first anniversary issue (all of us sing now, "happy birthday to cc+d..."), so in order to do something special, I need your help.

Send me your opinion of cc+d, how it has changed, comments, praises and criticisms. I'll include the best ones (fiction or not) in our first anniversary issue.

I'll also look for special pieces of poetry and prose that are about either children, churches or daddies (something that I don't normally do). Hey, if you can write something up about children, churches and daddies, there's probably a good chance it'll get in (or at least it will get a good laugh out of me).

So this is my challenge to you. Let's make this issue fun - the anniversary issue deserves a party, and this is the closest thing we'll get. I'm waiting to hear from you!!!



Editor

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

TO ALL PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN
PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN CC&D:

I was thinking the other night, I thought, "Hey, Janet, I think it's about time you started working on a larger project. Last year at about this time you were printing a 200 page, two color perfect bound book." (In case you people don't know, the book is "Hope Chest in the Attic", and it's only about \$10. Thank you.)

So okay, I'm thinking, another book for me is not in order yet. And besides, I don't have the money... geez, it would be really nice to do a good-quality compilation book of work that has been in past issues of cc+d and chapbooks...

Well, this is what I was thinking. This giving stuff away to contributors just wouldn't work for a large project like this, so if contributors would be willing to pay the printer costs for the number of pages of work they had in the paperback book, we would all pay a fair amount - and have a proportionate number of books.

I got a quote from a printer last year (granted, this is a quote from last year, and prices may change, but hopefully not much) for about \$2,000 for 500 books. Yes, that does sound like a lot, even though that only amounts to about \$4 per book. But listen: the book is 200 pages, perfect bound, with a 2 color cover, and possibly the use of those colors in the inside of the book. In other words, nice looking.

And, when you just have a few pages of work in the book, everyone takes a small share of the cost. For example, if you only have one page in the book (one small poem) you'd be paying for one page out of 200, times \$2,000 (the cost) - only \$10. And then, when it was done, I'd send you 2 books (well worth the cost).

Even for more pages it is pretty cheap. If you have 10 pages, then your cost is 1/20th of 2,000 or \$100. Sure that sounds like a lot, but then you get 25 good quality books to share (or sell). I know I had no problem selling the first 50 copies of my book, and I want to keep more than one copy of a book like this for myself, so I know everyone could at least break even if they had more pages in the book.

I figure this is the only way I can do it. Some people buy contributors copies anyway. I'd like to publish a lot of people a lot of the time in a high quality format, but we are all going through tough times, and for a good project like this, I can't handle the financial burden alone.

Anyone out there who is interested in being a part of a book like this, something more permanent, something that I donate copies of to libraries, blah, blah, blah, please let me know. We can work out a plan where we print the number of pages for you that you can afford - as long as I have enough people willing to share this burden with me.

A magazine is fun, but a book is a part of history. I want to make everyone who has been printed on these pages a part of history with me, but I can't do it alone. Please write and let me know if you're interested. Thanks so much.



Editor

C U R T A I N C A L L

too early for fast food breakfast
and far too late to quit writing.

what happened to that promising thunder?

several good flashes rattled the glass,
but i was driving my word machine
and when i forgot about the storm,
the storm misplaced the lightning.

the birds are in rehearsal;
their voices aren't unpleasant,
but for me, it's a sad sort of music:

a song for the end of the night.

C R A M C G U I R T

U R I N E

“You’re just a mutant,” Shane said as Casey peed on his face.

We all ran down by the two of them to see Casy complete this amazing task.

“How the heck are you doing that?” I yelled at Casey.

“It’s easy!” he said. “Doesn’t take much practice...just a little hard work and some confidence!”

We all looked over at Shane to see his reaction...

“I think it’s stupid!” Shane said. “What the hell would you pee on your face for? That’s completely stupid! I mean, only an idiot would pee on himself!”

So Casey got up and beat the shit out of Shane...then we all tried to pee on ourselves unsuccessfully, afterall, Casey was our hero.

B R A N D O N F R E E L S

F R E E W A Y S A S S E E N N E A R G A R G O Y L E S

Freeways straddling the undergrowth like animals,
Whose creators omitted brains or heart,
Offer contrast to gargoyles.

Those stone masks carved from hatred
Provide catharsis for the sculptor, although
Rain, not invective, pours from silent lips.

L I D A B R O A D H U R S T

M I N D G A M E S

Listen to the preacher telling lies
Concerning Jesus.
He's altered myths and stories.
He's a joker who lives off false fantasies,
His speeches of morphine numbing your senses.

