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Cold Pavement and Two People

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Cold Pavement and Two People

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"On that brisk February evening Elizabeth and I stood side by side on the Greyhound station waiting platform. It was so cold I thought my feet and fingertips would freeze. I could see no reason why everyone had to wait so long to board the bus. Although I wasn't enjoying it at all, it didn't seem to bother Elizabeth; she seemed very comfortable as she held tightly onto my arm. It struck me as if zero, waiting, and our coming separation weren't in her mind at all; I knew she was trying not to think of them. I felt bad that I would be back home in fifteen minutes and she had a twelve-hour bus ride ahead of her. In spite of being very cold and impatient, I thought of these things. I knew my love for her was as cold as the pavement and empty air around us. This was the reason that I shivered heavily underneath my coat and gloves. I knew why she did not shiver as she stood so straight in her high heels. I knew why she held my arm more tightly and that she was probably looking at me and smiling. I just couldn't look in her eyes very long. Everytime I did her love seemed to come forth in that look, and I knew it must return injured; it had never met what it had itself."

Cover Page Footnote

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Cold Pavement And Two People

By J. D. HYDE

On that brisk February evening Elizabeth and I stood side by side on the Greyhound station waiting platform. It was so cold I thought my feet and fingertips would freeze. I could see no reason why everyone had to wait so long to board the bus. Although I wasn't enjoying it at all, it didn't seem to bother Elizabeth; she seemed very comfortable as she held tightly onto my arm. It struck me as if zero, waiting, and our coming separation weren't in her mind at all; I knew she was trying not to think of them. I felt bad that I would be back home in fifteen minutes and she had a twelve-hour bus ride ahead of her. In spite of being very cold and impatient, I thought of these things. I knew my love for her was as cold as the pavement and empty air around us. This was the reason that I shivered heavily underneath my coat and gloves. I knew why she did not shiver as she stood so straight in her high heels. I knew why she held my arm more tightly and that she was probably looking at me and smiling. I just couldn't look in her eyes very long. Everytime I did her love seemed to come forth in that look, and I knew it must return injured; it had never met what it had itself.

It was only four days ago that we had enjoyed each other. The first time that we really had since we met last summer. Only four days ago that I began to think and wonder why I didn't really love her. My feet were freezing. Where could that damn bus driver be?

"Gee Liz, I hope the bus is warmer than this. You should have worn some knee socks or something." She just smiled and said, "I'm not cold." She must have been a little cold. I knew it was cold. I was freezing. I wished that bus driver would come on; I was running out of comments about the cold, the people, the Greyhound service. I looked down at her, and still that warming, affectionate, smiling grasp of my arm. Damn! I felt sick inside. It was really horrible. I didn't seem to care at all. My stomach shivered and tightened.

Before I realized it people were boarding the bus. She kissed me goodbye with a quick questioning embrace that brought from me only a weak smile, and no words. I felt then that she knew. As I started to say I was sorry, she was gone. Then she gave her ticket to the driver, entered the bus, and disappeared in the dark green tinted windows. Stand-

ing there and watching the bus pull out, I knew if I loved her I would feel differently right then.

I did feel different. I was alone on the waiting platform now; it made the hollowness inside me more real. I looked around. The pavement was cold and dark. I didn't especially want to go anyplace. I just felt very empty.

The thing that bothered me the most was the joke of it all; it was as if something was both there and not there. The next thing I knew I was walking through the terminal station. As I walked out onto Main Street I looked to the right. Down aways Elizabeth's bus was just pulling away from the traffic light at the corner. The street lights shone through the windows of the bus; passengers in their seats were outlined by the dark green haziness, distinguishing them from the darkness of the sky and the shadowy store fronts. I put my hands in my coat pockets, and didn't notice the cold as I walked to my car.

Attic

Up the stairs to the cool Attic,
the dark Attic.

To sit alone, leaned against the stair-wall.

Attic is the high and solemn intellect
of house: its memory is there.
and a fear that things unused
will somehow come alive for want of use,
driven by the pain
of their solitude:
the dolls,
the clothes,
all the great trunks.

And now the multitudinous fingers of
cool hand of rain are
strumming,
strumming,
with an unconscious impatience
on the fitted beams, the rhymed and shingled roof.
and the sound, like a thousand tiny elves
twinkling down attic stairs around me;
silent.
leaving only their small rush of air,
and time.

RAY PAVELSKY