

## Fanfare

I've never before heard a fanfare of trumpets  
except on television or radio or at the movies  
which means that until now I've believed that  
I'd heard a fanfare of trumpets but now I know different,  
hearing the real thing from the gallery  
above me and to my left, with the trumpeters  
not bare-legged actors welcoming Moses,  
as played by Charlton Heston, home to Pharaoh's palace  
after conquering Ethiopia,  
but members of the Royal Canadian Regiment Band  
in their full-dress uniforms, Boer War scarlet tunics and  
sun helmets,  
signalling the arrival of Her Majesty  
Elizabeth II, Queen by the Grace of God, and, suddenly,  
by God, she is a Queen—which is to say, I've been  
watching  
the woman all week and it keeps happening,  
this transfiguration: it's as if once upon a time  
there was this little middle-aged lady who'd been sea-sick  
all the way from New York and was kept awake all night  
by the fog-horns,  
had a backache, an aide said, and whose face had that  
disconnected  
look that comes with numb exhaustion,  
but this little middle-aged lady had the power  
to rise several inches into the air and float,  
as she's doing now, and to glow  
as if there were a light inside her.

Alden Nowlan