

5-1-2016

Paper Anniversary // Brass Band Epithalamion // On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard

Dante Di Stephano
Binghamton University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/gandy-dancer>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Di Stephano, Dante (2016) "Paper Anniversary // Brass Band Epithalamion // On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard," *Gandy Dancer Archives*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 40.

Available at: <https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/gandy-dancer/vol4/iss2/40>

This Postscript is brought to you for free and open access by KnightScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gandy Dancer Archives by an authorized editor of KnightScholar. For more information, please contact KnightScholar@geneseo.edu.

Postscript

DANTE DI STEFANO

Paper Anniversary

Marriage is a new way of telling time
against chronology. It is the end
of *please* rewritten in indigo ink
on the tip of our tongues. It is how *thanks*
will paint all of the hospital walls blue
in our newborn dreams of dying alone.
It is light that stags the doe in transit
through the underbrush and brings her to still
herself at the snapped twigs scrunched underfoot.
It is bunny hop and a pocket watch
that will travel through dresser drawers unused
until one day it finds itself become
heirloom and shining. It is a promise
that calls into question the visible
colors of the ultraviolet spectrum.
It cattails the breeze in marshland evenings
and smacks the warble out of the red-winged
blackbird's beak that serenades our footsteps.
It is, in fact, done with all serenades,
all indigos, all vaults and vestibules
of autumns reimagined on leaf stems.
It's as useful as knowing how to change
a car battery or a toilet's chain.
It is the most unromantic knowledge
of the greening need at the heart of so
much aging ahead. It's: "I no longer
mind cleaning the bathroom sink tonight."

It's you switching your toothpaste brand to mine
without hesitation. It's the word *help*
become holy, memorized as a prayer.
It's what most outwalks us when we walk out
the door together into days laddered,
like the fine blue lines on loose leaf paper,
with the things we are supposed to do now
that we are who we are supposed to be.

DANTE DI STEFANO

Brass Band Epithalamion

While the sousaphones, walking the bass-line,
groove on a riff, and the crescent moon casts
crumbs of light like a screwdriver on
a cymbal attached to a bass drum played
by a kid in a varsity jacket
and camouflage pants, while the three trombonists
hurl salvos at the crowd on the corner
of Chartres and Frenchman, while twin trumpets
punch pins into the umbrella of our
hand-in-hand understanding of the dark,
while teenage boys, sag and swagger, waggle,
cakewalk, strut and bump, to the snare drum's roll,
I am content to contemplate streetlights
with you and to wave the white handkerchief
in time with the wedding march that breaks down
across boarded up storefronts and holds us
in a levee of melody more true
and insistent than your pulse, my heartbeat,
our hemoglobin adjudicating
evening. In the small hours that follow, you
will whistle "I'll Fly Away" on the banks
of the Mississippi and I'll outlook
the strain a busking violin puts on
my memories of imagined futures,

but for now we listen on the dancing verge
and nothing can curb the sound of this band
as it plays "I Ate Up the Apple Tree,"
welcoming us to the Mardi Gras of
an Eden we'll be forever leaving.

DANTE DI STEFANO

On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard

That this small band of white gold has been lost
among the roots of saplings, which will grow
and, perhaps, shoot a finger through the hoop
that will choke the bark coasting underground,
is no small consolation; that the hooves
of deer will silk the dirt above it now
and at the hour of my death, and of yours,
is a brittle thought that breaks like hills
whose trees cycle through a blaze of autumns.

That my friend, whose orchard this is, will let
his little daughters build imaginary
kingdoms between the rows where an empire
of apples will one day scud what once was
pasture, and that our initials will be
buried, unacknowledged, beneath their dreams
and beside their father's hope, is a swan
that origamis the endless mountains.

I will buy a new ring and remember
how the original, encased in earth,
hooping worm and rock and root and desire,
remains unbroken, a tracing of loam,
subterranean, shining in the dark
that gallops and gallops still underfoot.