Living

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VIVIRE

Vivire,
chiusi in una stanza
senza porte
senza finestre
solitudine,
 cercando in me
vita.
Vivire,
ieri per oggi
oggi per domani.

Domani ti imbroglia
sembra che l'acchiappi,
ma e sempre l'ontano.
Oggi arriva il domani
vento che spette violentemente
s'un muro di pietra
inscrizione non pertinente,
suddenly darkness befalls.

Buio in un mondo buioso
senza vedere un raggio di sole.

Vivire
oggi per oggi
domani, non si sa.

LIVING

Living
closed in a room
without doors
without windows
solitude,
searching in me
life.
Living
yesterday for today
today for tomorrow.

Tomorrow comes you,
it seems within your grasp
but it's always too far.

Tomorrow arrives today
wind that beats violently
upon a wall of stone
irrelevant inscriptions,
suddenly darkness befalls.

Dark in a world of darkness
without seeing a ray of sunlight.

Living
today for today
tomorrow reigns the unknown.

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Giovanni Vella

Scenes From a Friendly's Restaurant

By Suzanne Bartz

Somehow, when you observe people all your life, it becomes a sort of art. Each individual is distinctly different, a mystery within itself. What intrigues me though is looking for their story: where are they going, who are they looking for, what troubles them—the list is endless. If I possessed the ability to look into each person's mind I would block it out. For the whole purpose of observing others is to use your imagination, make up a story, add other characters—there are countless possibilities. Jason, a close friend of mine, is an excellent player. His mind is in constant overdrive. He has the ability to recite people's lives as if they personally handed him the script.

One such episode is taken out of a Friendly's restaurant while the two of us indulge in our sundaes.

"See that man and two children over there?" Nonchalantly he takes his spoon and points me in the right direction.

"His wife is working late again as usual. He lost his job about a year ago, so now he takes care of the kids."

The story is told in between gulps of ice cream. The waitress stops to ask how our desserts are. Jason peers at his gooey delight and reassures her with a chocolate-y grin and the okay sign. I pleasantly add "Fine, thank you" to Jason's appealing, adolescent display. Before she is able to escape, he interrupts her steps by asking for crayons to color our animated place mats.

She smiles at our childishness and is sent to find a box.

No sooner is she gone when an elderly man of about seventy-five is seated directly across from us. Jason, without hesitation, begins again. Leaning towards the table, he quietly whispers: "That man took his girlfriend to an ice cream parlour every Saturday. They eventually became engaged and made this event a tradition. During their marriage, not one weekend went by without a trip to get ice cream. As they settled down and began to get older, Friendly's became their designated spot. She passed away last year, but every Saturday he returns to the same booth; all the waitresses know him by name, and he keeps the tradition going."

I peer at the man, hoping that his wife is alive and well, then return my eyes to Jason; he's concentrating on his sundae again.

The waitress returns with our crayons and the same amused smile. "Make sure you stay within the lines," she adds and walks away. The two of us begin our coloring; however, Jason's attention is easily distracted by a new waitress who just began her shift.

"Suzanne, see that waitress standing at the corner booth?"

I turn my head around to catch a glimpse of this young, petite, frail-looking girl who doesn't look a day over sixteen. Jason agrees with my opinion of her youngness and uses it as the basis of his final story.

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