

We would have stood like sentinels
 but you wouldn't have it.
 No hand-wringing, no long, anxious
 faces,
 no whispered prayers.
 Just you
 alone.
 Death claimed you
 but you were prepared:
 wallet, will and final arrangements
 on the dining room table.
 Just you
 alone.

Suddenly, you left.
 We were afraid to imagine
 your last minutes.
 No cries for help.
 No one to hold your hand.
 Just you
 alone.
 Calls unanswered,
 notes ignored, knocks unheeded.
 We respected your isolation.
 Burnt out light bulbs yet
 tomatoes in the refrigerator.
 Just you
 alone.

Passive Suicide

The shopping cart
 with an infant seat attached
 rested on its front end
 and hung over the
 railing of the bridge
 above the railroad tracks
 beside the highway
 with the big green and
 white sign that said
 PRANCH AVENUE 1 MILE
 because the B was broken.

Non-fiction

He smiles, remembering when passion
 raged between them.
 They stand embracing;
 two bodies pressed together.
 Holding on, their faces and lips touch.
 He calls her "Peaches"
 a nickname from bygone days.
 Sometimes she responds.
 In sickness and in health, everything and
 nothing have changed.
 She lives among the broken bodies and
 shut-in minds.
 He, the faithful visitor
 loving
 'til death do them part.

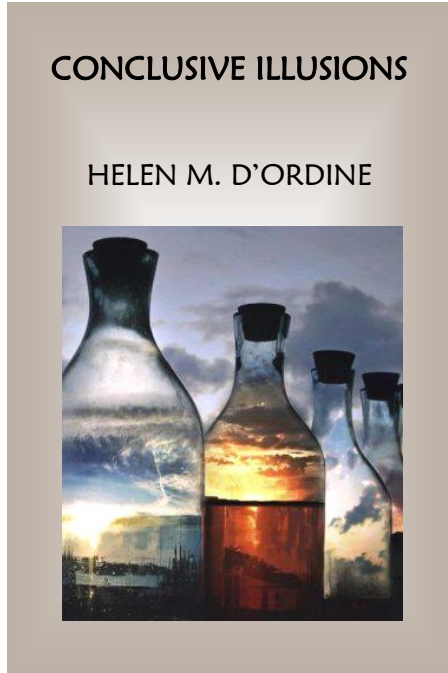
Bedtime

Please recycle to a friend.
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Origami Poetry Project

CONCLUSIVE ILLUSIONS
 By HELEN M. D'ORDINE
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In Front Of The Green Beach Umbrella

Yielding a small patch of solitude
 on a crowded beach
 he executed Tai Chi with
 slow, deliberate movements,
 a testament to his mastery;
 his gray hair braided, his muscles firm.

She, in lotus pose,
 with the incoming tide
 lapping over her legs that
 didn't break her yoga trance
 but added to her
 oneness with the earth.

Later, they shared tofu and organics,
 never craving a sip of wine.

Gender Offender Villanelle

It makes me feel defeminized
 when people say "You guys". It's clear
 the world's become desensitized.

My self-esteem is minimized.
 This female detests the idea.
 It makes me feel defeminized.

Womanly traits, some maximized
 so obvious, it would appear.
 The world's become desensitized.

The genders, blurred and compromised;
 one lone woman, not of good cheer.
 It makes me feel defeminized.

Cleavage abounds, I realize,
 but "Guys! Guys! Guys!" is all I hear.
 The world's become desensitized.

So, world, take note and be apprised!
 Cease and desist! Lend me your ear!
 It makes me feel defeminized.
 The world's become desensitized.