Silenced by the motion of his lips,
You close your eyes, but fall
Into the realm of his molested mind game.

T O B I N B R O A D H U R S T

T H E A U T O M A T I C P R A Y E R

In a far land, the monks would spin the prayer wheels. A well-to-do farmer would be able to purchase a spin or two with a copper coin. Retainers and householders gave a silver penny for a hundred or so blessings. A gold coin from a wealthy noble would buy a thousand blessings. The king kept the apprentice monks hefty and muscular, ceaselessly bestowing endless millions of suplications to the gods, who, if the ever existed, were surely bored to death or deafened by the endless patter of pious suggestions.

Twenty sailors were washed up upon the shore when their rotted galley broke up in a heavy sea. They had a single brass coin with a holt in it that was suspended from a string from a boy's neck and a scrap of sailcloth among them. The shivering, weary men huddled in the leeward side of a rock and discussed what they should do.

They went to the hills where the monestary was and sent the lad inside to purchase a blessing. The priests tossed him and his coin into a dung heap.

A group of knights noticed the boy. They patted his shoulder and gave him a staff. Then they drew their swords and baited him to death.

The naked sailors saw what was going on and tried to rescue the boy with improvised weapons; alas, the boy perished and the sailors were enslaved upon the benches of yet another rotting galley.

So the sailors learned a valuable lesson; the gods listen, but not to brass farthings.

L A R R Y B L A Z E K

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

A woman all in white intrudes,
his name dripping off her lips,
I triumphantly catch the sound
like a bullet in my teeth,
His footsteps echo the sudden
relentless chant of the wall clock
and his backwards glance drapes
and tickles like sheer red curtains
as the bullet melts like chocolate under my tongue.
The nurse locks the door behind him.

The keyhole oiled,
I exhale,
unfold my thighs like a love letter,
and continue to wait.

M E L A N I E V O T A W

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

K . F . E . Q .

I work the graveyard
at a country music station
mostly twelve hour shifts
lots of black coffee and mountain dew
caffeine like amphetamine
rush of my old addiction

Long nights babysitting satellite
this is a partially automated station
reading, writing poetry, readying submissions
rituals at the candy machine
ogling the bikini calendar
in one of the sales department cubicles

I monitor the computers
hit the news at the top of each hour
take transmitter readings
test the ebbs
and watch the weather menstruate
by radar and gage

J E F F F O S T E R

W A I T I N G R O O M

I breathe in the air provided me by the unknown patron,
feeling shamefully ungrateful as I return it jagged.

He watches me.

I fold my right thigh over my left,
to vainly conceal how easily
he could cause them to turn from each other like enemies,
rendering my mind's will impotent.

He observes me like a scientist would a new creature
discovered in a remote jungle,
brought back to civilization
for the mere pleasure of his insatiable curiosity.

I feel like the star exotic dancer
lying on a glass slide under light and lens.

As I am drenched in his bottomless gaze,
a part of me I have not yet met
runs to hide behind the rest of me,
out of my sight,
did he notice the lone tear of sweat
licking my face from forehead to chin
as I imagine his tongue might?

He swallows.

(continued)

once when I was little

I was walking home from school
filled with fear, like I always was

the other kids made fun of me
they called me names
sometimes they threw rocks at me
once they pushed me to the ground
went home, bleeding knees and tears

but once, I'll never forget, Patti
from 121st street was
walking behind me and threw
her gym shoes at me

they landed right next to me
as I was walking down
that first big hill

I don't know if I stopped
but I remember for a brief moment
looking up at the tall tree branches
next to the road

all the entangled dead branches

and I thought
that all I had to do
was pick up her shoes
and throw them

as hard as I could

and she would never
get her shoes back

I looked at the trees
for only a moment
and I continued walking
as fast as I could
as I always did
and suddenly the shoes
were long behind me

and the others were laughing

I look back now
and wonder why I didn't
do it

was I scared of them
was I scared of myself

I still keep asking myself that

J A N E T K U Y P E R S

just before Halloween. She invited me in to help
carve a pumpkin. Every year she bought me a Christmas
present. The sweetest woman. The most beautiful woman.

And there was Ira and Betty Wiggins, who lived on
the next street, Sand Drive, with a sign in front of
their house that said, "The Wiggins' Wigwam."

