

What Matters Is Round

by John Olson

How do you do my name is Luigi and I am the Duke of Abruzzi. I love bubbles, strawberries, and sheets drying in the wind and sunlight. Hobbies include bank robbery, kidnapping, and extortion.

As you can see, the streets are barricaded, and the police are confused.

What can I say?

I grew up in Minneapolis. I am a true poet. I grow obscure when I feel like it and ride the green dragons of Mandalay.

I feel old. I have begun to see my life as a play in the shape of a boat propeller.

In Act One, I bare my fangs, lightning illumines the library, and the sea crashes against the rocks. I wrap myself in a cape and glide from room to room howling plump and personal sentences.

In Act Two, I saw an opulent emotion in half. This is how I discover the magic of bubbles.

There is a blaze of art in the room. Do you see it? Even the map has a pulse. Figures move around on a screen and a mound of photogenic sugar acquits all adjectives of their burdensome role in the sentence.

But what sentence? We are all serving a sentence. Even this sentence is serving a sentence. But what can be done?

People die in the canyons all the time. We do what we can to warn them, but there are always those who go headlong into the wilderness with nothing but a song and a flashlight.

Necessity makes a necessity of necessity.

Hope is a curious medicine, healing and enfeebling simultaneously. Did I mention the Rolling Stones played at our wedding?

Did I mention that I was married?

I married a balloonist from Barcelona. We honeymooned in Honolulu.

Where is she now? That's my last Duchess on the wall, over

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there, by the begonias. She's the one with the hairdo that looks like a Tyrannosaurus Rex in a Moab garage.

I know all the sorrows of the jukebox. Sometimes I feel like I am walking on a highwire, and sometimes I drive to California in a silver Dodge sedan, only to discover that I have not left the couch, but am lost in a cloud of smoke, a bowl of opium at my side.

Absence does not have a structure. If it did, it would not be absence, it would be a hat, or an elevator.

Do you hear? There is a song in the ink. A pool of words bubbling in the center of the page. I saw this happen once on Ron Silliman's blog. A pair of slugs mated, dangling from a branch on a strand of mucus, their genitals entwined.

Life is an endless struggle and death is a long sweet rest. But let's not fuss over little things. What matters is ultramarine. What matters are spoons and forks. Alphabets and clams.

I wonder if the wash is done. You'll have to excuse me. I see a revolving door and somebody has to push it. Round and round and round and round. Thank god for walls. Thank god for breasts and sentences and syllables and sound. And round and round and round and round.

