



Jeanpaul Ferro

79 Degree Probability of Loss

By Jeanpaul Ferro

What beautiful death there is in Madonna de Campiglio,
the peasant people frozen in ice in dance,
the slopes of Austria, and now they call it Italy,
another place you must come, one more dream to put your trust in,

and you can't believe you'll ever do it again,
swimming in the light and shadows where you've drowned,
the gum arabic and green volatilize of valle Verzascaa—
the river where you saw the diver from Lucerne go down three times,
the way you held his girl friend, the river from the glacier,
minion and nonpareil, crystalline, his body preserved,
Russian experiment in the stone houses of Sonogno,

the ache in my body when your breasts ease into my mouth,
the way your legs cover out, the ecstasy in your pain,
in the white under your flesh in your bones,
the risk, the knife of your spine,
and I take it, twist and turn and bludgeon it,
and the body moves, consumes all of me, and you give in,
and you die in a way too, so cold here in the Dolomites,
always writing by candlelight, the bathroom out in the hallway,
and dance without music—

the sound of your hands against the piano back in the states.

The Ice Storm

By Jeanpaul Ferro

The ice storm came overnight,
catching us all off-guard in a splendid
togetherness,

the sun brightening like a homespun
blue, bending and hissing at the edges,

all the ice falling and crashing
from the treetops like broken glass;

we spent all day cleaning up
everything that we had lost—

burying the dead,

throwing away old pieces of ourselves
like we didn't even matter,

even though we knew that we would remember
everything from this pale evening

for the rest of our lives.

When You Are Young You Are Very Stupid

By Jeanpaul Ferro

We were standing there along the cliff walk like this:

She had her black leather coat on, and I was a punk thinking
I was Bob Dylan, Voltaire, and Rudolph Valentino;

"You be me", I told her, "and I'll be you;"

She kissed me, and I punched her in the mouth.

For the next ten years we filmed the war using 8mm film:

Take Five on the cliffs over in Jamestown,
finding a place to lie naked along the salt ponds,
every movie ever made flashing blue & white before our eyes,

someone is born and someone else is dying,
someone got married and someone found themselves by
losing me;

there was the class reunion back up there in Scituate,
where she put on her favorite white dress,

and then one day we were watching those planes
flying into the World Trade Center,

and we were watching each other falling from
the sky too.

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[<-- previous](#) [next -->](#)

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