They had a hammock on their porch, and art so
beautiful, so colorful on their walls. They lived in
Panama for years, he used to be a doctor. So

many things collected from all their travel. They both
knew so much, they both loved life. Once they saw
me and asked if I wanted to catch a lion. They then

went to the side of the road, and with a spoon pulled
an ant lion from the top of a sand hill. So many secrets.
Every night Ira could be found with cue holder,

decorated with Panamanian art, at the pool table, playing
my father, or another man who died years ago. I remember
that man telling me that when I was younger he would

watch me on Easter Sunday, me in my pastel dress, by
myself, spinning, dancing in the streets. He remembered
me dancing. This is his memory, how he thought of me.

And I remember the McKinleys, Pete and Lindy, another
beautiful pair who talked of Mexico, of all the places
they'd gone, all the things they had seen. So many times I

EXCERPT FROM HOPE CHEST IN THE ATTIC, 1993

You're my best friend
my love
you make me feel alive

Thank you
my inspiration

Thanks for going to C Street
so many times with me

Thanks for talking to
strangers on the Quad

Thanks for spilling
your heart out to me

Thanks for being so caring

For buying me a
Dr. Seuss book

for sitting with me
by my Christmas tree

for inviting me to
basketball games

for all the pizzas

for taking walks with me
in the springtime
at three in the morning

I say you can be happy
for someone else's happiness

I feel that way about you

J A N E T K U Y P E R S

A C H I L D I N T H E P A R K

this was no ordinary park, mind you: there
were no swings or children laughing; there were
different children there. There was recreation:

tennis, the pool, and a maze of streets for bicycles
and long walks; surrounded by rows of prefabricated
homes each with one little palm tree by the driveway.

People drove golf carts around in the park, or large
tricycles, or older couples would walk together just as
it was beginning to turn to dusk and long shadows from

tree-tops criss-crossed over the streets. In the afternoons,
the women in the pool would wear hats and sunglasses,
lean against the sides, swing legs in the warm water.

I remember the summer afternoons when it rained in
Florida, and after the rain I would go out in the puddles
in my roller skates, skate through them, feet soaking wet.

There was even a street named after me in the park,
and at the end of Jan Drive there was a pond.
I spent hours there, playing imaginary games,

pretending I was grown-up, feeding the ducks,
watching the fish swim around the rocks at my
feet, looking for the turtles, listening to the wind.

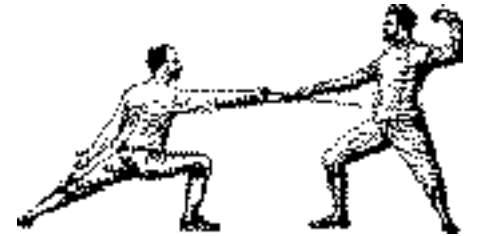
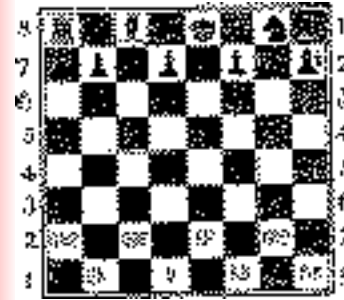
Oh, I remember Mr. Whorall, how he would walk
onto his driveway every time I was playing tennis
across the street. He would watch me, tell me how

I was getting better at the game every time he saw me.
And there was also Mrs. Rogers, who lived up the
street from me. She saw me riding my bicycle by one day

(S I L E N C E)



(S C I E N C E)



(F O R
R E C R E A T I O N
O N L Y)

WAITING FOR YOU (2 / 1 3 / 9 4)

i look out at the evening sky

snow falling out of the sky
star-shaped flakes as big as fingertips

falling onto my face
melting into my skin

touching me sharp and sweet

like your hand on my cheek

in the cold of winter
it almost feels warm

J A N E T K U Y P E R S

would visit them just to hear them talk. And Pete would try to stump me with an intellectual riddle every time I sat with him; he would ask me about astronomy, what I had learned in my

classes since the last time I visited the park. Sometimes they would take me to their country club, play on tennis courts made of clay, how strange it felt on my feet through my tennis shoes.

It was like another world there. The park was where I spent my Christmases, my Easters. I remember swimming in the pool, a week shy of

thirteen, when my parents told me I was an aunt. Now I talk to my sister on the phone, she asks me if I remember so-and-so from Palos Avenue,

from Blue Skys Drive. The couple that had the ornate rock garden in their front yard, or the snow shovel against their lightpost with the words “rust in

peace” painted in white on the metal. Yes, I say, I remember them. Well, so-and-so passed away last week, she says. Heart attack. This is what it comes down

to, I think, all these memories are slowly disappearing. So many memories. Where there are palm trees everywhere. It was my other world, my other life, another

lifestyle, another everything. This was not an ordinary park, but the children were so much smarter, and still so full of life. So much to teach. So little time.

