Lines

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Cover Page Footnote

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refused to believe that; she couldn't
love him the way he was now. Nevertheless, letter after letter
came, saying that she still loved
him as much as she did before. But
Gianni knew that the life he had
dreamed of living with Karen could
never come into being; he could not
and would not commit her to a life
with a cripple. He loved her too
much to do that to her.
After three months of hospital
they sent him back to the States
and then after several months
more he was released and told
he could go home. But now he wanted
to stay in the hospital forever. How
could he face Karen half a man?
The letters had stopped after he
had deliberately neglected to an-
swer them.
The train made its final turn
nearing the tunnel which led to the
station. He hoped and prayed that
Karen would not be there to see
him. Then he thought of his mother.
She had written him several
letters in Italian, but he had never
answered. Would she be there?
Or had she abandoned him too?
Outside the snow was falling light-
ly and he remembered the Christ-
mas Eve of two years before, so
sad, yet so happy.
There were men who like him
were going home permanently dis-
abled. They all felt lucky to have
escaped death, but Gianni did not.
The real lucky ones were the men
in the refrigerator cars at the back
of the train. At least they were re-
lieved of the problems that he and
the other men wounded would have
to cope with.
The train finally stopped at the
station. An attendant flung the door
open, then walked toward his chair.
Slowly he pushed it down the ramp,
Gianni was the first one out. Crowds
watched silently, as he sat waiting
for someone to step forward. Then
he heard someone scream and
a commotion, a woman came rushing
toward him, crying, shouting his
name, "Gianni! Gianni!"

Gianni held out his arms and
called "Mamma! Mamma!"

MYSELF
It is of myself
the stranger
that I am
of whom
I write these lines
And of the cryptic
life
that lies behind
whose impress
structures my
very quick
And gives me
such wearisome
puzzlement.

LINES
For him
at one time
Even the horizon
borrowed its line.
And the sky's
blue bowl
Was numbly lifted
from minds apart.
So that what he knew,
he knew
by other eyes.
And yet upon his life
there lies
the stamp of
Other quite different lines.

By John H. Liddle
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