

Eugene Stevenson

## Pasta For Two at Frankie D's

Pasta for two at Frankie D's was  
all they agreed upon that Sunday:  
puttanesca steaming, spicy, garlicky,  
a working girl between appointments.  
Choosing the place, only an accident.

Dark wood, heavy carpet, snowfall of  
white linen in their booth. Over food  
was how they talked best, nowhere to  
hide as they passed bitterness & acid  
across the table like wine past its time.

She burned with indifference, lips tight  
as if macerating grapes, made mistakes  
with her uncaring: the lasagna last week,  
a simple sauce without unity. She did not  
like lasagna, or him, & her lips were loose.

Linguini, chianti & talk as intense as  
the meal. Smart enough not to say, *You  
are going to fail*, she swept crumbs from  
the tablecloth, pasta for two consumed  
with difficulty as *il conto* loomed large.

## Bloody Mary Breakfast

Weird trip  
in flashback, the  
business trip, knowing the  
end before the beginning, but  
going.

Just the  
carry-on facts,  
the remnants of triage  
& under-the-breath mutterings  
last night.

Morning  
flight, six hours to  
the coast, calculated,  
merciless, only a duffel  
required.

Bloody  
Mary breakfast,  
mute companion, but one  
is anyone one wants to be,  
this trip.

The storm  
tomorrow is  
reconsideration,  
only too wet, too late to change  
the past.

## Pinocchio at Taliesin West

A wretched boy, Geppetto thought him,  
a rascal, an imp. How like fathers of  
human boys, the ones whose noses  
do not elongate in the telling of a lie.

There stands his creation: a disgrace,  
humiliation personified. Fathers have  
a choice: to foster & teach, or to whip  
& leave ignorant of what is to come.

Tears fell early, the son failed to please,  
while Geppetto's hands held the strings.  
Promises made, some promises broken,  
other promises delayed until long after.

With eyes so large, Pinocchio embraced  
his need to see around the curve of the  
earth, to find all the delight he could hold,  
found a tough place of yes & no, up & down.

Wood into flesh, dream into experience:  
to walk, legs burned off; to swim, caught in  
a net; to laugh, chained in a circus; to flee,  
swallowed in the belly of an enormous fish.

Death came to the puppet, to the boy,  
too many times, turned into an ass indeed;  
once committed to work, to be good & to  
study, he delivered & ended hung in a tree.

Under this shining brow, this shining statue  
of ridiculous puppet runs to lovely boy in  
a run to obedience, honesty, hard work,  
in a run from a dream to becoming real.

As did Heloise who came here to study,  
to perform, age twenty-three, & stayed  
three more lifetimes, true heart, enduring  
wish, in an age when that was possible.

*Note: Pinocchio, by Heloise Christa (USA), 2000*

## Roundtrip Ticket, Open Return

Roundtrip  
ticket, open  
return. Fill in the date  
with certainty, relying on  
a vow.

The end  
is found in the  
beginning. Take the flight  
to be somewhere. Better than rest,  
alone.

Decide  
on the drive to  
the airport whether to  
punish, reward, go & return,  
or not.

In the  
briefest journey,  
a promise of solace  
before lifting the ticket, light  
as air.