J A N E T K U Y P E R S



(I M B I B E)

Thomas considered the snow.

It was late afternoon and the sun was almost down. Snow went off through dark green pines. Thomas stood near the road edge, where a three foot high bank of snow had earlier been shaped, and stared off into the woods. Out there, he imagined, water moved in a river. Because water moved it did not freeze. Thomas had an urge to find the river and follow it to wherever it went. But the snow was everywhere and up to his knees. He stood there thinking about it.

They were all back at the cabin. All of them were married, with children, and this had done something irrevocable to their lives. They were there for a clan reunion. Thomas was the unmarried one. Now, as he stood there staring at the dark pines and flat white snow, he felt as if his unmarried and childless status were a burden. It's difficult to breathe, he thought, especially when trapped in the cabin with all of them. At this moment he'd rather be out in the cold where the spaces were large and unobstructed. He wanted to walk off through the snow and find that river of moving water.

Jayne had married his friend. Thomas had been with her a decade before. It had never worked out between them. Like all the women in his life, Jayne had wanted him to change. He was writing back then. Not much and not very good, but writing. Now he held no illusions about writing or anything else. Thomas drank and the creative part of his life was now nothing more than a shadow. He saw himself lost out there in the dark spaces between pine trees. There was nothing left to put down on paper.

Thomas didn't know her. She was another person now, a stranger. When he looked at her there seemed to be few associated memories. Drinking had done that, or so he told himself. Drinking was a form of cowardice. None of the clan drank like he did. They had gravity in their lives while he combated weightlessness. Drinking was necessary, an anchor which prevented him from floating away entirely. Thomas feared sobriety.

Everything, he thought, is out of control.

He had threatened to kill her. She would, of course, never forgive him. Now, a decade later, she looked at him like a person looks at a rabid dog — never certain when and where the animal might bite. Thomas didn't hold it against her. She had

every right to mistrust him, to stay away from him. Her almost banal politeness and empty conversation perturbed him. It was this conversation and particularly the uneasiness of her eyes which had made Thomas decide to go through the cabin door and down the road until he reached the darkness of pines some distance away. He wanted to be alone. He wanted the conversation to end. Silence. He wanted to find the river and follow it to wherever it went. That he might get lost or even freeze to death didn't concern him. It really didn't seem all that important.

Now the sun was down.

Snow took on a deepening blue as darkness approached. Thomas remembered that the snow was this same color the afternoon he had discovered them together. He had threatened her. Then she moved her things out. For a long time after, he remembered, the snow was that same cold empty blue color. The color it was now as he stood there remembering. That he remembered at all, after such an expanse of nothingness, surprised him.

What I need, Thomas thought, is a drink.

When he turned away from the woods he saw where the road stretched out and went in a northerly direction. There, where the road began its descent into a semi-circle of denuded hardwoods, sat the small cabin. Warm yellow light burned through cabin windows. Thomas moved slowly, instinctively toward the light. The evening was very quiet and cold, the sky a dark purple sprinkled with faraway stars. Water moved, he knew, hidden in the dark expanse at his left. Thomas sincerely wanted a good stiff drink. It was this need and his cowardice which moved him down the road. The indifference of nature, and its peculiar ability to kill without retribution or judgement, filled him with a numb acceptance. His failures no longer seemed important. Wind moved through pines. Thomas imagined the taste of scotch. He'd mix it with cold water.

K U R T N I M M O

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

M E A S U R I N G

"Mom, how many seconds in a year?"

(This posed before coffee.)

Yes...how many exactly: angstroms,
ells, light-years, hectares, gills.

Your son's zeal: quantification.

Measure the outside world, precise.

Mom, if you don't know, then:

"What's your guess?"

What's your best, best guess

if you had to make a guess?"

Your best guess, quoting friend:

"If life begins at forty,

what was all that other stuff?"

Well, it was stuff in gray areas.

It was always judgment calls.

It was jerks along a spectrum.

No alidades, octants, plumb rules,

T squares, verniers.

All entirely subjective.

M A R Y W I N T E R S

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

Mom wanders her words
in cautious attempts
at putting faces to events
while dad applauds contestants
as they answer daytime
questions. Did you know
that one? She sometimes
asks.

P A U L W E I N M A N

He looked out the window.

Now he thought I have written about that a hundred times. About a solitary man looking out the window at a woman or a bird and it's always the same character... and that character is me.

She had let the dog out and the little black dog had pissed on the lawn and as he looked at the lawn now he saw where the grass had turned brown where the little black dog had pissed. He had never really liked the dog. It wasn't dogs in general but that dog in particular. He had earlier read in the newspaper how a man in the city had died and wild dogs had eaten part of him before the police came with the truck and hauled him off to the morgue. He saw her dog out there on the lawn meticulously sniffing and preparing to piss and then shit on the frozen grass of February. Would the little black dog eat him if it was hungry enough?

She stood near the window looking.

Fifteen minutes before they had made love in the bed. She had locked the dog out of the bedroom. It stayed on the other side of the door. It wanted to get inside. It always wanted to be with her and it probably now was even though he wasn't. He didn't think a dog was capable of jealousy but this little black dog seemed to be jealous of him. When he kissed her on the sofa the dog tried to get between them. It had barked and he had wanted to lock it outside in the cold. He didn't want to hurt the dog or any other creature but all the same he didn't want it near him.

He looked out the window.

In March she had sent her daughter to her father's house in another city and they spent Sunday morning making love. He remembered the sun coming through the window on the east side of the house. He remembered the way his skin looked under that warm yellow light as he walked naked past the window in the minutes before they had made love. She had come up behind him and shut the curtains because she was afraid the neighbors would see him naked there framed in the window. She was in a robe and he smiled and said something about the robe and how much better she looked with it off and then he slowly untied the sash of the robe and pushed it over her shoulders and it fell down around her white ankles. She made little noises as he put both his hands on her breasts. Outside he heard the lit-

the black dog struggling at its rope and yelping and crying because it wanted to get inside and be with her there in the warmth behind the closed curtains.

He knew that they would never fall in love.

He knew that it would only be for a short time and after that time had elapsed he would be alone again. He didn't know how long it would take before he fell in love again. Or before he died. He thought that after his death somebody would publish all his short stories and poetry. After you die the world comes to an end and it does not matter one way or the other if somebody comes along and puts all your stories and poetry in a book. Many times he had told himself that love is a disease but now as he looked out the window at the circle of dead brown grass on the lawn he thought that he would like to fall in love one more time before he passed away from the world.

I want to fall in love more than I want all my stories and poetry published in a book that I will never live to see.

In February they spent time together. In June she told him that it was probably best if they went their own separate ways. In August he called her on the phone and

asked her out but she told him that she was now engaged to be married. He wished her good luck and then hung up the telephone.

He went in the other room and took down the vodka bottle.

If it wasn't vodka it was the writing and if not the writing then it was the voluminous reading. It was like his life went from the bottle to the writing machine to the books and then back to the bottle in the cabinet. When he was with her he thought about the writing and when he was alone trying to write he thought invariably of her. It was a way he didn't want to be so when she called it off he was secretly relieved. He was too much of a coward to end it and dedicate himself to the writing. Inside he wanted to give up the writing and fall in love even though he knew that love is very temporary and translucent and in the end writing is hard and steady as a slice of granite. It is easy to fall in love but not easy to write and when the writing walks out the door it more often than not is gone forever.

Ask Hemingway.

Early in the morning when he stayed at her place the dog followed him around. He was naked and thought about the next story he wanted to write as he went out and

put the coffee on. She was like many women in his life. She wanted to make love in the morning and then sleep until ten or eleven. He was up and out of bed walking around naked even during the coldest days of February and inside of him the stories twisted and turned and if he didn't get them out they would be lost. He sat in the bathroom on the toilet with a pad of paper writing it down but it wasn't right and he usually threw the paper in a wicker basket near the toilet. After he put the coffee on he went back in the bedroom and she said something to him and then he was under the blanket with her making love and the stories went away forever.

In May the love was not the same.

He knew women and how they let it go and after a few weeks he was alone again and the stories were there. Strange how it works he thought as he went to the cabinet and brought down the bottle of Gilbey's vodka. He poured himself one with tonic water and sat in the chair near the window reading a book of short stories. Occasionally he thought of her and how she had said she was going to get married and he wondered if the love making was good and if they were happy together. Or if she had let him go and was now alone reading the popular novels she liked to read before she went to bed.

He looked out the window.

It was late September and everything was about to change. He saw where the grass had turned brown. He thought about her and how the little black dog had always stayed close and he didn't think that was all bad. She had the little black dog and he had his writing machine.

He wouldn't have to bury the writing machine...

K U R T N I M M O